



Go to www.mcgill.ca/polling on your computer, tablet, or phone

Click “Join Polling Session”

Sign in with McGill username

Enter the session ID: Active2

Engaging Students Using Active Learning Strategies



McGill

Learning to Teach Day

Saturday, November 10, 2018

Carrie Hanson & Christina Popescu

Teaching and Learning Services

<http://www.mcgill.ca/tls>

TLS

Workshop Goals



- Identify the importance of active learning and what it entails
- Gain insight about various active learning approaches in the classroom
- Select appropriate activities for students from a range of active learning strategies
- Identify and overcome challenges in the implementation of active learning techniques

Ask yourself: What do I want to achieve with active learning?

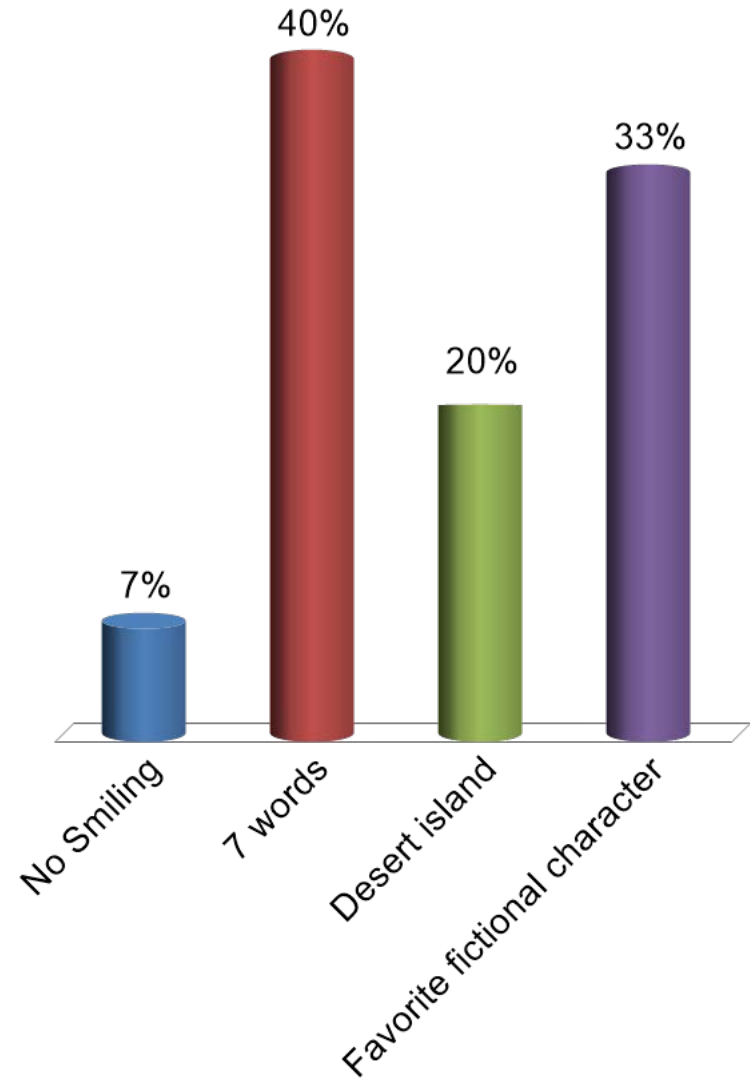


- Allow students to get to know each other, reduce their anxiety and alienation.
- Find out what students already know about a new topic.
- Guide students through learning process, help them focus on the crucial parts of the material, develop their reading or writing skills, etc.
- Provide opportunities for practice and application.
- Provide opportunities for reflection on the material and/or the learning process.

Choose your icebreaker



- A. No Smiling
- B. 7 words
- C. Desert island
- D. Favorite fictional character



What do I want to achieve?



