

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT TOOLBOX

SIMPLE AND EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES TO
PROMOTE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

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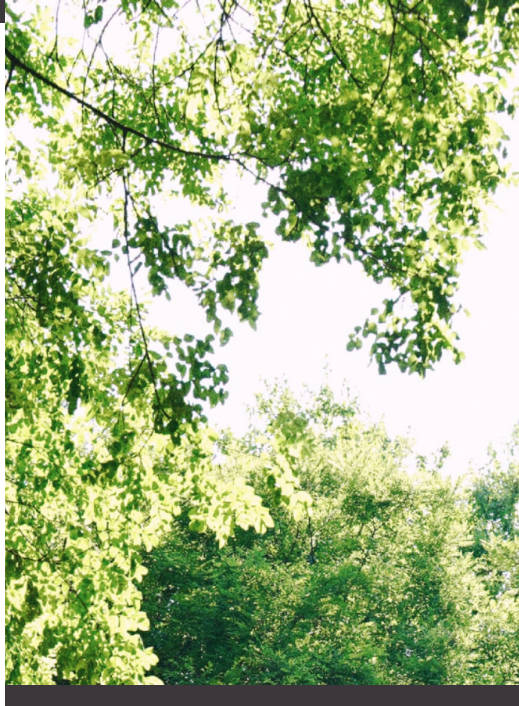


**An accessible and
comprehensive resource
with effective, simple,
clear and easy-to-use
engagement strategies**

The engagement strategies were adapted from research studies, articles, videos and blogs on student engagement. Most strategies can be used for in-person learning as well as virtual learning. Although the strategies were targeted for elementary school children, they may be adapted and used for students of all ages.

Providing Recognition and Rewards

1. Spectacular students
2. 100's Chart or BINGO chart
3. Score Board
4. Good Behavior Game
5. Secret Spotlighter
6. Ideas for Rewards
 - Quick Rewards
 - Bigger Rewards
 - Individual Student Rewards



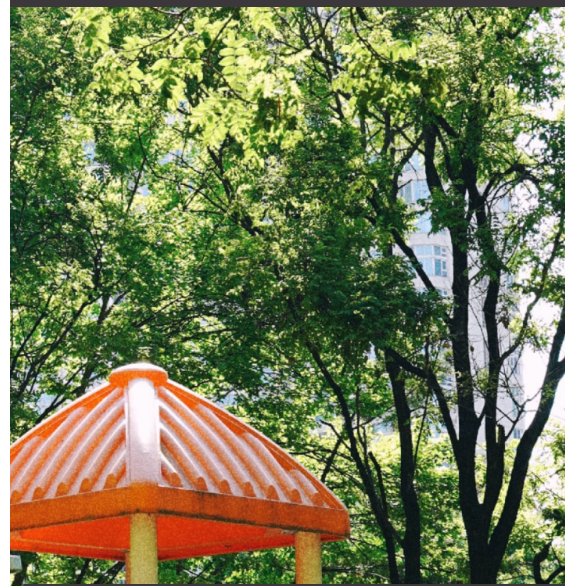
Instructional Strategies

1. Make Content Relatable and Fun
2. 10:2 Method
3. 3-2-1 Method
4. Flipped Classroom Method
5. Gallery Walk
6. Flip Roles
7. Encourage Collaboration
8. Encourage Periodic Movement
9. Problem Solving Session
10. Pause Mid-sentence
11. Word of the Day
12. Virtual Field Trips



Relationship Building Strategies

1. Use Students' Names Throughout the Day
2. Learn about Students' Interests
3. Smile and Use Humor
4. Hold Office Hours for Emotional Support
5. Leave Positive Messages
6. Send a Card Home
7. 2X10 Strategy
8. Share About Yourself
9. Build Choice into the Day
10. Encourage Responsibility



Games to Reinforce Content

1. Scavenger Hunts
2. Kahoot
3. Set up Polls
4. Bingo
5. Jeopardy
6. How Many Words?
7. Last Letter
8. Sparkle
9. Monsters and Dinosaurs
10. Wacky Math
11. Guess the Location
12. PowerPoint Template Games



Fun Games

1. Scavenger Hunts
2. Beat the Clock
3. The Wi-Fi Works
4. Put a Finger Down
5. 4 Corners
6. Just Like Me
7. Counting Cameras
8. Secret Squad
9. Memory Game
10. Pictionary
11. 20 Questions
12. 2 Truths and a Lie

PART 1

PROVIDING RECOGNITION AND REWARDS

Studies support teachers working hard to keep their students engaged. We present several ideas to help supplement your reward system along with several ideas for rewards.



1. Spectacular Students
2. 100's Chart or BINGO Chart
3. Score Board
4. Good Behavior Game
5. Secret Spotlighter
6. Ideas for Rewards
 - Quick Rewards
 - Bigger Rewards
 - Individual Rewards

1. Spectacular students

All students of the class work together towards a big reward (decided mutually by the teacher and the students in the beginning) by displaying expected behaviors.

1. Write 'Spectacular Students' on the board.
You can switch the word "student" with the school mascot e.g., Spectacular Swans, Spectacular Gators).
2. Teacher/ Students pick(s) a random number from 20-40.
3. Write the number on the board.
4. List the specific expectations that you want to recognize as part of this system (e.g., everybody who is virtual, logs in on time; or everybody completes their assignments).



5. Have students give ideas on reward choices by writing them on a piece of paper and/or on Jamboard. With younger students, you might present a list or picture/symbols of choices and ask for other ideas (you can see ideas for rewards presented later).
6. Present those ideas that are feasible for you to do, have students vote on which they like.
7. As students meet your expectations, place checks, tallies or other symbols, under the number on the board. For example, if all students log in on time in the morning, you make one tally mark.
8. Reflect daily on the number earned, how many left to earn, etc. As the teacher, you are in control of how soon this goal number will be reached! Try to think about the end goal, for example, if your goal number is 25, try to award 5 tallies each day to hit the goal in a week. Make sure you reach the goal and award the class by the end of a week – stretching it beyond that may lead to students losing motivation.

2. 100's Chart or BINGO Chart

Put up a large 100's chart or a Bingo Chart, but instead of using the word BINGO, you will use the word which is the school mascot, e.g., BEARS, EAGLES, SWANS. You can use this [resource](#) for free BINGO cards.

- (1) Establish your expectations, as stated above in the Spectacular Students method.
- (2) Have students vote on the class reward (they can pick their own reward, or see ideas for rewards below).



- (3) The teacher should gather numbers for their chart by writing the number on slips of papers or on poker chips.
- (4) When students are displaying the expectations you identified, give specific verbal praise, pull a number, and mark that number on the chart with a marker, a sticker, or use a sticky note, to cover that number square.
- (5) Once you obtain all the numbers in a diagonal, vertical or horizontal line, the class wins the reward.

