

## **Unscientific Models, Definitions, & Suggestions Regarding Engagement**

[underline indicates a term used by scientists] [HolisticEquity.org/student-engagement.html](http://HolisticEquity.org/student-engagement.html) Oct-2021

### **Strong, Silver, & Robinson (Survey-derived Model)**

Q: What kind of work do you find totally engaging?

Q: What kind of work do you hate to do?

People who are engaged in their work are driven by four essential goals, each of which satisfies a particular human need:

Success (the need for mastery)

Curiosity (the need for understanding)

Originality (the need for self-expression)

**Relationships** (the need for involvement with others)

### **Schlechty (Observation-derived Model)**

**Rebellion** (diverted attention, no commitment): Most types of rebellion are easy to spot: walking around the classroom, distracting other students, refusing to open a book or pick up a pencil. Others can be harder, such as when students appear to be working on the activity but have actually moved on to reading, drawing, or writing about a topic that's more interesting to them.

**Retreatism** (no attention, no commitment): Students who "retreat" might not actively try to sabotage a lesson, but they're not necessarily learning more than rebellious students. These are students who daydream or stare at you with a blank expression, but they are clearly not truly listening or participating.

**Ritual compliance** (low attention, no commitment): Some students don't care about participating in a lesson but also don't want to get in trouble. These students will do the minimum they need to do to meet the lowest requirements and avoid negative consequences, but they're not truly engaged.

**Strategic compliance** (high attention, low commitment): Some students are motivated by rewards such as good grades or praise from teachers, peers, or their parents. These students will be highly attentive and eager to perform well, but they might not have true buy-in or long-term commitment to master what they're learning.

**Engagement** (high attention, high commitment): In true engagement, students believe in the inherent value and meaning of what they're learning. They will persist through difficulties and learn in a way that has a lasting impact on their lives.

### **Advancement Courses (A Wiley Company)**

**Meaning:** Students will not put forth effort if they don't believe a lesson is worth their time. That's why it's important to create a sense of relevance and buy-in in any lesson. For example, you can show how the content relates to prior knowledge or how adults or older students use the material your class is about to learn.

**Sense of Competence:** If students feel like the material is beyond them or they have no chance of success, they're highly likely to disengage. To ensure students have a sense of competence (i.e., the ability to meet the learning challenge), make sure the lesson: (a) is scaffolded to be slightly above students' level of proficiency, (b) asks students to demonstrate understanding during the lesson, and (c) provides feedback and models for success.

**Autonomy:** Adults thrive when they feel a sense of control and direction over their lives. Children are no different, especially in an educational context. So whenever possible, invite students to share their ideas and opinions about a lesson rather than merely giving directions they must follow exactly. In addition, make sure to give students time to understand the lesson for themselves rather than telling them the right answer.

**Collaboration:** Connecting with others is a powerful way to enhance learning. However, not all collaboration is created equally. To make sure group work leads to true engagement with the material, make sure to model what an effective group looks like, create groups with diverse abilities and perspectives, and encourage accountability through role assignments and individual (as well as group) evaluations.

**Positive Student-Teacher Relationships:** Students perform best when they feel known and cared for. That's why it's essential for teachers to take an interest in students' social-emotional needs and try to work in time for one-on-one interactions, even if they're brief. In addition, teachers should strive never to break a promise or give the appearance of favoritism or unfairness, and should speak to students with kindness and enthusiasm.

**Mastery:** When approaching a lesson, students should ideally not be focused on getting a good grade or comparing their performance with their peers. Instead, a mark of high engagement is when students want to learn the material for the sake of their own learning and growth (i.e., having a mastery orientation toward learning). To de-emphasize grading, make sure to share specific assignment criteria and make final scores private.

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### **Edglossary.org (Model &/or Suggestions?)**

**Intellectual engagement:** To increase student engagement in a course or subject, teachers may create lessons, assignments, or projects that appeal to student interests or that stimulate their curiosity. For example, teachers may give students more choice over the topics they are asked to write about (so students can choose a topic that specifically interests them) or they may let students choose the way they will investigate a topic or demonstrate what they have learned (some students may choose to write a paper, others may produce short video or audio documentary, and still others may create a multimedia presentation). Teachers may also introduce a unit of study with a problem or question that students need to solve. For example, students might be asked to investigate the causes of a local environmental problem, determine the species of an unknown animal from a few short descriptions of its physical characteristics and behaviors, or build a robot that can accomplish a specific task. In these cases, sparking student curiosity can increase “engagement” in the learning process.