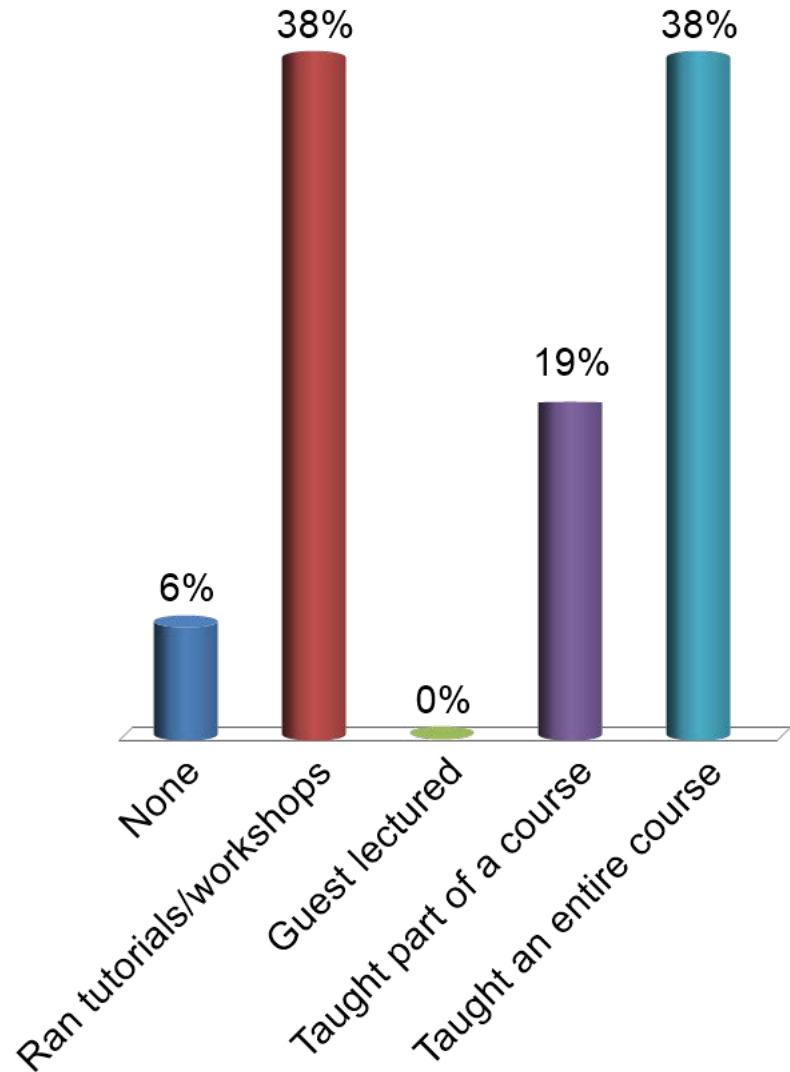
The icebreaker activity was designed to:

- **Allow students to get to know each other**
- **Reduce their anxiety and alienation**

How much teaching experience do you have?