3. Score Board

This is a game in which the teacher and the class compete with each other for points. As opposed to the above two games in which students display expected behavior for a period of time (e.g., a week) to earn the class reward, it is recommended to use this method for fixed, shorter time durations (e.g., during a math class).

- (1) Create a 'T' chart, with 'CLASS', on one side, 'TEACHER' (your name) on the other side of the T. The idea is that the class is playing against the teacher for points (see what a T chart looks like below).
- (2) Set a time period when you want to use this system, such as during math, or for the morning, etc. Don't try using it for a whole day.

Teacher	Student
Total	Total

Name: _____	Date: _____
T-Chart	Title: _____

- (3) List the things the class can earn points for. For example, everyone raises their hand (virtual hand), quiet transitions, everyone submits assignments, everyone follows directions, etc.
- (4) As the Class progresses, give a point to the Class if they met the expectation, if they didn't, the Teacher gets the point.
- (5) One caution, don't allow more than a 3-point spread between Teacher and Class. If that occurs, the Class can get too confident, or too discouraged.

4. Good Behavior Game

This game is very similar to the Score Board game, but instead of the students competing with the teacher, the students compete with each other for a reward.

- (1) Divide the class into two teams.

Student teams play against each other for a privilege or other reward. Examples of a privilege: the winning team gets to pick a quick reward, or, winning team gets to line up first for lunch.

- (2) Remember to set up a chart to track points earned by each team, giving them specific expectations. Again, this is best used for a pre-determined amount of time, or during a group activity.

- (3) Track points for each team, and remember teams can tie in the GBG!



5. "Secret Student" or "Secret Spotlihter"

The teacher picks a student who then gets to pick a reward for the entire class, however, the name of the student is not revealed, creating a sense of suspense!

- (1) Choose a student name, but keep that a secret.
- (2) Tell the class that your secret student will win a quick fun activity for the whole class if they are following the expectations you tell to the group.
 - This can be done during a content block or just during a transition!
- (3) Mention that your secret student is doing well, but no mention of the name.
- (4) At the end of the period, if the student has done well, reveal the name, praise what they did well, and give a quick reward activity to the whole class.
 - If the student did not meet expectations, don't share the name, let the class know they can try again soon.



6. Ideas for Rewards

We present these in three main categories based on the amount of time and effort that students may have put in to earn the award.

Quick Rewards

These are great for games like the Score Board, Good Behavior Game and the Secret Student.

1. Change 1 thing!

1. Teacher turns off camera for a second, changes something about appearance or background (take off an earring, change your hair, put on a hat), turn camera back on.
2. First student to type in the change in the chat box wins. Repeat a few times.

For in-person learning:

Have students close their eyes, during the change.



2. Alphabet Search

1. Ask a student to pick a letter of the alphabet.
2. Teacher scans or walks around the room to see if they can find an object starting with that letter
3. Then student takes a turn

Could be adapted for littles, just start with simple items:

1. Randomly select a student to find an item
2. That student then passes it to another student who then has to find an item that starts with the last letter of the previous item.
3. For example, if the first student shows a "doll" the next student could show a "lemon" and then the next student could show "nail polish," etc.

Quick Rewards (Continued)

3. What's in the Box/bag?

1. Have an item in a box or a bag.
2. Give students a theme on the item.
3. Students ask Yes or No questions to the teacher to determine what is in the box



4. Guess the location of your background

Change your background to a famous location and have your students guess where you are!

5. Four Squares

1. Draw a square with 4 quadrants on a white board.
2. Write the words: name, place, animal, thing (one word in each quadrant).
3. Move your finger around the quadrants as you count down from 10. Where your finger ends up (either on name, place, animal, thing).
4. Give a letter, and students need to write or draw.
5. For example, my finger ended up on animal, I choose the letter M, so they can draw or write an animal that starts with the letter M. Students show their paper or white board.

6. Guess that sound

Students can guess what the sound is. Check out this [video](#).

7. Teacher gives shout out

Teacher gives a shout out to everyone (e.g., class cheer, 20-second clapping, etc.)



Quick Rewards (Continued)

8. Scavenger Hunt

1. Either make a random generator, or simply think of items to hunt for in their spaces.
2. Keep it simple, such as "find something that is shiny."
3. Give them a time of 1 minute to find the item and bring it back.
4. Those that are successful, can share what they find!
5. Another adaptation is to do a 5 senses scavenger hunt ("bring back something that smells fruity but isn't a fruit").
6. You could also do shapes, or colors!

Keep in mind that not everyone has certain items (be culturally and socially aware), so be mindful of what you are asking students to retrieve and share



9. Freeze Dance

Who doesn't love a good game of freeze dance?! You could also use this time to teach the students how to mute, every time they "Freeze"!

10. Simon Says

To make it ~digital~ use phrases like:
 "Simon Says, mute your microphone"
 "Simon says type 'hello' in the chat"
 "Simon says turn off your camera"
 "Simon says 'pin' the teacher's video"

Quick Rewards (Continued)

11. Collaborative story

You can do this in multiple ways, with a digital picture, or simply spoken words.

You could also share your screen and write the words as the students go, so they can visualize.

1. Create a theme for your story.
2. Each student will say a word to make a sentence, and then a few sentences, and eventually a full-story. Example: The theme is "going to the store." As the teacher, you start the story with the phrase "Once upon a time..." The first student says then adds any word to complete your sentence.



12. Zoom In

- (1) You will need a photo/image available for this.
- (2) Place the image really close to the camera, slowly start to pull the image back, as the students are guessing, either in the chat or verbally.
- (3) The image could tie into your lesson for the day, and start as an bell-ringer!

13. Describe and draw

- (1) Choose an item to describe, such as a "butterfly." Explain each step, without revealing what the image is; "draw a big number 3, then draw a big backward 3" Once you are done with the instructions, have students share their drawings, and giggle together!
- (2) For our concrete thinkers, this may be difficult. Reassure them that this is a *fun* and *silly* activity.

Bigger Rewards

These are great for games that take a longer amount of time to win the reward (e.g., Spectacular Students and the 100's Chart/BINGO chart).

1. Lip Sync challenge with teacher
2. Class votes on a theme for the next class (e.g., all wear the color of their favorite sports team, or sunglasses, crazy socks, or funny hats, etc.)
3. Karaoke (students sign up)
4. Tik Tok Dance Party



5. Show and Tell - give a theme
6. Teacher has Lunch with the whole class



7. Special guest appearance (former teacher, admin, speaker, etc)
8. Play a group online game

Bigger Rewards (Continued)

9. Teacher creates a [JibJab video](#) with their face and shares with class
10. [Pick the words for Mad Libs story](#) (choose students randomly to give the next word). For more on Mad Libs, here is a great [resource](#).
11. Class can vote on [virtual class trip](#). (see number 12 of Instructional Strategies for ideas)
12. [Principal's Got Talent](#)
The principal shows their talent to class



13. [Joke To End The Day](#)
Students submit jokes to the teacher, teacher reads them to the class, students vote on favorite
14. [Talent Show](#)
Encourage your students to sign up
15. [Step by Step drawing activity](#)
Check out these great resources:
[Easypeasy and Fun](#)
[Art Projects For Kids](#)
Also check out youtube videos like [this one](#).

