



Strategies to Break up the Block

- Openers
- Questioning
- Text Analysis
- Research and Discuss
- Closure, Review, and Reflect

Openers & Starting a New Topic

<p style="text-align: center;">Brain Writing</p> <p>Each person, using Post-it notes or small cards, writes down ideas, and places them in the center of the table. Everyone is free to pull out one or more of these ideas for inspiration. Team members can create new ideas, variations or piggyback on existing ideas.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Carousel Brainstorming</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Generate X number of questions for your topic or study and write each question on a separate piece of poster board or chart paper. Post questions sheets around your classroom. 2. Divide your students into groups of 5 or less. 3. Direct each group to stand in front of a home base question station. Give each group a colored marker for writing their ideas at the question stations. 4. Inform groups that they will have X number of minutes to brainstorm and write ideas at each question station. Usually 2-3 minutes 5. Before leaving the final question station, have each group select the top 3 ideas from their station to share with the entire class.
<p>Possible Sentences</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Generate a list of 10 words related to your lesson. These words should represent concepts that are both familiar and unfamiliar to students. 2. Have students create 5 possible sentences by using two words in each sentence until all words are gone. 3. Teach your lesson on the topic. 4. After the main instruction is over, have students go back and evaluate the accuracy of their possible sentences by placing a + (for correct), - (for incorrect), or a? (For cannot determine) beside each sentence. 	<p style="text-align: center;">PIPE CLEANER SCULPTURES</p> <p>This is a terrific activity to use at the beginning of a unit or lesson to connect the information to student's prior knowledge in a meaningful way. You can also use this at the end of a lesson to summarize what the lesson was about.</p> <p>MATERIALS: pipe cleaners or chenille wires</p> <p>Example:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teaching a class about algebraic equations for the first time the concept for the unit is balance. Offer the pipe cleaners to the students to create a sculpture whose title will be Balance. 2. At the end of a lesson spent with the Capulets and Montagues, distribute the pipe cleaners and have students sculpt what they thought the lesson was about. Fate, honor, and love in twisted pipe cleaners are always a treat.

Openers & Starting a New Topic

Exclusion Brainstorming

- Choose a list of words that appear in the material (textbook chapter, video, novel...) that the students will encounter. Add several other words that may not appear in the selection.
- After giving students a brief introduction to the topic, for example “Migrant Farm Workers Struggle for Civil Rights,” have students work in pairs or cooperative groups to decide which words they expect to find in the selection and which they don’t. Students cross out (exclude) the words they feel don’t belong.

Idea Wave

Each student lists 3-5 ideas about the assigned topic. A volunteer begins the “idea wave” by sharing one idea. The student to the right of the volunteer shares one idea. The next student to the right shares one idea. The teacher directs the flow of the “idea wave,” a few volunteers who were not included can contribute an idea.

Questioning

In the Hot Seat

1. Prior to the beginning of class, the teacher will prepare questions related to the topic of study and write them on sticky notes. Four to five questions are usually enough.
2. Place the sticky notes underneath student desks/chairs so that they are hidden from view.
3. At the start of the class, inform students that several of them are sitting on "Hot Seats" and will be asked to answer questions related to the topic of study for the day.
4. Have students check their desks/chairs for the strategically placed sticky notes.
5. Students who have questions on sticky notes will then take turns reading the question and attempting to provide an answer.

Reciprocal Questioning

1. · Divide the class into small groups and provide each group with a reading selection.
2. · Explain the Request process: students read a selection and develop discussion questions directed toward the teacher.
3. · Allow time for students to read their selections independently and to write a list of potential questions.
4. · Have the groups combine and revise the team members' questions into a final form.
5. · During the class discussion, a spokesperson for each group asks the questions to the teacher. The teacher answers the questions to reinforce learning.

Vote with Your Feet

Sometimes your lecture lasts beyond 15 minutes. Shake up a bit by encouraging movement during a short, on-tape intermission.

MATERIALS:

- Optional: tape signs on the walls with the following words: Yes, No, True, False.
- Optional: create custom signs for multiple choice answers.

METHOD:

Ask students a yes/no, true/false, multiple choice question, or open-ended question (agree/disagree/fence-sitter). Instead of calling on students to give their answers, have them vote with their feet and gather under the sign that best fits their answer. Give students a minute or two to discuss why they chose the answer they did and elect a spokesperson. The spokesperson from each group explains the group's rationale. Students return to their seats for another chunk of mini-lecture.

Questions in a Jar

- Students develop questions based on the content skill, and processes they have learned.
- They print the questions on one side of a slip of paper and the answer on the other side.
- These are deposited into the jar.
- The class forms teams.
- A person from each team draws a question for her or his team.
- If the team answers the question correctly, they get 2 points. If not, the other team can answer the questions for 1 point.

Questioning

Paper Pass

Each student puts their name on two 5X8 cards and develops two review questions. Writing on each card
Cards are passed around the class as music is played (can sit or stand for this).