**Emotional engagement:** Educators may use a wide variety of strategies to promote positive emotions in students that will facilitate the learning process, minimize negative behaviors, or keep students from dropping out. For example, classrooms and other learning environments may be redesigned to make them more conducive to learning, teachers may make a point of monitoring student moods and asking them how they are feeling, or school programs may provide counseling, peer mentoring, or other services that generally seek to give students the support they need to succeed academically and feel positive, optimistic, or excited about school and learning. Strategies such as advisories, for example, are intended to build stronger relationships between students and adults in a school. The basic theory is that students will be more likely to succeed if at least one adult in the school is meeting with a student regularly, inquiring about academic and non-academic issues, giving her advice, and taking an interest in her out-of-school life, personal passions, future aspirations, and distinct learning challenges and needs.

**Behavioral engagement:** Teachers may establish classroom routines, use consistent cues, or assign students roles that foster behaviors more conducive to learning. For example, elementary school teachers may use cues or gestures that help young students refocus on a lesson if they get distracted or boisterous. The teacher may clap three times or raise a hand, for example, which signals to students that it’s time to stop talking, return to their seats, or begin a new activity. Teachers may also establish consistent routines that help students stay on task or remain engaged during a class. For example, the class may regularly break up into small groups or move their seats into a circle for a group discussion, or the teacher may ask students on a rotating basis to lead certain activities. By introducing variation into a classroom routine, teachers can reduce the monotony and potential disengagement that may occur when students sit in the same seat, doing similar tasks, for extended periods of time. Research on brain-based learning has also provided evidence that variation, novelty, and physical activity can stimulate and improve learning.

**Physical engagement:** Teachers may use physical activities or routines to stimulate learning or interest. For example, “kinesthetic learning” refers to the use of physical motions and activities during the learning process. Instead of asking students to answer questions aloud, a teacher might ask students to walk up to the chalkboard and answer the question verbally while also writing the answer on the board (in this case, the theory is that students are more likely to remember information when they are using multiple parts of the brain at the same time—i.e., the various parts dedicated to speaking, writing, physical activity, etc.). Teachers may also introduce short periods of physical activity or quick exercises, particularly during the elementary years, to reduce antsy, fidgety, or distracted behaviors. In addition, more schools throughout the United States are addressing the physical needs of students by, for example, offering all students free breakfasts (because disengagement in learning and poor academic performance have been linked to hunger and malnutrition) or starting school later at a later time (because adolescent sleep patterns and needs differ from those of adults, and adolescents may be better able to learn later in the morning).

**Social engagement:** Teachers may use a variety of strategies to stimulate engagement through social interactions. For example, students may be paired or grouped to work collaboratively on projects, or teachers may create academic contests that students compete in—e.g., a friendly competition in which teams of students build robots to complete a specific task in the shortest amount of time. Academic and co-curricular activities such as debate teams, robotics clubs, and science fairs also bring together learning experiences and social interactions. In addition, strategies such as demonstrations of learning or capstone projects may require students to give public presentations of their work, often to panels of experts from the local community, while strategies such as community-based learning or service learning (learning through volunteerism) can introduce civic and social issues into the learning process. In these cases, learning about societal problems, or participating actively in social causes, can improve engagement.

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**Cultural engagement:** Schools may take active steps to make students from diverse cultural backgrounds—particularly recently arrived immigrant or refugee students and their families—feel welcomed, accepted, safe, and valued. For example, administrators, teachers, and school staff may provide special orientation sessions for their new-American populations or offer translation services and informational materials translated into multiple languages. Students, families, and local cultural leaders from diverse backgrounds may be asked to speak about their experiences to students and school staff, and teachers may intentionally modify lessons to incorporate the history, literature, arts, and perspectives of the student ethnicities and nationalities represented in their classes. School activities may also incorporate multicultural songs, dances, and performances, while posters, flags, and other educational materials featured throughout the school may reflect the cultural diversity of the students and school community. The general goal of such strategies would be to reduce the feelings of confusion, alienation, disconnection, or exclusion that some students and families may experience, and thereby increase their engagement in academics and school activities.