Rewards for Individual Students

These are some ideas that have and may work well for rewarding individual students.

1) VIP student (day or week)

- Give a shout out or give online certificate.
- Celebrate the student and acknowledge their good work/effort/good behavior in front of the entire class, where everyone cheers for them.
- You can also create a certificate and email it to the parents that they can print and put up, or you can print it and send it home with the student. Check out this [free resource](#).



2) Electronic submission of Positive Referral to administrator

- Let the student know that they have been awarded a certificate for good behavior/any other good expectation achieved.
- Also let student know that even the principal has been informed about it and have received a copy of the student's certificate for their records.

Rewards for Individual Students (continued)

- 3) Student choice of class activity
- 4) Student spotlight on social media or during class
- 5) Student becomes teacher's partner of the day
- 6) Virtual lunch bunch/snack/chat with teacher (time designated by teacher)
- 7) Student-determined incentive (give student some choices)



- 7) Student highlights pet (or draws a picture of pet they would like to have)
- 8) Student chooses song to add to recorded lesson or live session (class "DJ")
- 9) Positive phone call home or video message to family by teacher or administrator
- 10) Student chooses class "greeting" for the next check-in



PART 2

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

The way in which you instruct your students and conduct the classroom activities play an important role in predicting student engagement. Under this section, we provide a variety of suggestions related to providing instruction which will help increase student engagement.



1. Make Content Relatable and Fun
2. 10:2 Method
3. 3-2-1 Method
4. Flipped Classroom Method
5. Gallery Walk
6. Flip Roles
7. Encourage Collaboration
8. Encourage Periodic Movement
9. Problem Solving Session
10. Pause Mid-sentence
11. Word of the Day
12. Virtual Field Trips

1. Make Content Relatable and Fun

Often times, students may be less engaged because they may not be interested in the task.

- One way to tackle this is to make the content more relatable and interesting by **integrating the students' likes and interests into instruction**.
 - For example, if your student is interested in sharks, you can incorporate that in your math lesson on addition: there were 3 hammer-head sharks and 4 tiger sharks swimming in the ocean. How many sharks were there in total?
- Another way to do this to **try and build a real-world connection** - help them see the value in learning it.
 - For example, while teaching them about money, you can explain to them that in the real-world, they will need to learn how to use money to buy food, etc.
- Finally, **invite their opinions** on topics that they may be familiar with/interested in
 - Example: if a certain student is very interested in planets, when teaching about the solar system, invite them to share their thoughts.
 - Example: While teaching about different cultures, have students from different backgrounds share their own cultural traditions.

Source:

Pearson (2020). Effective Strategies to Engage Students in Learning. Teaching for Impact: Best Practices for Online Teaching and Learning. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kVce-eckF-A>



2. 10:2 Method

For every 10 minutes of instruction, allow students 2 minutes to process the instruction.

This can be done in three ways:

- 1) Ask students to write down what they have learned
- 2) Students may ask questions about it
- 3) Students may discuss with a fellow student

For younger students, instead of giving them 2 minutes to process the information, you may give them 1 minute or 1.5 minutes depending on their ability to focus.

Source:

Pearson (2020). Effective Strategies to Engage Students in Learning. Teaching for Impact: Best Practices for Online Teaching and Learning. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kVce-eckF-A>

3. 3–2–1 Method

After teaching a lesson, ask students to write:

- 3 things they learned
- 2 things they found interesting
- 1 question about the lesson

If they struggle, encourage them for them for their effort and provide prompts.

Source:

Pearson (2020). Effective Strategies to Engage Students in Learning. Teaching for Impact: Best Practices for Online Teaching and Learning. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kVce-eckF-A>



4. Flipped Classroom Method

- 1) Give students material to read ahead of class.
- 2) During class time, discuss the material that the students read ahead of time.
- 3) It may be helpful to develop questions in advance that are likely to spark conversation and discussions about the topic.
- 4) Helpful questions are ones that invite them to reflect, think and share their opinions.

Source:

Pearson (2020). Effective Strategies to Engage Students in Learning. Teaching for Impact: Best Practices for Online Teaching and Learning. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kVce-eckF-A>

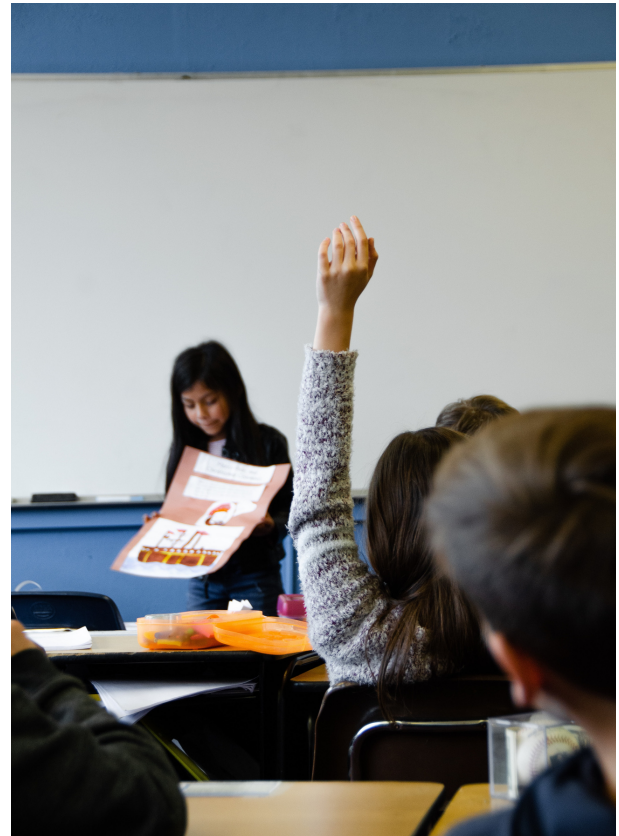


5. Gallery Walk

- 1) Ask students to research a topic on their own.
- 2) Give the students options for the topic to research/help them come up with a topic.
- 3) Give instructions on how they can present their researched topic (e.g., orally, create a brief presentation/word document).
- 4) When students present their researched topic on a certain day, peers are encouraged to ask questions/say something positive about the student's presentation.

Source:

Pearson (2020). Effective Strategies to Engage Students in Learning. Teaching for Impact: Best Practices for Online Teaching and Learning. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kVce-eckF-A>



6. Flip Roles

- When you were a student, did you ever pretend to be a teacher? Wasn't it fun? That is exactly what we mean by flip roles!
- Let your student be the teacher for a selected amount of time!
- Let them decide what they want to teach and how they want to teach! My son, a 2nd grader prepares his own presentation using Google slides and we do a Zoom session where he pretends to be the teacher and I am the student!