When music stops each class member must answer question in his or her hand.

Card is returned to the author and they give feedback to the student whom has answered the questions

Sticks

Method for Random Name Calling

1. Get popsicle sticks
2. Once you have your sticks, begin writing each student name on individual sticks until you have written down your entire roster.
3. After having your sticks completed, the next step is to find a cup or mug to place the sticks into
4. Use them to make sure you are randomly calling on every student.

Text Analysis

Character Quotes

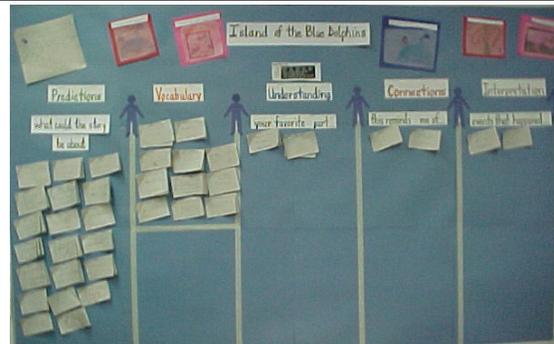
- Distribute one quote to each student.
- Ask the students to read the quote and then find all the other students in the room with the same quote.
- Designate an area in the room for each group to meet.
- Give each group a marker and large sheet of paper for recording their list of adjectives.
- Explain that each group is to study the quote and write all of the adjectives that describe the character. Remind students to pick adjectives that they understand.
- Once all groups have recorded the adjectives, call on each group to read their quote and display their list of adjectives.
- Explain to the other students that their job is to listen carefully and focus on whether they think the adjectives fit with the quote.
- Once the group has read all the adjectives, ask the class if there are any adjectives that seem not to fit.

SQ3R

- **Survey:** The reader previews the material to develop a general outline for organizing information.
- **Question:** The reader raises questions with the expectation of finding answers in the material to be studied.
- **Read:** The reader next attempts to answer the questions formulated in the previous step.
- **Recite:** The reader then deliberately attempts to answer out loud or in writing the questions formulated in the second step.
- **Review:** The reader finally reviews the material by rereading portions of the assignment in order to verify the answers given during the previous step.

Jot Chart

1. Create a Jot Chart on the chalkboard or on an overhead transparency or produce a print copy for each student. The chart/matrix should be structured as follows:
 - Main ideas/items for description or analysis are listed across the top of the chart.
 - Question/characteristics of the main ideas/items are listed down the left side of the chart.
2. Discuss the purpose of the chart with students before the reading assignment. Give an example of a completed chart to help clarify its functions.
3. Have students read the selection and complete the Jot Chart.
4. Discuss the students' findings and compile the results into a group Jot Chart. Stress the relationships between the data in the chart.



Types of Rocks			
	Igneous	Metamorphic	Sedimentary
Examples of each type of rock			
How is it formed?			
Where are each found in the United States?			

Research and Discuss

<p style="text-align: center;">Hot Potato</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Every team has one sheet of paper and each student has a different colored pencil 2. A problem is given to the group 3. Person 1 writes the first step of the solution process, explaining aloud, and passes the paper onto person 2. 4. Person 2 makes corrections and adds the next step, explaining aloud, and passes the paper on. 5. Process continues until the problem is complete 	<p style="text-align: center;">Silent Debate</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student pairs: one is the pro the other is the con 2. Each pair has one pencil and one sheet of paper 3. A topic is given, the pro goes first 4. The pro makes a supportive statement in writing 5. The con reads the statement and then writes a comment against the topic 6. The process repeats 3-4 times
<p style="text-align: center;">Listening Post</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student 1 and 2 work on a math problem aloud in their team. 2. Student 3 listens to the discussion and can ask clarifying math questions 3. Student 4 only records what is discussed and verbalized (looks for attitude) and may not talk. 4. After 15 minutes, work stops and student #4 shares notes and observations 	<p style="text-align: center;">Dyad</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Each person is given equal time to talk. 2. The listener does not talk, it isn't a conversation 3. Confidentiality is maintained 4. Maintain eye contact and good body language
<p style="text-align: center;">Four Corners</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Generate a controversial scenario related to your topic of study. 2. Formulate four divergent opinions related to the scenario. Post these on chart paper in the four corners of your classroom. 3. Present the controversial scenario to your students. 4. Ask students to move to one of the four corners. Students should move to the corner with the statement that most closely fits their opinion of controversial scenario. 5. Follow up by having students present a group summary of their opinion. This can be done through an oral presentation or by using a strategy such as an Opinion-Proof T-chart or a RAFT. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Socratic Seminar</p> <p>The Socratic Seminar consists of the four following elements:</p> <p>A) The Text- The text is drawn from readings in literature, history, philosophy, works of art, or current events.</p> <p>B) The Question- The opening question is open-ended. It has no right or wrong answer.</p> <p>C) The Leader- The leader is a teacher or student. He/she has a dual role as leader and participant.</p> <p>D) The Participants- The participants study the text, listen actively, and share their ideas with the other participants</p>

