

# Active Learning

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## Active Learning

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A growing body of research points to active learning strategies as a way to better engage students, cultivate critical thinking, and improve the overall quality of teaching and learning. Active learning is especially valuable in online learning because it increases learner motivation to test what is being learned in the real world. Active learning can be accomplished online using multi-media, chatting, video conferencing, file attachments, simulation software, and role playing.

The **basic elements of active learning** include

- active listening
- thoughtful speaking
- the reading of content materials and other participants contributions
- reflection and writing about what is being read and learned

**Typical learning structures** to contain active learning activities include

- small groups
- collaborative projects
- simulations
- case studies

**Common teaching resources** include

- reading assignments
- supplementary lectures and study notes
- summaries
- primary information sources
- reviews
- opinion essays
- debates about conflicting opinions
- critical analyses
- examination of theories and models
- guest speakers

**Technology mediation** is included by means of

- overhead or slide projector

- films
- videos
- commercial and educational TV
- video cameras
- computers and modems
- chart pads and markers
- and so forth.

To learn more about active learning and how to implement it see Meyers, Chet and Thomas Jones. *Promoting Active Learning: Strategies for the College Classroom*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993.

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