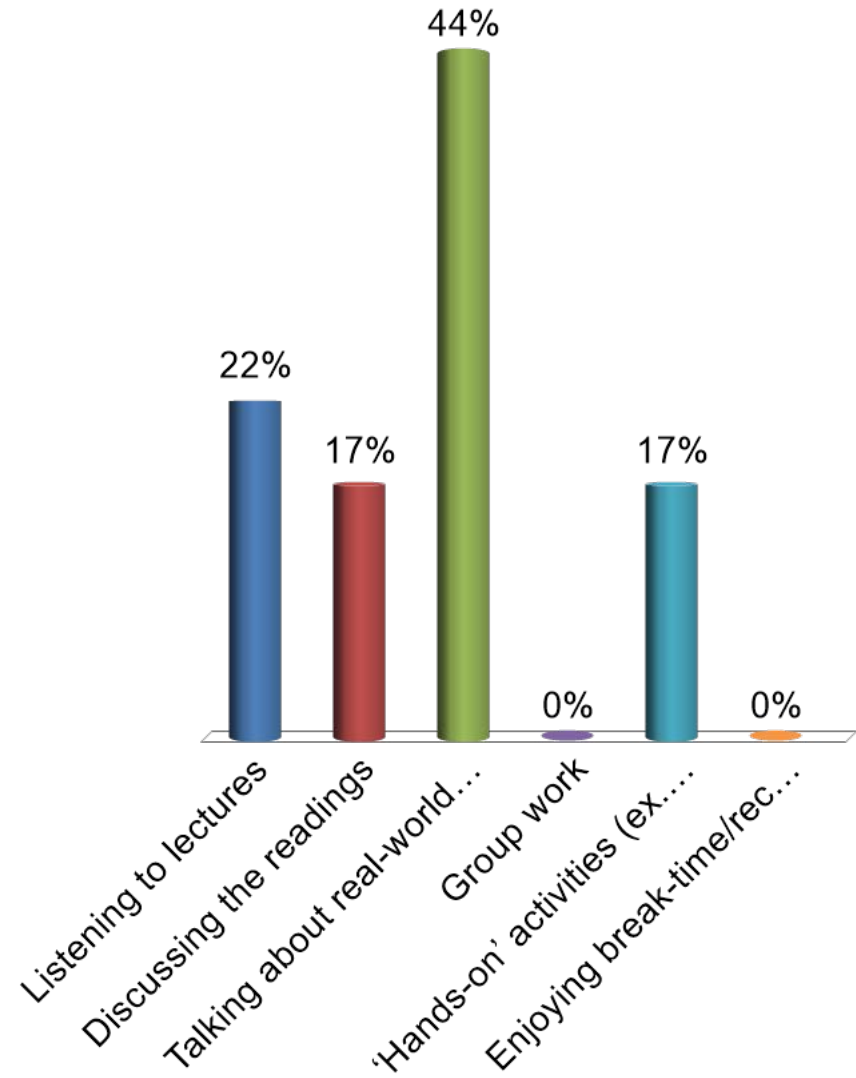
- A. None
- B. Ran tutorials/workshops
- C. Guest lectured
- D. Taught part of a course
- E. Taught an entire course



As a student, I learn best when...



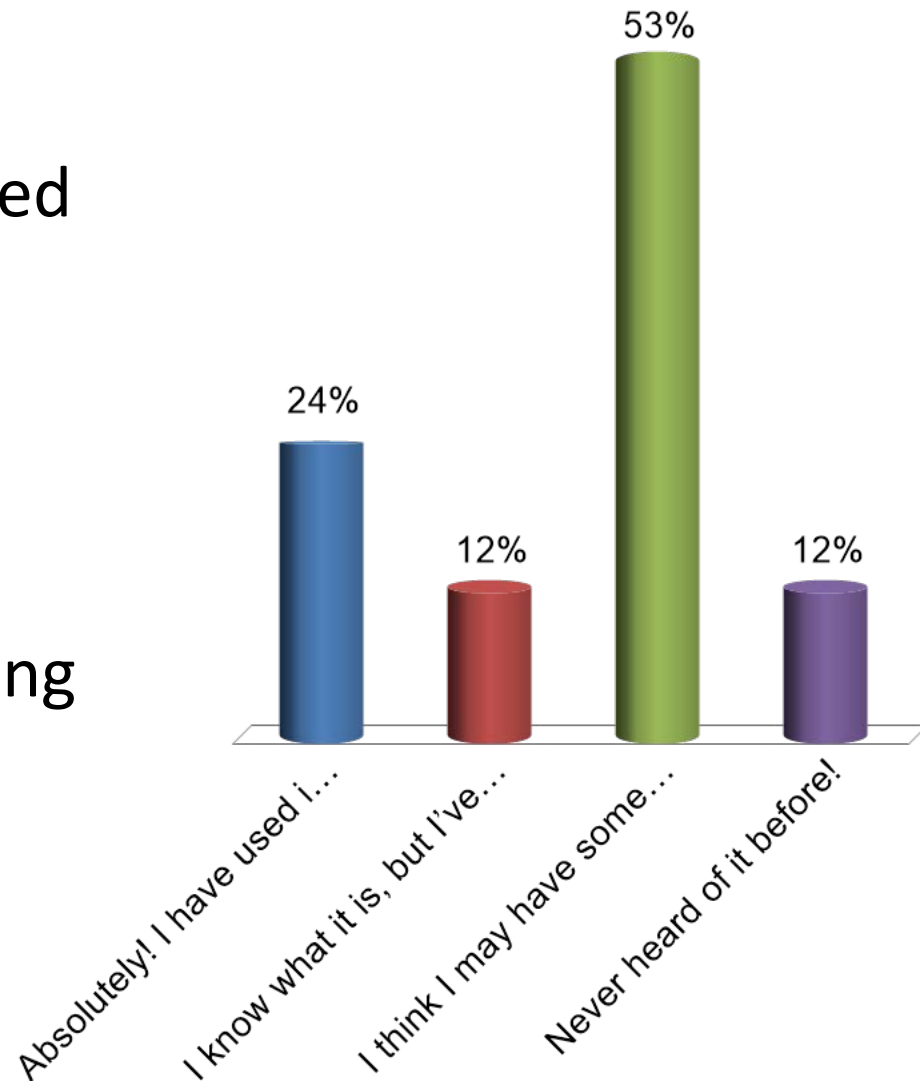
- A. Listening to lectures
- B. Discussing the readings
- C. Talking about real-world implications or contemporary examples
- D. Group work
- E. 'Hands-on' activities (ex. lab work)
- F. Enjoying break-time/recess



