Blending, Mixing, and Processing: Strategies Used to Engage Students in the Classroom

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Agenda

- Our Institutions
- Obstacles
- Your obstacles?
- Blending
- Mixing
- Processing
- Your teaching strategies?
- Conclusion
Founded in 1847
City University of New York (hereafter CUNY) is an urban public university consisting of 24 institutions
Campuses across five boroughs of New York City.
11 senior colleges, seven community colleges, a graduate school, a law school, and a journalism school.
CUNY serves 540,000 students
College of Staten Island (CSI)

- Senior college spread over 200 acres
- Largest CUNY college (in size).
- Offers Bachelor, Master, and Ph.D. programs in various programs
  - Strengths: Nursing, Education, Business
- Targeted one-shot classes (ENG 111).
- 10 teaching librarians (12 full time)
- Approximately 300 Library Instruction classes taught per academic year.
John Jay College

- Senior college
- Approximately 15,000 students
- Criminal justice focus
- Targeted one-shot classes
- 11 teaching librarians
● 3000 students enrolled in 20 college programs
● Campuses in Manhattan and Brooklyn
● Information Literacy is part of Core Competencies Division
● 2-credit course taught by librarians
● Every student is required to take this class
● Full semester course (15 weeks) for 2 hours a week
● Core Competencies Division also offers courses such as Freshmen Skills and Career Development
Obstacles

- Students may not feel engaged or motivated because
  - Classes are non-credit bearing
  - They are not evaluated on their performance.
  - Why am I here?
  - Isn't LIB 100 a "library" course?
- Trouble getting “buy in” from academic departments and individual teaching faculty.
Obstacles

- Students may forget everything afterwards.
- No “relationship building” between student and librarian.
- Students may be overwhelmed by too much information.
Obstacles

- Students need to learn different interfaces that may not be user-friendly.
- Librarians providing instruction for large Undergraduate classes (in an auditorium/theater) is a challenge.
Obstacles

- What obstacles do you face in your library instruction classes?
Blending

Integrate different strategies to start the class and blending students' lives into the class

- Icebreakers
- Storytelling
- Visuals
- Colorful handouts
Blending

- Scaffolded learning
- Theatrics
  - Information Cycle
  - Acting Out
  - Humor
  - Email and Phone Etiquette
- Embed yourself into a course
- Experiential learning
  - Hands-on learning
  - mini research
  - investigative assignment in-class
Mixing

- Mix Media and Methods
- Make the lesson memorable
- Media Literacy
  - different news sources covering the same story
  - Show videos, a LibGuide, etc..
  - Wikipedia assignments
  - Facebook profiles used to teach citations
  - Flickr tags to teach subjects
  - Break up lecture time
Mixing

Don't sit still! Move around..

- Engage students
- Inspire and empower
- Don't talk down
- Create a dialogue
- Ask questions
- Kinesthetic learning
  - Boolean demonstration
  - Writing keywords on the white board
  - Show peers how to use a resource
Technology & Realia

- Document projector
  - library card, book, mobile device
- Realia
  - journals and magazines, books
Processing

Incorporate critical thinking exercises and group work

- Metacognition
  - Tell students what they will learn
- Practice, exercises, activities, group work
Processing

- Mnemonics -- memory retention
  - CRAAP test --> Compare Web Sites
- Group discussions
  - Learn from each other
  - Feedback
  - Teamwork
Processing

Critical Self-Reflection

- Journaling
- Problem solving
- Critical thinking
- "Thinking about thinking"
- Conceptualize, Apply, Synthesize, and Evaluate
Your teaching strategies

1. On the handout, please write down some teaching strategies you use to engage students.

2. We will then ask you to share and discuss these strategies with the person sitting closest to you.
Conclusion: Assessment & Follow-up

- Assessment tool such as a quiz or questionnaire
- Informally testing students’ comprehension of the material is important.
- Emphasize importance of the tailored handout and contact information.
- Emphasize our availability via phone, in-person, or email
- We need to promote ourselves
- We encourage them to follow-up with us.
Thank you for your attention!

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