7. Encourage Collaboration

Have students work together in pairs/groups.

- For virtual learning, give them an assignment (e.g., state capitals) which can be accessed via Google docs, or Google slides, or Google Jamboard.
- For in-person instruction, this can be done by giving them a task requiring collaboration (e.g., a difficult multi-step Math problem) which they can work on together.

For more strategies on how to improve student collaboration, read [this article](#).

Source:

Burns (2016). 5 Strategies to Deepen Student Collaboration. *Edutopia*.
<https://www.edutopia.org/article/5-strategies-deepen-student-collaboration-mary-burns>



8. Encourage Periodic Movement

Research suggests that period movement breaks are beneficial for students in several ways, including improving student learning and student engagement.

Check out these great resources:

- [Fluency and Fitness](#)
- [Go Noodle](#)
- [FitBoost](#)
- [Quick Brain Break Activities](#)

Source:

Lampretch (2016). Benefits of Movement in the Classroom. The Literacy and Language Center Inc.
<https://literacyandlanguagecenter.com/the-benefits-of-movement-in-the-classroom/>

9. Problem Solving Session

- 1) Divide class into two groups - groups A and B.
- 2) Teacher presents group A with a question to discuss/a Math problem to solve.
- 3) While group A engages in discussion/attempts to solve a problem, group B observes.
- 4) When the time is up, teacher invites members of group B to share their thoughts:
 - What did they notice about their peers?
 - What questions do they have?
 - What suggestions would they make?
- 5) After group B has had the opportunity to share their thoughts, the groups switch roles:
 - Group B engages in a discussion or problem-solving while group A observes and then comments.

Source:

Tucker, C. (2020). 10 Strategies Designed to Engage Elementary School Children Online. <https://catlintucker.com/2020/08/engage-elementary-students-online/>



10. Pause Mid-Sentence

- Pause mid-sentence and ask your students what they think should be the rest of the sentence.

It is a great way to check that students are paying attention.

Source:

Pearson (2020). Effective Strategies to Engage Students in Learning. Teaching for Impact: Best Practices for Online Teaching and Learning. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kVce-ecKF-A>

11. Word of the day

- 1) Each day you can pick a word to be the "word of the day". It can be a new word that students have not been exposed to in the readings, or it can be a word that they are likely to hear that day/week. The word doesn't need to be a big, fancy one, and can be as simple as "coral reefs".
- 2) Make sure that your students are aware of the word of the day.
- 3) Pause mid-lesson and ask students to type in the "word of the day" in the chat or write it on a piece of paper – this serves as a way to check who is paying attention, especially in the virtual learning format.



12. Virtual Field Trips

Field Trips are always exciting for students! If you are unable to do in-person field trips, you can try virtual field trips if you already haven't!

Here are some options:

- Zoos and aquariums offer free virtual fieldtrips
- Use Google Earth as a resource
 - Example: if you teach your students about the Himalayas, take a virtual field trip to the Himalayas via Google Earth
- Tour of Museums
- Virtual Theme Park Rides

Source:

Teacher FYI (2020). Teacher Tips: Ideas for Remote/Virtual Field Trips During Distance Learning. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EvhxshXeLRc>

A group of children are standing outdoors, holding up a large rainbow flag against a blue sky with scattered clouds. The children are seen from behind, and their arms are raised, holding the edges of the flag. The flag is vibrant with red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple stripes. The background shows a lush green forest under a bright sky.

PART 3

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING STRATEGIES

Abundant research has demonstrated the positive effects of a positive teacher-student relationship on student academic and behavioral outcomes. Thus, making sure that you, as an educator, have a good relationship with your students is essential. Here are some suggestions.



1. Use Students' Names Throughout the Day
2. Learn about Students' Interests
3. Smile and Use Humor
4. Hold Office Hours for Emotional Support
5. Leave Positive Messages
6. Send a Card Home
7. 2X10 Strategy
8. Share About Yourself
9. Build Choice into the Day
10. Encourage Responsibility

1. Use Students' Names Throughout the Day

- Knowing the names of students, pronouncing them correctly and addressing students by their names throughout the day is important!
- Using student names can make them feel:
 - More valued
 - Invested in the course
 - Comfortable seeking help and asking questions
 - Confident

Sources:

Cooper, K. M., Haney, B., Krieg, A., & Brownell, S. E. (2017). What's in a Name? The Importance of Students Perceiving That an Instructor Knows Their Names in a High-Enrollment Biology Classroom. *CBE life sciences education*, 16(1), ar8. <https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.16-08-0265>

Pearson (2020). Effective Strategies to Engage Students in Learning. Teaching for Impact: Best Practices for Online Teaching and Learning. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kVce-eckF-A>



2. Learn about Students' Interests

- Make an attempt to learn about your students; likes, interests, hobbies, culture, and upcoming events.
- One way to remember this is by entering this information in a spreadsheet.
- Once you learn about your students' interests, use that information in different ways to build rapport.
 - Example: If you know a student has an upcoming baseball game, ask them how it went.
 - Example: If you know a student is very interested in sharks, tell them how much you remembered them when you watched a documentary on sharks!
 - Example: If a student is great in arts/crafts, seek their advice: ask them if they would be willing to teach everyone how to make an origami swan.

Source:

Pearson (2020). Effective Strategies to Engage Students in Learning. Teaching for Impact: Best Practices for Online Teaching and Learning. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kVce-eckF-A>



3. Smile and Use Humor

- Research shows substantial correlation between smiling and teacher effectiveness.
- Using humor also helps build relationships with students:
 - Crack jokes
 - Encourage your students to tell jokes
- Check out this great [article](#) for more ideas

Sources:

Dabell (2017). Smile, you're a teacher! Teacher Toolkit. <https://www.teachertoolkit.co.uk/2017/07/24/smile/>

Elias, M. (2015). Using Humor in the Classroom. <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/using-humor-in-the-classroom-maurice-elias>.

Harrington, G. M. (1955). Smiling as a measure of teacher effectiveness. The Journal of Educational Research, 48, 715–717. <https://doi-org.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/10.1080/00220671.1955.10882244>



4. Hold Office Hours for Emotional Support

- Just like some students need instructional support, many students need time to connect, talk and hang out!
- This may be all the more required in a virtual setting, where students miss the usual interactions with their educators and their peers.
- You may send out a link to a google form via email to parents offering a 15–20-minute time block for students to chat and hang out with you once a week!
- Allow about 5-6 students in the meeting; if a student is not picked because of too many requests, prioritize them next time!
- Ideas for what you can do during this time:
 - Ask them what they like doing outside of school
 - Do a fun project together, like arts/crafts
 - Tell jokes
 - If you are doing this virtually, you can allow students to explore different functions of the platform being used. For example, with Zoom, you can try different filters and backgrounds, and do all sorts of fun things.

