

Guide and Professional Development Ideas for the Video: *Student Engagement*



Background

Student Engagement is one of four videos that were created as a companion to the book, *Supporting Every Young Learner: Maryland's Guide to Early Childhood Pedagogy Birth to Age 8*, a publication from the Maryland State Department of Education. The titles of the other three videos are *Questioning and Discussion*, *Teacher Feedback*, and *Using Center Activities to Foster Social Foundations and Inquiry-Based Learning*.

The 9 minute video contains footage of teachers interacting with students in five kindergarten classes and one prekindergarten class. Teacher comments are included with the vignettes to provide an insight into their thinking and teaching practices.

Summary

Video clips provide different scenarios that demonstrate strategies teachers use to engage students. Practices, including the use of manipulatives, pacing, enthusiasm, student choice, and relevance of the activity can increase student engagement. The level of student involvement increases with the use of multiple modalities, including visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic activities.

Teachers that are intentional in their interactions with students create an environment that encourages engagement and less teacher talk. Viewers of the video will see teacher demonstrations of "turn and talk," use of wipe-off boards, choral response, and other practices.

Audience

Kindergarten, First, and Second Grade Teachers: showcase intentional teacher planning and teacher student interactions that promote an environment of engagement and student choice.

Administrators and Supporting Staff: gain a better understanding of the importance of teacher planning and intentional teacher student interactions to create an environment of engagement. Practices and strategies are demonstrated as examples to share with staff.

Prekindergarten and Child Care Teachers: identify practices that are appropriate for the age and developmental level of the children in your program, and how it would help them prior to attending kindergarten. Focus on teacher-student interactions that encourage student thinking, language development, and opportunities to work with their peers.

Narration Found in the *Student Engagement* Video

The Maryland State Department of Education Division of Early Childhood Development has published *Supporting Every Young Learner: Maryland's Guide to Early Childhood Pedagogy, Birth to Age 8*, commonly referred to as the *Pedagogy Guide*. (Subtitle on screen: The *Pedagogy Guide* can be accessed by going to <http://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org>).

The Maryland Early Learning Standards are found in the appendix of the *Pedagogy Guide*. We hope you find this video to be a useful tool as you work with Maryland's children.

Student engagement is essential for student learning. Teachers have many strategies to maintain student interest and involvement. Presenting information by using multiple modalities, including visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic is effective. Providing small and large group instruction and having a learning environment that is balanced with student involvement and choice is essential. The teacher plays a critical role in establishing positive relationships and a welcoming environment that encourages active student participation.

In this video we will observe kindergarten and prekindergarten classes. Look at the different strategies teachers employ to foster student engagement.

Student engagement is fostered when students have an opportunity to create and construct their own projects. The following scenarios include students comparing their sketch of a bridge and a zoo to a picture that the teacher had taken after the project was completed, a drama center with students creating a dinner party, and an example of technology being used to engage students as they showcase their finished project.

You will see vignettes from several lessons in a kindergarten class. In the first lesson the teacher is asking students to visualize or use imagery while the teacher reads a folktale about a woodcutter. Students are asked to draw what they think the story is about when the teacher says the title is "A Sticky, Sticky Pine." Let's see how the teacher engages students during the lesson.

After several students shared what their partners had drawn, the teacher collects the boards. The drawings can be used as a writing activity in a small group. Knowing that the students need a break, the teacher provides a movement activity before transitioning to a phonics lesson.

A talented teacher is able to strike a balance between direct teaching and student involvement. Too much teacher talk can stifle student ownership of their learning and their independence. Pacing, teacher enthusiasm, and the use of multiple modalities create an environment that encourages student engagement. Knowing students' interests and prior knowledge enables the teacher to weave that information into lessons that are relevant to their lives.

Professional Development Activities for Student Engagement Video

Suggested Activity #1 (audience: kindergarten – grade two teachers and PK/preschool*)

1. Prior to showing video have participants discuss and define student engagement, then have them list strategies or practices to foster student engagement.
 - Focus discussion with participants in small groups: use sheet of paper, post-it notes, “turn and talk,” drawing, or chart paper for recording responses.
 - While in small groups brainstorm strategies used for engaging students.
2. After discussion, provide an organizer (sample note-taking sheet is attached) for participants to compare with their responses. Record notes when watching the video.
3. Guiding question for viewing video: How are the teachers being intentional or purposeful in engaging their students?
4. View video (9 minutes) – Use closed captions (CC) to view dialogue
5. Continue discussion on student engagement (note-taking sheet) in small group, then in large group with what was seen in the video. If needed, use the following questions:
 - What strategies were used? (e.g., small groups, positive environment, multiple modalities, enthusiasm, proximity, student involvement, student helpers)
 - What types of materials and manipulatives were used to engage students?
 - How did the teachers continue to engage the students that were creating the zoo, bridge and dinner party projects?
 - How do the ideas in the video align with your current instruction?
 - What ideas could be incorporated into your current instructional design to increase student engagement?
6. Have each person decide on one idea they will try in the classroom and share it with the group.
7. Alternate activity: View the video the first time without taking notes. Use closed captions (CC) to view dialogue. Then watch the video a second time and complete the note-taking sheet (attached).
8. Consider different methods for sharing ideas after viewing video
 - Create a visual to share with the group
 - “Cocktail party” by bringing your coffee and finding a partner to chat about the video (may need to have a guiding question)
 - Create an advertisement for engagement
9. Reflection
 - What is something you could do tomorrow to increase engagement in your instruction?
 - Is there something related to engagement that you would like to learn more about?
10. Extension activity
 - Individually or with a small group, videotape classroom vignettes demonstrating engagement or visit other classes for sharing and reflection at a later date
 - Practice one or more of the engagement strategies. Then share results at a later meeting

