

Creating activities can be a daunting task, even for seasoned instructors. Below is a guide to help you through the ideation, implementation, and reflection processes:

Conceptualizing Your Activity

It is best to start with a clear idea of what you want your students to leave the activity understanding, to recognize the logistics and limitations to doing so, and to ensure that you can fit the necessary tasks into the timeframe required.

Learning Goals and Outcomes

The first step to creating any activity or assignment is to pinpoint the most important things you want students to take away from your activity. This could be a specific knowledge base or it could be a methodology. Take a moment to write down these learning goals or outcomes, but try your best to limit it to one or two things you think are the *most important*.

Identifying Needs

Before you move forward with writing out the activity, you should take stock of what will be required to complete the associated tasks, what resources you have at your disposal, and what you can reasonably acquire or ask students to acquire. For example, if you need computers, is the computer lab available or will students need their own laptops?

Materials

What are the tangible items needed to complete the tasks:

1)

2)

3)

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4)

5)

Communication

What conversations do you need to have with your class *before* the activity? In the example above, this might mean making an announcement that class will be held in the computer lab or that students will need to bring laptops or make arrangements to borrow one from the library before class time.

Logistics

It is worthwhile to consider how you will go about procuring all the necessary aspects of the activity and how effective will the implementation be. Will the preparations outweigh the benefits? What will the impact of the activity be in terms of learning, class dynamics, work load, etc.

Other Preparations

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Activity Procedure

Now, we can write out the actual steps of the activity. The more clear and easily communicable the instructions, the higher the chance will be of a smooth experience.

Introduction

How will you introduce and set up the activity? What do students need to know before they get started?

Steps

Next, you should list all the major steps the activity will take so that you can adequately guide students through the process.

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Debrief

Activities should not be completed in a vacuum. It is important to help consolidate learning goals and solidify understanding through a set of relevant discussion or reflection questions.

Post-Activity Questions

Return to your learning goals and formulate a few questions you can ask students that encapsulate or apply those outcomes. This can be done individually, but it is often more effective to get students talking together in a classwide discussion, but be mindful of your timeline.

1)

2)

3)

4)

Post Activity Reflection

Once you have tested your activity in the classroom, make sure you reflect on its efficacy. Did students meet the learning goals/outcomes you expected? Did anything unexpected come up? How would you adjust the activity for future classes?