*Note that emotional support refers to providing a platform for students to hangout and chat! We are not talking about kids with emotional and behavioral difficulties, who may be better served by the services of a school counselor or a school psychologist.

Source:

Ye, J., Wang, C., Zhu, Q., He, M., Havewala, M., Bai, H., Wang, T. (2021). Parenting and Teacher-Student Relationship as Protective Factors for Chinese Adolescent Adjustment during COVID-19. School Psychology Review.



5. Leave Positive Messages

The photo on the right is from an elementary teacher who made a board with little coin envelopes. She puts little notes in each student's envelope weekly. They might include a complement, something inspirational, a riddle, a question about something they talked about earlier, or a question about something coming up in their lives. Just a quick note, nothing deep, always positive.

Some specific ideas:

- Doing well on a test/assignment
- Completing an assignment on time and turning it in
- Having an organized desk/drawer
- Helping a peer
- Trying something new and challenging

Also check out this [article](https://www.edutopia.org/article/value-mailing-encouraging-notes-students) on ideas for leaving notes!

Source:
Tiersma (2021). The Value of Mailing Encouraging Notes to Students.
<https://www.edutopia.org/article/value-mailing-encouraging-notes-students>



6. Send a Card Home

- Who doesn't love receiving fun surprises in the mail! One more way to connect with your students is by sending them a personally hand-written card/post card which shows them you care!
- You can also send them something small like a cookie, a pencil/eraser or anything else that shows that you care!
- Check out this [resource](https://www.wearateachers.com/send-students-mail/) for free/inexpensive gift ideas that you could use.



Sources:
Croteau, J. (2020). 20 Free or Inexpensive Surprises You Can Send Students in the Mail. We are Teachers. <https://www.wearateachers.com/send-students-mail/>

Pearson (2020). Effective Strategies to Engage Students in Learning. Teaching for Impact: Best Practices for Online Teaching and Learning. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kVce-eckF-A>

7. 2 X 10 Strategy

- Focus on a student you may not have a strong relationship with at this time.
- Intentionally, spend two minutes talking with them about their interests, family, whatever they choose to share about themselves.
- Have these two-minute conversations for ten consecutive days. Consider your relationship, is it changing? Has the student's classroom behavior changed?

Check out this [article](#) for more information!

Source:

Watson, A. (2014). The 2x10 strategy: a miraculous solution for behavior issues? <https://thecornerstoneforteachers.com/the-2x10-strategy-a-miraculous-solution-for-behavior-issues/#:~:text=The%202%C3%9710%20strategy%20is%20simple%3A%20spend%202%20minutes,he%20wants%20to%20talk%20about>



8. Share about Yourself!

- In order to build a good relationship with your students, while it is very important to learn about their likes, interests and hobbies, it is important for them to learn about you!
- Share about yourself so that they can see you as a real person!
- Check out this [page](#) for some ideas on how you can share about yourself!

Source:

Pandolpho (2018). The Power of Sharing Your Story With Students. Edutopia. <https://www.edutopia.org/article/power-sharing-your-story-students>



9. Build Choice into the Day

Another way to encourage students participate is being making sure that they are presented with choices throughout the day! Here are some ways in which you can build choice throughout the day:

- **Let students choose a topic**
 - Example: If they are doing a writing assignment, allow them to pick a topic they want to write on, or give them a few options to pick from)
- **Let students choose materials to be used**
 - Example: Let them choose their own books to read, art materials to use, vocabulary lists to memorize
- **Use classroom space to support student choice**
 - Set up classroom space with activity centers (e.g., reading, math, science, social studies, building area, etc.) in different parts of the room
- **Provide opportunities for student-chosen project-based learning:**
 - Let students come up with their own ideas and monitor their progress on their projects from start to end
- **Give students options with their learning assignments**
 - Example: If students are learning about the civil war, they can be given the option of gathering information on the civil war in different ways like finding songs on Civil wars, finding maps of important civil war battles, findings stories of civil war survivors, timeline of civil war events, etc.

Check out this [article](#) for more information on these and other interesting ways in which you can provide choice to students!

Source:
Parker, F., Novak, J., & Bartell T. (2017). To engage students, give them meaningful choices in the classroom. <https://kappanonline.org/engage-students-give-meaningful-choices-classroom/>

Spencer, J. (2016). 10 Ways to Incorporate Student Choice into your Classroom. <https://medium.com/synapse/10-ways-to-incorporate-student-choice-in-your-classroom-e07baa449e55>



10. Encourage Responsibility

- Students like to feel important! Giving them tasks and responsibilities helps with that!
- Doing that may be hard virtually, but here are some ideas:
 - Taking attendance
 - Class greeter
 - Chat box monitor
 - Time keeper

Check out these additional resources for more ideas

- [Virtual Classroom Jobs](#)
- [In person Classroom Jobs](#)

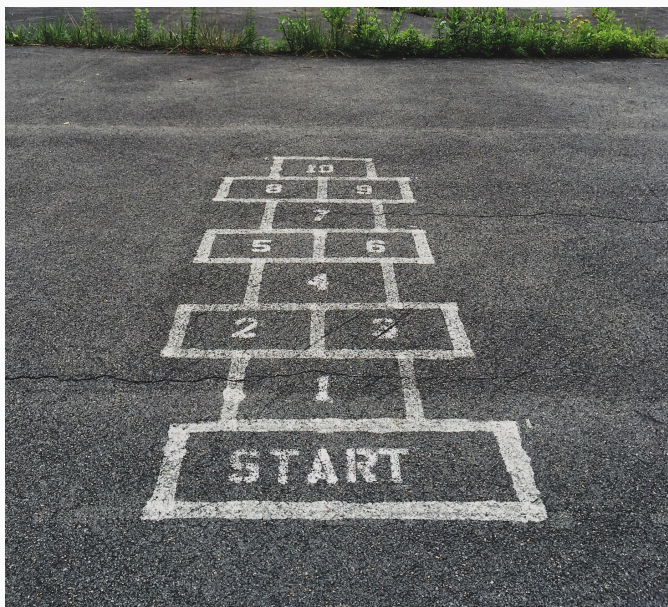
Sources:
Kelly (2020). 11 Ideas for Elementary Classroom Jobs for Distance Learning. <https://thesimplyorganizedteacher.com/classroom-jobs-distance-learning/>

Wolfe, S. (n.d.) Classroom Jobs for All Student Helpers. Scholastic. <https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/articles/teaching-content/classroom-jobs-all-your-student-helpers/>

PART 4

GAMES TO REINFORCE CONTENT

A great way to encourage student engagement is by incorporating games and play into your instruction. Here are some games that you could use to reinforce the content that you may have introduced to your students! Or you could use these games to assess the level of knowledge of your students, or use them in any other way that you like!