Closure, Review, and Reflect

<h2 style="text-align: center;">Three Step Interview</h2> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students work in pairs. One is the interviewer, the other is the interviewee. The interviewer listens actively to the comments and thoughts of the interviewee, paraphrasing key points and significant details. 2. Student pairs reverse roles, repeating the interview process. 3. Each pair then joins another pair to form groups of four. Students introduce their pair partner and share what the partner had to say about the topic at hand. 	<h2 style="text-align: center;">One Minute Paper</h2> <p>A “one-minute paper” may be defined as a very short, in-class writing activity (taking one-minute less to complete) in response to an instructor-posed question, which prompts students to reflect on the day’s lesson and provides the instructor with useful feedback.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Without looking at your notes, what was most memorable or stands out in your mind about today’s class? 2. What was the most surprising and/or unexpected idea expressed in today’s discussion? 3. Looking back at your notes, what would you say was the most stimulating idea discussed in today’s class? 4. For you, what interesting questions remain unanswered about today’s topic? 5. What relationship did you see between today’s topic and other topics previously covered in this course?
<h2 style="text-align: center;">Concentric Circles</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This activity gets students out of their seats and reviewing in a kinesthetic way. The first time you do this exercise, start-up takes a few minutes. However, the more often you use it, the more it becomes a routine and your start-up time decreases. • Divide your students evenly into two groups. Have the first group meet in the front of the room and create a circle with all people facing out. • Ask the second group to find a partner from the first group and face their partner. • Pose a question to the class and ask partners to discuss the question and come up with an answer. <p>Instruct the inner circle to move four people to the left and pose a new question.</p>	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Haiku</h2> <p>The deceptively simple 5-7-5 syllable formula can be a great way for students to manipulate both vocabulary words and concepts. Require three vocabulary words per poem and you’ve given your students a great thought exercise.</p> <p>Example:</p> <p>Radius Halfway through the circle, The radius takes a break. An equation waits.</p>

Closure, Review, and Reflect

3-2-1

As a quick and useful assessment tool, try using a 3-2-1 response with your students. There are several varieties of this strategy. Students can write responses in their notebooks, then you can quickly check for understanding.

- List 3 new facts or words that you have learned today,
- List 2 ideas or concepts that are new to you,
- List 1 question you still have.

Event Cards

1. Teacher prepares event cards made from 5X8 cards with yarn attached so the card can be worn around students neck.
2. Each student is given a card.
3. Without speaking to one another students must line up in order of the way events around their necks occurred.
4. When this task is completed, each student must share on fact about the event she or he is wearing.

Whip-Around

1. Topic or question is presented
2. Participants randomly have an opportunity to say something briefly about it
3. Everyone does not have to comment but are encouraged to do so.

12 Word Summary

In 12 words or less, summarize the most important aspects from today's lesson.

Closure, Review, and Reflect

<p>Evidence Bag</p> <p>Your ticket out of the door is to write a down two ideas you learned from today's lesson.</p>	<p>A-B Partner Teach</p> <p>Partner A, turn to Partner B</p> <p>Tell your partner the two most important things you have learned so far about....</p>
<p>Think-Pair Share</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With students seated in teams of 4, have them number them from 1 to 4. • Announce a discussion topic or problem to solve (Example: Which room in our school is larger, the cafeteria or the gymnasium? How could we find out the answer?) • Give students at least 10 seconds of think time to THINK of their own answer. (Research shows that the quality of student responses goes up significantly when you allow "think time.") • Using student numbers, announce discussion partners. (Example: For this discussion, Student #1 and #2 will be partners. At the same time, Student #3 and #4 will talk over their ideas.) • Ask students to PAIR with their partner to discuss the topic or solution. • Finally, randomly call on a few students to SHARE their ideas with the class. 	<p>Learning from A to Z</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The objective of this activity is to provide words, phrases, or sentences that are related to the topic that is being studied. 2. The teacher gives the student the topic they need to brainstorm 3. The teacher establishes a time frame to complete the activity 4. Students work individually or together in pairs or groups, to brainstorm words related to the topic that begin with each letter of the alphabet 5. When the time expires, the teacher guides the students through discussion of their entries for the each letter. Answers can be recorded.
<p>Quick Write</p> <p>Use a quick write to activate background knowledge, clarify issues, facilitate making connections, and allow reflection.</p> <p>Students write for a short, specific amount of time about a designated topic related to...</p>	<p>Exit Slip</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What made the learning easy for you today? • What made the learning difficult for you today? • What do you still need to know before we move on? • What did you learn today? • What should our next steps be? <p>Students can answer self-selected questions or teacher selected questions</p>