Have you heard of active learning before today?



- A. Absolutely! I have used it my tutorials or experienced it in my classes.
- B. I know what it is, but I've never experienced it.
- C. I think I may have some idea of what active learning could be.
- D. Never heard of it before!



What do I want to achieve?



This activity was designed to:

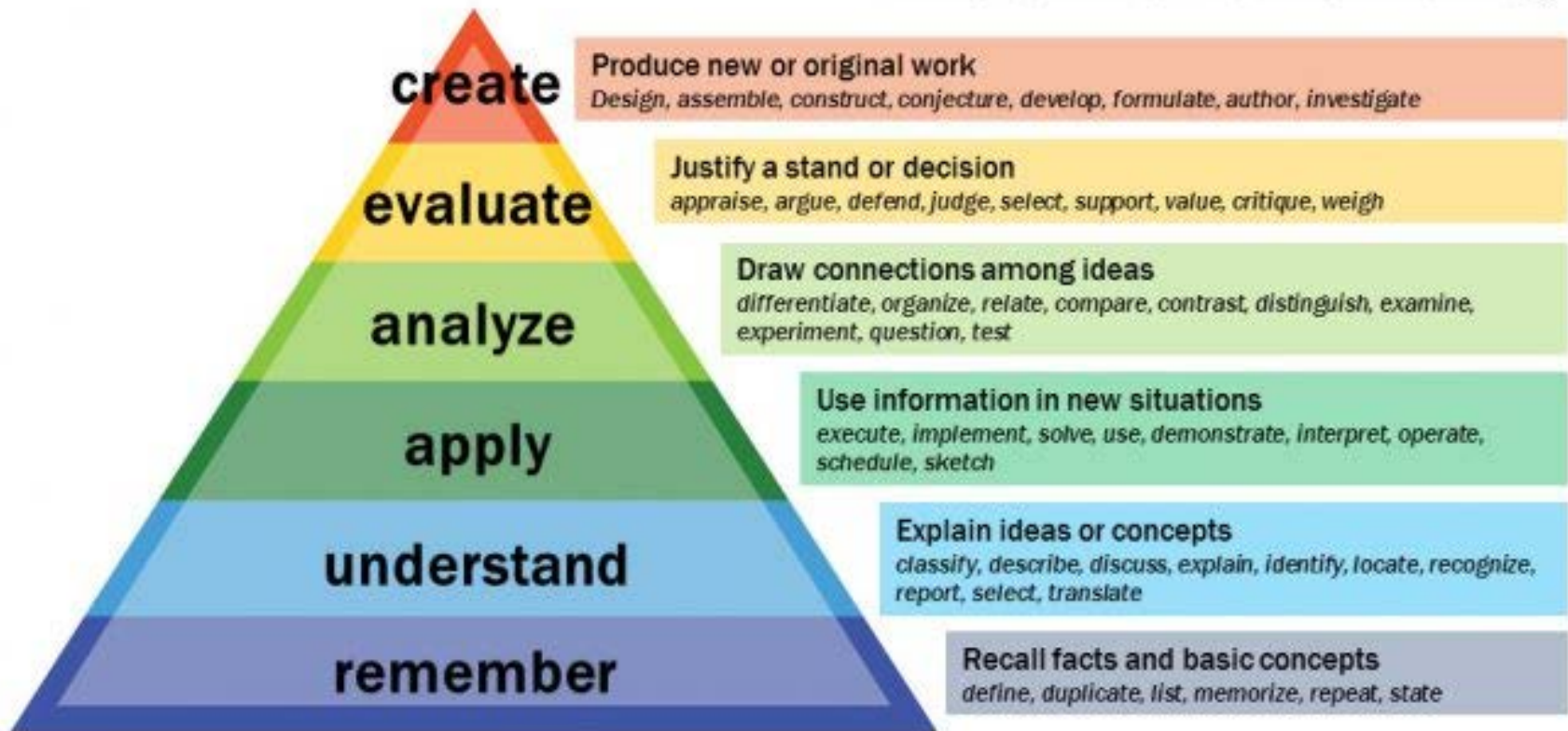
- **Find out what students already know** about a new topic.

