

How To: Reignite Student Learning

DQ5: ENGAGING STUDENTS

Element 24

Strategies for Noticing when Students are Not Engaged

The nine elements of Design Question 5 in the Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model give teachers the tools they need to reignite student learning. Noticing when students are not engaged is the first step, as noted in Element 24: “Noticing When Students Are Not Engaged.” The teacher scans the room and makes note of when students are not engaged, taking overt action to re-engage their attention. He or she can use a combination of the remaining eight elements of Design Question 5 to get the students back on task.

Strategies (this list is not exhaustive)

Teachers often require the undivided attention of their students. Included here are some ideas that can help teachers provide a safe, ordered learning environment for everyone.

Scanning the Room

- Look for students whose focus is wandering
- Notice students who aren't actively engaged or participating
- Scan regularly when students are working in groups, doing independent work at their seats, or receiving whole and small group instruction

Monitoring Levels of Attention

Teachers identify a student or group of students with low levels of attention or engagement and make an effort to reengage them by:

- Making eye contact
- Moving closer to them
- Changing activities
- Asking questions

Give Me Five

When things seem to have slid a bit off course, the teacher holds up one hand and says, “Give me five.” Students respond by putting their own hands in the air and shouting, “Five!” As they count backward to one, they get progressively quieter until “one” is said in a whisper. One variation of this exercise asks students to recount what they must do as each finger on their right hand is counted.

For example, the teacher says “Give me five,” and waits until all the students hold up their hand before leading the class in saying the five things together:

- (1) Eyes -- look
- (2) Ears -- listen
- (3) Mouth -- closed
- (4) Hands -- still
- (5) Feet -- quiet

Measuring Engagement

Students monitor their own levels of engagement through classroom routines. One way that teachers can involve students in this kind of monitoring is to give them three cards they can use to represent their current level of engagement, and then periodically ask them to display the card that best indicates how engaged they are — or are not.

For example:

- Green – I’m fully engaged
- Yellow – I’m sort of engaged
- Red – I need help

School Spirit Cheer

The teacher shouts/says the school name and the students respond by calling out the name of the school mascot. For example, the teacher shouts, “Pinewood” and the students respond with, “Beavers!” After they shout the mascot name, they are to be silent.