

Engage Students from the Start: Implementing Meaningful Warm-up Activities



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Introductions & Check-in

Which of the pictures best represents the way you are feeling about teaching right now?



Session Outcomes

1.

Explain the Value

Explain the value of beginning class with a warm-up activity

2.

Identify Examples

Identify various types of warm up activities and their different purposes

3.

Develop Your Own

Develop at least one idea for a warm-up activity to implement in your course(s)

Activate & Share

With a partner, list as many answers to the following question as you can in the time allowed:

Why do you think beginning class with a warm-up is valuable for student learning?



The Value of Warm-up Activities



Cognitive

Activate prior knowledge

Spark curiosity

Monitor learning and progress



Logistical

Hold students accountable to pre-class work

Provide time to transition



Social

Create a sense of belonging

Connect to students' lived experiences

“ Students do not come into our courses as blank slates, but rather with knowledge gained in other courses and through daily life. ”

-AMBROSE ET AL., *HOW LEARNING WORKS* (2010)

Warm-ups Activate Prior Knowledge

When students **make connections with relevant prior knowledge**

from previous courses or their own lives, they are more likely to retain new knowledge.

Why do you think...?

What do you know about...?



What do you think of when you hear...?

List all of the words that come to mind when I say [term].

Bransford & Johnson, 1972; Bransford et al., 2000; Peeck et al., 1982; Vygotsky, 1978

Warm-ups as Formative Assessment

Providing students with as many opportunities as possible to **retrieve and use information** supports long-term retention and deeper understanding.

Immediate feedback helps instructors and students know where to focus their efforts moving forward.

What were the main topics we covered in our last class session?

How would you define/explain this concept to a non-expert?



What is the significance of this topic (from the homework, last session, etc.)?

What questions do you have about the content covered in previous classes?

Ambrose et al, 2010; Angelo & Cross, 2012; Barkley & Major, 2016

“ The quickest method for cultivating retrieval practice in class takes the form of asking questions ... about material that either you or the students have covered already ”

-LANG, *SMALL TEACHING* (2016)

Warm-ups as Accountability

Starting class by **connecting to pre-class readings or other assignments** can help to hold students accountable to coming to class prepared and demonstrate the value of pre-class work.

What is one question you have after today's readings?

How do the assigned readings connect with what we discussed last class?

What are the highlights of the reading for today or work you completed for today?

What is one key takeaway you gained from the assigned video?



“**If we want to truly motivate and educate our students, we are much better off targeting their emotions.**”

-CAVANAGH, *THE SPARK OF LEARNING* (2016)

Warm-ups Build Community

By asking students to **share their emotions, feelings, opinions, or personal lived experiences**, you can help create a sense of belonging for students and increase their motivation to learn.

Think of a time when...

What are your thoughts on...

Have you ever experienced...

How do you feel about...



Addy et al., 2020; Cavanagh, 2016; Eyer, 2016

Warm-ups Support Interaction

Regularly integrating opportunities where students are **engaged in interactive and collaborative activities** creates an inclusive learning environment by centering social presence.

Share with a partner...

Form a small group and think about...

Turn to the person next to you and talk about...

Work with the people around you to...



Addy et al., 2020; Cavanagh, 2016; Eyster, 2016

Pause & Reflect

Which of these warm-up purposes seems most relevant to you or your course(s)?



Cognitive

- Activate prior knowledge
- Spark curiosity
- Monitor learning and progress

Logistical

- Hold students accountable to pre-class work
- Time for administration

Social

- Build community
- Support interaction

Formats for In-Person Warm-ups

In person, you can ask students to answer warm-up prompts via:

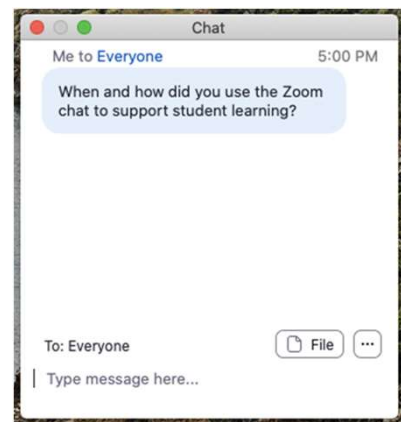
- Pen and paper (writing or drawing)
- Index cards or sticky notes
- Turn and talk
- Chalk talk/gallery walk



Formats for Digital Warm-ups

Online, in-person, or hybrid, you can ask students to answer warm-up prompts via:

- Polling tools (e.g., Poll Everywhere, Mentimeter)
- Message boards (e.g., Padlet)
- Whiteboards (e.g., Google Jamboard, Miro)
- Zoom tools (e.g., chat, poll, or annotation)





Your Turn!

How might you apply these ideas and suggestions to create meaningful warm-up activities in your course(s)?

Key Takeaways

Warm-ups are:



BENEFICIAL

Support student learning and a positive classroom climate



EASY

Require minimal preparation, materials, and/or time



ADAPTABLE

Can work in a variety of formats, disciplines, and course types



FUN

Encourage community building and set a positive tone

Thank you for joining us!

Stay in touch:

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