What is learning?

Acquisition of knowledge or skills



Bloom's Taxonomy



Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching

Definition

Icebreaker

Experience

Conceptualization

Activity

Challenges

Tools

Strategies

What is active learning?



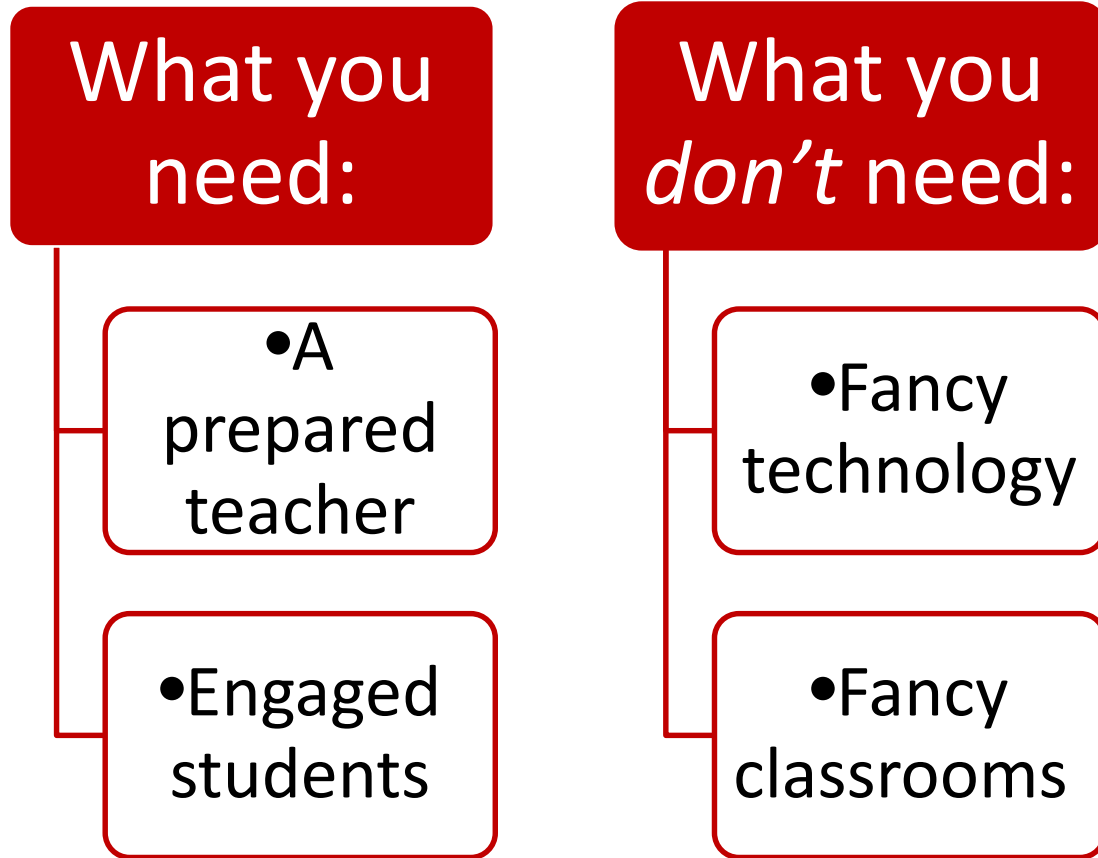
Active learning is a student-centered approach whereby students **engage in their learning** through meaningful activities and **think about their learning** during the process.