1. Scavenger Hunts
2. Kahoot
3. Set up Polls
4. Bingo
5. Jeopardy!
6. How Many Words?
7. Last Letter
8. Sparkle
9. Monsters and Dinosaurs
10. Wacky Math
11. Guess the Location
12. PowerPoint Template Games

1. Scavenger Hunts

In part 1 (Ideas for Rewards), we shared information on how scavenger hunts can be used as rewards, but you can use them a game to reinforce content as well. Give students a fixed amount of time (e.g., 45 seconds to a minute) to find the items. Below are some examples:

For reinforcing math skills:

- **Measurement:** Have students look for items that describe different measurements.
 - Example: ask them to search for something that is one inch long, or an item that can hold 2 cups of liquid.
 - Check this [resource](#) for more ideas.
- **Shapes:** Have them find items of different shapes that you may have taught them.
 - Example: find something in the shape of a square in your room.
- **Odd and Even numbers:** Ask students to find an even or odd number of the same item.
- **Comparison:** Ask the students to count the number of red items in the room. Then give them a number (e.g., 10) and ask them to say if the number of the red items were more or less than the number 10.

For Language Arts:

- **Vocabulary:** Call out a vocabulary word and ask the students to find it in one of their books.
- **Use:** Ask students to find items that are commonly used.
 - Examples: Find something that you can write with, something that you can draw with, something that you can drink water from.
- **Rhyme:** Say a random word and ask students to find something that rhymes with it.
 - Example: you can say the word "tall", students can get a ball or a doll. Check this out for some more ideas.
- **Alphabet:** Call out letters of the alphabet randomly. Students need to find items that start with that letter. If you want to make it challenging, you can ask them to find an item that starts with a certain alphabet (e.g., B) and ends with a certain one (e.g., D)! Add more twist: the word needs to be 5 letters long!



2. Kahoot

You have probably already used Kahoot! in your class! Here are some different ways in which you can use it:

- Review: Students love Kahoot as a review game! Instead of review sheets, this is a fun alternative to use.
- Student Created Review: You can try this with the older students. Have them create a quiz on Kahoot and test each other! You can filter the questions if you like!
- Quizzes and Formative Assessments
- Homework
- Opinions and Surveys
- Voting

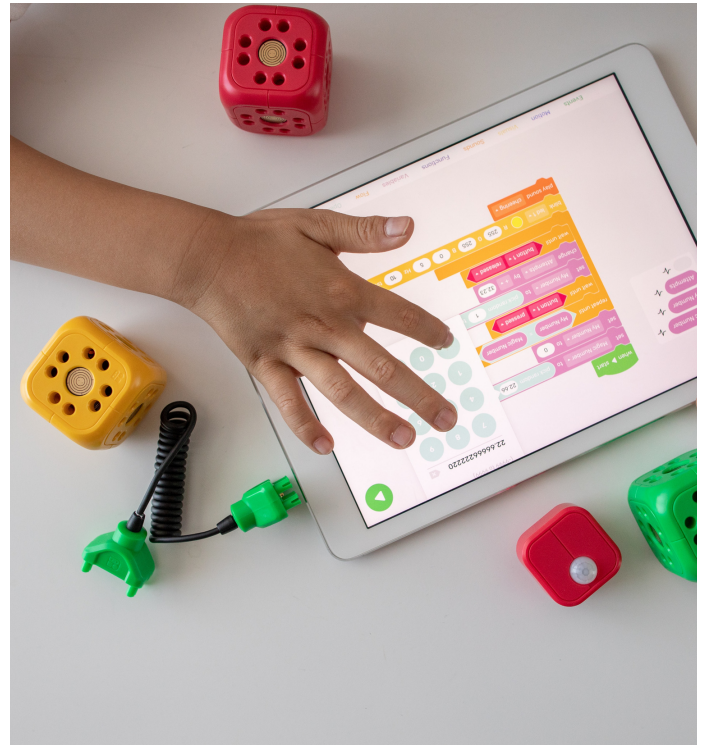
Here are some resources ([resource 1](#), [resource 2](#)) that may help you get started with Kahoot if you have not used it before.

3. Set up Polls

- Some virtual programs like Zoom give you the opportunity to set up polls within the program.
- Another alternative to Kahoot is set up polls within Zoom to test your students' knowledge (quiz/review/prior knowledge) or you can use polls to have them vote and share opinions on different subject areas or classroom activities (e.g., vote to pick the reward of the week).
- Check out this [resource](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kVce-eckF-A) for instructions on setting up polls within Zoom.

Source:

Pearson (2020). Effective Strategies to Engage Students in Learning. Teaching for Impact: Best Practices for Online Teaching and Learning. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kVce-eckF-A>



4. Bingo

Bingo can be used to reinforce content in any subject (on the left is a sample card for 3rd grade Science)!

- You can use this [resource](#) for generating your own BINGO cards or you can use their existing ones.
- Cards can be printed for students in class, and can be sent via email. Watch this [video](#) on how to generate cards and send them.
- Give every student a BINGO card.
- Call out the definition, word, phrase or question.
- Students must identify the word/letter/number/picture on the BINGO card and put a mark on it.
- If a student has all words diagonally, across a row, or vertically in a column, they should call BINGO.

B	I	N	G	O
Carnivore	Deciduous	Invertebrate	Conservation	Asteroid
Bacteria	Fossil	Amphibian	Mammal	Ecosystem
Atom	Axis	♥	Atmosphere	Topography
Gravity	Friction	Weathering	Photosynthesis	Pollution
Volcano	Larva	Experiment	Space Shuttle	Tornadoes

5. Jeopardy!

Another great game to review material is jeopardy! You may also use jeopardy to test fun trivia! My son (a second-grader) loves playing it, and has created a few jeopardy games on his areas of interest using jeopardylabs.com (see below). You can play it individually or in teams (e.g., boys vs. girls)!

Here are two great resources that you could use to build your own jeopardy games. They also have some existing games that you could use, but we recommend checking the content for those because the answers may not always be true.

- [Factile](#)
- [Jeopardylabs](#)

Source:
Little Loving Learners (2020). Student Engagement and Incentives During Remote Learning. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Q8iSaumvCc>



6. How Many Words?

This is a great game for building language arts skills. The directions are simple.

1. Give student a word, e.g., photosynthesis.
2. Ask them to write down as many smaller words as they can from this big word (e.g., photo, the, thesis, hot, etc.)
3. Keep a timer on - given them 1 minute to come up with their words
4. At the end of 1 minute, have students volunteer to read their words, or have them all hold up their words to the screen (for the virtual students).

An alternate way:

If you want to turn it into a competition, have the virtual students type their words into the chat, but ask them to keep typing all words and hit enter only just before the time is up, so everyone can see each students' words in the end. Students in class can write their words on a paper.

