



Ten Tips for Fostering Student Engagement

1. Know Your Stuff

- In order to effectively teach/lead True2U activities you have to know them inside and out. The more you are able to prepare, the better you'll be able to explain and facilitate the activities, and the better your session will go.
- Just ask returning mentors if it's easier this year or last year...

2. Attention Grabbers

- Develop a catch phrase to successfully help students turn their attention to you.
- You can also ask the teacher if there is one they already use in the classroom that students are familiar with.
 - Examples consist of: "5...4....3...2...1...", "Everyone put your eyes up front/on me," "Eyes up here, mouths closed," "Clap once if you can hear me, clap twice if you can hear me."

3. Less is More

- If students are speaking when they shouldn't or are having an unproductive conversation continue whatever you are doing and simply physically move closer to that student or group of students (without touching).
- Instead of causing a disruption by "calling out" those students, use your proximity to draw attention to their unwanted behavior.

4. Wait...

- If you attempt to lead your True2U sessions when students are not quiet and behaving properly, they will continue those behavior patterns. Instead, develop a phrase that lets students know you are not going to continue with the session until everyone is paying attention.
- Examples include: "I'll wait..." "When everyone is quiet we will continue" "It needs to be quiet in 5,4,3,2,1..." "I'd like to continue..." You may need to repeat this phrase a couple of times until all students are quiet.

5. Choose Your Battles

- If a student has their head down during a True2U session and you attempt to wake them up once or twice and they continue to be disengaged decide whether or not the battle of engaging this student is worth your time and energy.
- Remember students can sometimes carry heavy burdens to school and it just might not be their day. Shrug it off and work to engage that student next session (follow up with the teacher privately after the session to ensure the student gets the support they need).

6. Transitions, Transitions, Transitions

- In order to help with the chaos that can sometimes accompany transitions be sure to give **ALL** of the required directions before students start to move.
- A good way to hold students' attention when giving directions is by starting with the phrase "When I say go..." Give **ALL** of the directions and if the students begin to move before you say go, bring them back together, get their attention and continue.

7. Remember Students' Names

- How do you make someone feel special? Remember their name. If you are able to remember each student's name it helps them to know that you care about them and took time and effort to remember them.
- Students want to listen to and be engaged with people who care about them. Work with your mentor partner or use whatever memory strategy you can to remember their names.

8. Equality for All

- Do not (consciously or subconsciously) choose favorites, stereotype, or judge the students in your class. You may not realize it, but students can read adults like a book.
- There may be a student in your class who is seemingly "a trouble maker" or "the smart one" but it is your responsibility to treat each student equally. If you don't, students will know and it will impact your ability to manage your class.

9. Show Excitement!

- You get to see your mentees once a month, whether or not they are excited to see you, you should be ECSTATIC to see them! This could be shown through smiles and tone. Show students that you are excited to see them and spend time with them.
- Ask students about things they told you about during your last session. *"How was that math test?" "How's your basketball team doing?"* Remembering what students have told you goes a long way.

10. "On Your Feet, Not in Your Seat"

- Standing up while facilitating and walking around the room will help the students stay engaged and focused during the session.
- When you are the mentor who is not directly facilitating continue to be engaged with the students. Leading by example is one of the best ways to get students to engage in your session. **Avoid cell phone use to show students you are present and they have your full attention.**
- Don't sit down away from the students and disengage from the session. Stay engaged the entire time, even if you aren't the lead facilitator for an activity.

Remember, have fun, be authentic & be True2U!