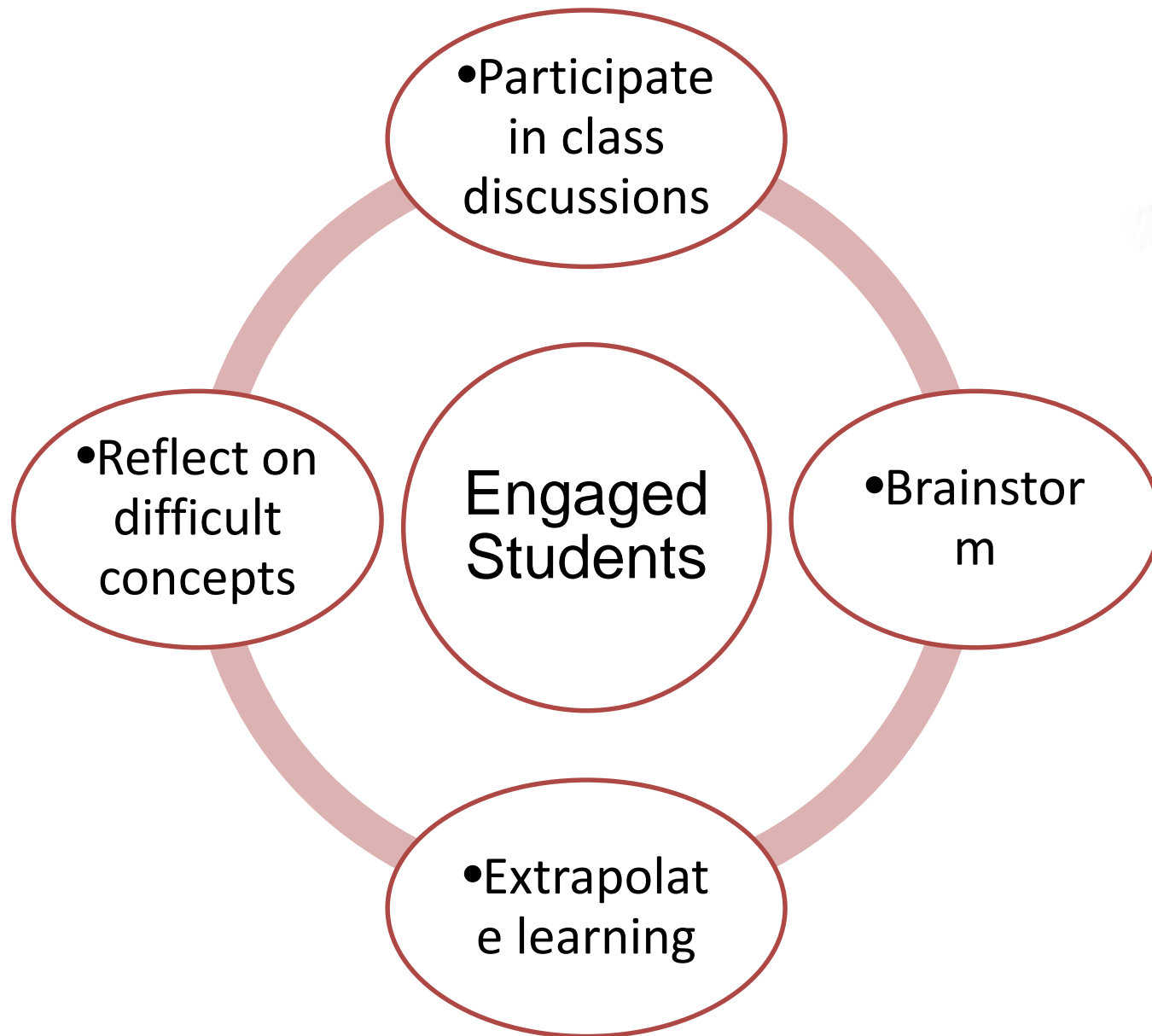
Student-centered learning

- Focus is on students rather than the teacher
- Teacher facilitates students' learning

Bonwell, C. C., Eison, J. A., (1991).
Carleton College (<https://serc.carleton.edu/introgeo/gallerywalk/active.html>)
University of Michigan Center for Learning and Teaching
(http://www.crlt.umich.edu/active_learning_introduction)

What is active learning?





Why active learning?



- Improve critical thinking skills, increased retention and transfer of new information, increased motivation, improved interpersonal skills
- Decrease failure rate by 12%, improve test scores by 6%
- Students are 1.5 times more likely to fail with traditional instruction compared to active learning
- Student improves from 50th percentile to 68th percentile with implementation of active learning

From UBC EDCP371 951 2010/Active learning
(Freeman et al, 2012)
(Prince, 2004)

How to make learning active



Traditionally Passive Activities	Make it Active
Readings, videos, audio recordings	Use them to prepare for class discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to submit questions they would address to the group Guide the activity with questions for students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to relate the videos/ audios with theories they are reviewing One sentence summary/One-minute paper Read/watch/listen as a class, pause to discuss
Lecture/Presentations	Incorporate polling and/or questions Incorporate activities and discussions such as think-pair-share Stop lecture midway and have groups of students compare notes
Demonstrations	Involve students in the demonstrations, have them reflect and analyze the process Have students predict the outcome individually then discuss it in groups or with the whole class