Source:
Teacher FYI (2020). 15 Virtual Morning Meeting Games & Activities to Play Online Using Zoom - Distance Learning Tips. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ApGjNsZcVn4>



7. Last Letter

This is a fun game to strengthen content in any subject area (e.g., social studies, science).

1. Pick a theme, for example, animals. The teacher starts by saying the name of any animal, for example, dog.
2. The teacher picks a student who will have to say a name of an animal that starts with the last letter of the teacher's animal, i.e., G.
3. The student says an animal with the word G (e.g., goat).
4. The teacher picks the next student, who then will have to say an animal starting with letter T.
5. The game continues till all students have had a turn.
6. The teacher can give hints or ask other students to help if a certain student(s) is stuck.

Source:
Little Loving Learners (2020). Student Engagement and Incentives During Remote Learning. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Q8iSaumvCc>



8. Sparkle

If playing this virtually:

1. Using the google Jamboard, put students' names in order using sticky notes, like how they would be sitting on the carpet for community circle (see image on left).
2. Give students a word to spell, e.g., boat.
3. The first student (in the example on the left, Vanessa) would have to say the first letter of the word, i.e., B.
4. The next student (Sasha in this example) would have to say the next letter, i.e., O.
5. If a student is stuck or says an incorrect letter, the teacher can ask the next person.
6. Continue in this way till the last letter is said by the student.
7. The student who says the last letter has to remember to say the word, "Sparkle" or they are out of the game! You can modify this part if you like (i.e., if they forget to say Sparkle, they can still play!)
8. The teacher then gives a new word, and the next student would start them off by saying the first letter of the word.

If playing in person:

Follow same directions having all students sitting on the carpet, like for circle time!



9. Monsters and Dinosaurs

This is a super fun game that you could use to review concepts, assess prior knowledge, or just for fun!

1. Download this already prepared [PowerPoint](#):
2. Make sure you download it and use it in full screen. It will not work as google slides.
3. The teacher prepares 15 questions based on any content area.
4. Teacher pulls up the PowerPoint in full screen
5. Teacher asks a question and picks a student/student from a team to answer
6. Student answers the question
7. If the student answers correctly, they pick a square (e.g., A-3)
 - Dinosaur = Team receives 2 points
 - Happy Yellow Minion = Team receives 1 point
 - Angry Purple Minion = Team steals 1 point
 - Rotten Orange = Team loses 1 point

Source:

Permiakov, E. (2020). Top Five Apps to Make Virtual Learning Interactive – Part 1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C7vxAn0w7YA>



10. Wacky Math

This is a fun way to practice addition skills!

1. Pick any number - for example 23.
2. Play with teams against the teacher or against each other
3. Team one starts at zero.
4. Team two can add either 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 to the existing number (zero in this case).
5. Team two would say the number they want to add and the new total (for example, we add 3, $0+3 = 3$).
6. The two teams keep taking turns in this way.
7. The first team to get to 23 wins!

Here are some more fun and wacky math games!

11. Guess the Location

This is an easy and fun game to use while teaching students about different places!

1. Google the location that you may have taught your students about (e.g., pyramids)
2. Add the image on a PowerPoint slide.
3. Do the same for the different images about different places.
4. If you want to make it even more fun, you can set it as your background.
5. Show the different pictures to the students/keep changing your background and ask them to guess what the location is.



12. PowerPoint Template Games

- This [site](#) provides so many great games for content.
- Click on Quick Links or Collection to see the PowerPoint Games and Seasonal PowerPoints.
- Templates for each PowerPoint game have already been created, you just add your content!
- Each template game comes with directions.
- Just some of the fun games include:
 - Tic-Tac-Toe
 - Mystery Square
 - Pair-up
 - Bulls Eye
 - Battleship
 - Jeopardy
 - Concentration
 - Picture reveal

Also, don't miss the great [Spinner template](#) you can use for so many things!

PART 5

FUN GAMES

These fun games can be used during community circle to build connections and relationships, but can also be used throughout the day as you like!



- 1.Scavenger Hunts
- 2.Beat the Clock
- 3.The Wi-Fi Works
- 4.Put a Finger Down
- 5.4 Corners
- 6.Just Like Me
- 7.Counting Cameras
- 8.Secret Squad
- 9.Memory Game
- 10.Pictionary
- 11.20 Questions
- 12.2 Truths and a Lie

1. Scavenger Hunts

We already talked about how much fun scavenger hunts can be! Check out these cards below for more ideas!



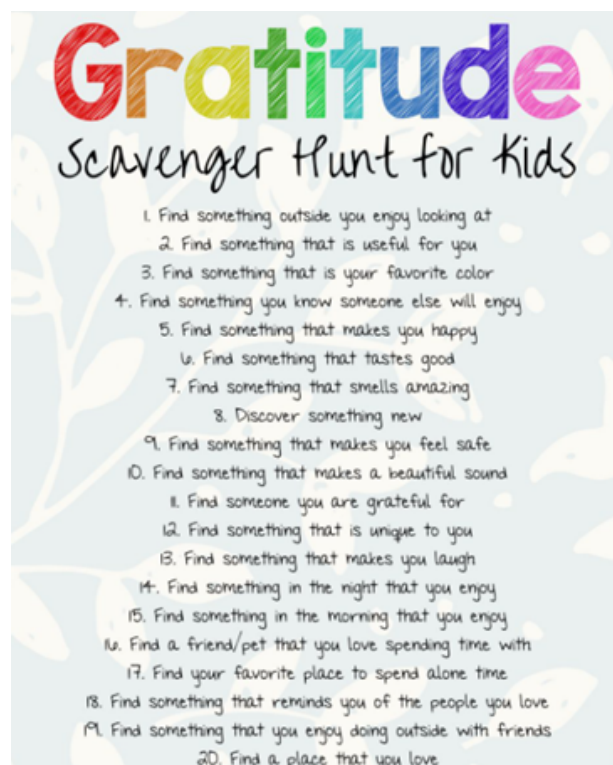
Source:
TrishSutton (<https://trishsutton.com/indoor-scamenger-hunt-free-printable-isolation-game/>)



Source:
Macias (n.d.) Zoom Scavenger Hunt Ideas for Kids.
<https://www.boxofideas.com/zoom-scamenger-hunt-ideas-for-kids/>



Source:
Teachers Pay Teachers (2020). Virtual Feelings Scavenger Hunt.
<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Virtual-Feelings-Scavenger-Hunt-5587642>



Source:
Natural Beach Living (n.d.). The Best Gratitude Scavenger Hunt for Kids and Adults.
<https://www.naturalbeachliving.com/gratitude-scamenger-hunt/>

2. Beat the Clock

1. Assign each student a number. For example, if there are 20 students in the class, each student is assigned a number from 1 to 20.
2. Start a timer (around 45 seconds – 1 minute)
3. The student who is assigned number 1, says "1", the student who is assigned number 2, says "2", and so on till the last student says the number 20 (or whatever the last number is based on the number of students).