### 30 Engagement Suggestions for Educators

Students need to

- 1) see what the future can look like;
- 2) identify what they like to do, such as hobbies;
- 3) have an adult on campus that they trust and can reach out to when they have problems;
- 4) have someone who can help them identify a job to help with their immediate financial needs;
- 5) get assistance with creating job-related products and skills such as resume writing and interview skills;
- 6) have the opportunity to attend school on a part-time basis and complete coursework on a schedule that fits their lifestyle; and finally
- 7) have frequent communication between the school and their families.

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|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Educational technology                          | 15. Brain breaks                      |
| 2. Classroom management strategies<br>(20 of them) | 16. Gamification                      |
| 3. Active learning                                 | 17. Interdisciplinary teaching        |
| 4. Blended learning (& flipped classroom)          |                                       |
| 5. Quick writes                                    | • Listen to students                  |
| 6. Reciprocal teaching                             | • Make sure students feel ‘seen’      |
| 7. Class participation strategies<br>(4 of them)   | You are seen                          |
| 8. Flexible seating                                | You are respected                     |
| 9. Culturally responsive teaching                  | You have something to offer the world |
| 10. Personalized learning                          |                                       |
| 11. Cooperative learning                           | • Provide choice                      |
| 12. Service learning                               | Choice of Process                     |
| 13. Inquiry-based learning                         | Choice of Content                     |
| 14. Project-based learning                         | Help Students Make Good Choices       |

E – Expectations- You cannot have engagement without expectations. The expectation I am referring to is cognitive demand. To truly engage a student, they need to be thinking deeply.

A – Attention- The greater the level of attention being given to a concept or stimuli, the greater the chance at engagement. The difficulty is that attention is not always silent, nor is it always collaborative.

T – Toughness- High expectations and high attention are the cornerstones to engagement, but kids must process/struggle through the work to have true engagement. If we do not allow them the space to cognitively struggle through concepts via active work, engagement is unlikely.

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### 62 More Suggestions for Educators

- Fun
- Meaning
- Mastery
- **Autonomy**
- Relevance
- Tell stories
- Role-Playing
- Social media
- Collaboration
- Be vulnerable
- Provide support
- Use simulations
- Set expectations
- Assess attendance
- Prepare (yourself)
- Lean on technology
- **Sense of Competence**
- Digital Whiteboarding
- Make material current
- Stay engaged yourself
- Integrated curriculum
- Assess early and often
- Video-Assisted Learning
- Lead dynamic discussions
- Make the course relevant
- Gamify Your Lesson Plans
- Use visual representations
- Tap into students' interests
- **Relationships** and Community
- Promote Mastery Orientations
- Teach students, not standards
- Motivate Unmotivated Students
- Authentic learning experiences
- Community above everything else
- Engage Students in Online Learning
- Problem-based/project-based learning
- Make your classroom work challenging
- Positive Student–Teacher **Relationships**
- Respond to disruptions in the classroom
- Pose questions rather than make statements
- Expect 100 percent participation at all times
- Give students official roles in the classroom
- Provide Personalized Support For Every Student
- Ensure clarity and purpose for student learning
- Become addictively stuck ‘in the zone’ with FLOW
- Pique natural curiosity through INFORMATION GAPS
- Prepare for class before class (student prep exercises)
- Generating commitment through identifying RELEVANCE
- When your students are working, don’t help them too much
- Learn to develop and execute highly engaging lesson plans
- Stay Present: Mindfulness for Better Teaching and Learning
- The Growth Mindset: Foster Resilience and a Love of Learning
- Create Meaningful Relationships and Set Boundaries with your Students
- Set up classroom structures that allow students to learn with and from each other
- Integrate Coding With Core Subjects  
(suggested by Kodable.com, self-serving perhaps?)
- Kids have the right to think deeply about important, relevant concepts every hour of every school day.
- Microlearning- break teaching and learning processes down into smaller, more manageable units or chunks
- Clarifying purpose: Classroom engagement requires articulation of practical application, academic relevance
- Draw attention to some knowledge areas which pupils already have, which seem unrelated to them, but which are actually are linked.
- Zooming-In and Zooming-Out- if you look closely enough at anything, or step back far enough from it, then you can find a level of resolution whereby you find it interesting
- Every aspect of life – every aspect of everything in fact – has somebody who finds it fascinating. **There is no such thing as something which is inherently boring, nor inherently [engaging].**
- The Progress Principle: Pleasure comes more from making progress toward goals than from achieving them. Shakespeare captured it perfectly: “Things won are done; joy’s soul lies in the doing.”