From UBC EDCP371 951 2010/Active learning

Definition

Icebreaker

Experience

Conceptualization

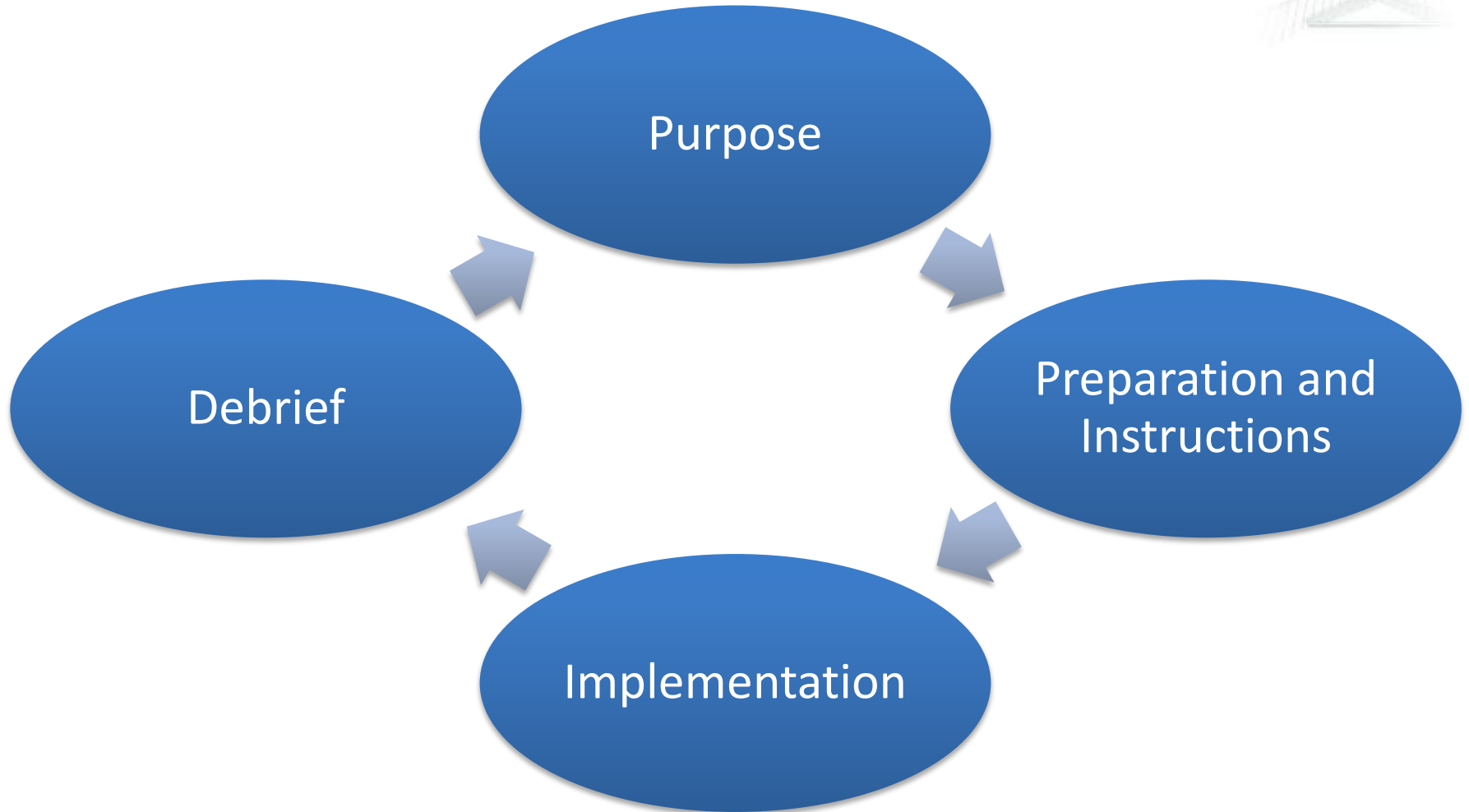
Activity

Challenges

Tools

Strategies

The active learning cycle



Activity: Individual Reading



- Read the handout
- Mark strategies you could imagine using in your class with a “√”

Activity: One-Minute Paper



- Select **one** new strategy you might like to try
- In a few sentences, write:
 1. Why did you choose this strategy?
 2. How would you use this strategy?

Activity: Buzz Groups



- In groups of 2-3
- Name the topic you will cover with the activity
- Share your strategy and ideas for implementation

What do I want to achieve?



These activities were designed to:

- Provide opportunities for **practice** and **application**.

Send the problem



Swap cards with your neighbour

On the card you received, write:

- 1 proactive strategy to prevent the problem before it even happens
- 1 reactive strategy to manage the problem once it happens

What challenges might you face?



Now that you've identified which strategy you want to use, try to anticipate a challenge you might run into when running this activity.

Write out the challenge in 1-2 sentences on your cue card.

Common challenges with active learning



- Students not participating (e.g., discussions, group work)
- Preparing/not having all the materials
- The activity not working
- The group gets off topic/distracted
- Students behaving inappropriately
- Timing (too much/too little)

What do I want to achieve?



This brainstorming & discussion activity was designed to:

- Providing **opportunities for reflection** on the material and/or the learning process.
- Prepare for the realities of implementing active learning strategies.

Active Learning Classrooms



- Group seating
- Smartboard technology
- Whiteboards (BYO Markers)
- Projector connections from group tables
- [Classrooms at McGill](#)

Summary



- What are two new things you learned today?
- What would you like to learn more about?
- Do you feel comfortable applying what you learned today?

What do I want to achieve?



This activity was designed to:

- Guide students through learning process, **help them focus on the crucial parts of the material**, develop their reading or writing skills, etc.

Activities we used today:



- Polling
- Brainstorming
- Focused Reading
- One-Minute Paper
- Buzz Groups
- Send a problem
- Group Discussion

Thank you!



Questions?

Teaching and Learning Services

<http://www.mcgill.ca/tls/>