4. Students need to complete it before the timer goes off.

Tip: keep their assigned numbers the same all year round. In the beginning of the year, students may take longer to do this, but with time, they may get faster!

Source:

Teacher FYI (2020). 15 Virtual Morning Meeting Games & Activities to Play Online Using Zoom - Distance Learning Tips.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ApGjNszcVn4>

3. The Wi-Fi Works

This game is great for virtual learning.

1. First ask all students to turn off their cameras.
2. Then say, "The wifi works for everyone who loves french fries." All students who like French fries are supposed to turn on their cameras.
3. Then all students turn their cameras off.



4. The teacher says another statement and students who agree with the statement/students for whom the statement applies turn on their cameras.

- Other examples
 - i. The wifi works for everyone whose favorite color is red
 - ii. The wifi works for everyone who has a dog

Keep making up other fun statements like that.

To play this game in the classroom:

Instead of having students turn on and off their cameras, you have them sit and stand up (e.g., stand up when a statement applies to them, but to keep sitting when it doesn't).



Teacher FYI (2020). 15 Virtual Morning Meeting Games & Activities to Play Online Using Zoom - Distance Learning Tips. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ApGjNszcVn4>

4. Put a Finger Down

1. The game starts with all students holding up their 10 fingers.
2. Like the previous game, the teacher says a statement, and if it applies to the student, they put a finger down
 - Example: If you have a younger brother, put a finger down
 - Example: If your favorite subject is Math, put a finger down
 - Example: If you like Pizza, put a finger down

Source:

Teacher FYI (2020). 15 Virtual Morning Meeting Games & Activities to Play Online Using Zoom - Distance Learning Tips. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ApGjNszcVn4>



5. Four Corners

Everyone is familiar with the in-person version of this game

1. Assign a number to the 4 corners of the room
2. Clear areas near the four walls, so the students can move around easily
3. Ask for a student volunteer who stands in the middle of the room and counts down from 10-0.
4. Everyone else moves in one of the four corners
5. When the student volunteer finishes counting, he/she picks a number from 1-4. Anyone in that corner has to sit down/are out. The same process continues.

To play this virtually:

1. Have 4 separate pieces of paper with the numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4 written on each paper ready.
2. Ask students to hold up 1, 2, 3 or 4 fingers.
3. The teacher picks a paper and holds it up to the screen. All students holding those many number of fingers are out. For example, if the teacher picks the paper with number 2, all student holding 2 fingers are out.

Source:

Teacher FYI (2020). 15 Virtual Morning Meeting Games & Activities to Play Online Using Zoom - Distance Learning Tips. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ApGjNszcVn4>



6. Just Like Me

1. Each student shares a fact/hobby/likes/interest about themselves. The teacher can give an example to start things off: "I like painting". Everyone in the class who also likes listening to music would give a thumbs-up.
2. Go around the class asking each student to share something about themselves. Instruct the other students to give a thumbs-up (thumbs-up sign if doing it virtually) if they agree/share a similar interest/hobby.

Source:
Teacher FYI (2020). 15 Virtual Morning Meeting Games & Activities to Play Online Using Zoom - Distance Learning Tips. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ApGjNsZcVn4>



7. Counting Cameras

This is great game for the virtual setting.

1. If there are, for example, 20 students in the class, all 20 students need to keep their cameras on to start with
2. Then the teacher gives them a number – e.g., 12
3. The students need to figure out how to keep 12 cameras on, i.e., 12 out of the 20 students need to keep their cameras on, and 8 need to turn them off.
4. Students can talk to each other to figure this out

You can adapt this game for in-person learning too:

1. Have all students gather on the carpet
2. Give them a number, e.g., 14
3. 14 students need to remain on the carpet, the rest of them need to go back to their desks
4. They can talk to each other to figure this out.

Source:
Teacher FYI (2020). 10 Virtual Morning Meeting Games & Activities to Play Online Using Zoom - Distance Learning Tips. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VoWAPMtuGO0>

8. Secret Squad

This is great game for virtual learning.

1. The teacher picks 3 students to be a part of the secret squad, but only the three students know that (none of the other students know who these 3 students are).
2. The teacher asks everyone to turn on their cameras and hold up an object, so that the student and the object are clearly seen (the object can be anything: a stuffed toy, a pencil, an eraser, a book)
3. Everybody holds up their objects for about 30 seconds – all students get to see each others' faces and objects.
4. Then the teacher says "Objects down"



5. The teacher asks them to hold up their objects again.
6. All students hold up the same object they were holding, except for the three students in the secret squad who get to hold up a different object.
7. The rest of the students have to guess which three students are part of the secret squad.

Source:

Teacher FYI (2020). 15 Virtual Morning Meeting Games & Activities to Play Online Using Zoom - Distance Learning Tips. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ApGjNsZcVn4>

9. Memory Game

This is a simpler twist to the secret squad game. The instructions are similar in that everyone holds up an object of their choice to the screen.

But, instead of having the three secret students change their objects and having the remaining students guess the secret squad, the teacher asks all students to put their objects down. Then the teacher can randomly pick different students and ask them to say what a fellow classmate was holding up.



10. Pictionary

Instructions for playing this in person:

1. Teacher divides the students in two teams – team A and team B.
2. Team A decides a word (e.g., flower).
3. A member of team B draws the word on the white board, and his team is supposed to guess correctly. If they guess correctly within a time-limit, team B receives the point, otherwise team A receives the point.
4. The two teams alternate doing this.

Modification: The teacher can pick words based on the content they have been learning and give the words to the teams to draw

Instructions for playing virtually:

1. The teacher sends the word to a student privately in chat
2. The zoom white board function is used
3. The student is supposed to draw that word on the zoom white board and the remaining students can guess by entering the word in the chat

Source:

Teacher FYI (2020). 15 Virtual Morning Meeting Games & Activities to Play Online Using Zoom - Distance Learning Tips. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ApGjNszcVn4>



11. 20 Questions

1. Pick a category – e.g., famous people, plants, animals, etc.
2. Ask a student to pick something from the category and share it with the teacher
3. The remaining students will one by one ask questions to guess what/who the student had picked
4. They are allowed to ask a total of 20 questions that the student is able to answer in Yes or No.

Source:

Teacher FYI (2020). 15 Virtual Morning Meeting Games & Activities to Play Online Using Zoom - Distance Learning Tips. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ApGjNszcVn4>



12. 2 Truths and a Lie

1. A student shares two things that are true about them (e.g., I have a younger brother, and I love riding my bike), and one thing that is a lie/false about them (e.g., I play tennis).
2. The remaining students guess which are the two truths and which is the one lie.
3. Go through each student one by one

This is a great game to help students learn about each other.

Source:

Teacher FYI (2020). 10 Virtual Morning Meeting Games & Activities to Play Online Using Zoom - Distance Learning Tips. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VoWAPMtuGOO>

Meet the Authors

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