Suggested Activity #2 (audience: kindergarten – grade 2 teachers and PK/preschool*)

1. Prior to viewing the video, in small groups discuss and define engagement. Identify and list strategies that foster student engagement.
2. Guiding question for viewing video: How are the teachers being intentional or purposeful in engaging their students?
3. View video (9 minutes) – Use closed captions (CC) to view dialogue. Video can be paused to discuss strategies for engagement seen in the video, or the strategies and practices can be listed (can use attached note-taking sheet).
4. Create 3-5 different work stations of the various strategies (this should be planned ahead of time). Teachers then visit a work station to learn more about the strategy.
 - Example: A “turn and talk” station - At this station there would be a “turn and talk expert.” This expert would explain turn and talk, discuss the importance of modeling the strategy in the classroom, provide materials that the teachers can take to implement immediately in the classroom and could include a resource paper on topic. Take into consideration the skill level of language and what strategy may be more appropriate, or what support you can provide.
 - Example: A “movement” station – At this station a person can provide examples of using student movement (e.g., acting out character’s actions in a story).
 - Example: Select one of the projects in the video (e.g., bridge, zoo, dinner party, or boat) – At this station discuss how this can be implemented in a classroom.
5. Have teachers select one or more strategies to practice during the next few weeks.
6. Extension or Follow-up session (e.g., next month) – meet to discuss and debrief the implementation of the strategies that were practiced in the classroom.

English Learners (EL) and Students with Special Needs

- Using multiple modalities is particularly important for ELs and students with special needs not only for engagement, but also as way to show understanding and learning. Consider pairing of students (intentional with varied skill and/or language levels) and use of manipulatives.

Key Take Away Points

- You must know your students in order to know how to engage them. Observation and listening are essential in knowing your students.
- Positive relationships with children and between children creates an environment of trust and encourages risk-taking.
- Take into consideration how this professional development mirrors the way we want students to learn.

***Suggested Activity for Prekindergarten and Preschool**

- You may use all the ideas that are listed in the first option for Activity #1 and #2, or you can modify based on the background and needs of the group.
- Discuss how the engagement strategies and practices you use in your class would be the same or different as in the video.
- Give specific examples of what you would do differently to engage your children.

Suggested Activity #3 (audience: administrators, directors and resource staff)

1. Open topics for small or large group discussion
 - Discuss and define student engagement.
 - Identify practices and strategies that you have observed that both discourage and promote student engagement.
 - Use sheet of paper, post-it notes, “turn and talk,” drawing, or chart paper for recording responses.
 - Brainstorm strategies used for engaging students.
2. After summarizing discussion, ask administrators to take notes identifying strategies and practices that teachers use in the video to foster student engagement. An organizer may be used as an option (sample note-taking sheet is attached).
3. Guiding question for viewing video: How are the teachers being intentional or purposeful in engaging all their students?
4. View video (9 minutes) – Use closed captions (CC) to view dialogue
5. Continue discussion on student engagement (note-taking sheet) with what was seen in the video in small group, then large group. If needed, use the following questions:
 - What strategies were used to increase engagement? (e.g., small groups, positive environment, multiple modalities, enthusiasm, proximity, student involvement, student helpers)
 - What types of materials and manipulatives were used to engage students?
 - How did the teachers continue to foster engagement with the students that created the zoo, bridge, dinner party, or boat projects?
 - How do the ideas in the video align with observations of your staff?
6. Key points for discussion and reflection
 - Teacher planning and purposeful teacher-student interactions.
 - Pacing as it relates to engagement – How does it look in your observations?
 - Small and large grouping – Is a variety of grouping evident in your observations?
 - Importance of flexibility in planning and having constructive noise – Do teachers feel “locked in” to their schedule or the need for students to be “quiet?”
 - How could this video be helpful to you as a professional development tool for your staff?
 - Share that two other activities are available in this handout for teachers in preschool through second grade.

The following page is the Student Engagement Note-Taking Sheet that can be used with the professional development activities.

Thank you to the following people for their contributions in developing the professional development activities: Anne Arundel County Public Schools (Alison Good, Chelsea Massa and Sharon Mattoon), Baltimore City Public Schools (A’Kwaela Morris), Frederick County Public Schools (Michele Baisey), Howard County Public Schools (Laura Brown and Jessica Karbassi), and the Maryland State Department of Education (Laura Hook, Robert Wagner and Monica Waldron). Please contact the Division of Early Childhood Development at MSDE for information.

For Presenter Only: Note-Taking Sheet with Sample Responses

Aspect of Student Engagement	Evidence Found Within the Video
Student interest and involvement	Chorus response (1:58), station helpers (2:28), zoo and bridge projects (3:24), dinner party (4:00), turn and talk (5:55), geometric shapes (7:28), story about engineers and ramp (7:49), chalk writing (8:22)
Multiple modalities for presenting information	Unifix cubes (2:05, 2:45), bridge (3:50), marshmallows and toothpicks (4:35), geometric shapes in bags (4:48), wipe-off boards (6:26), story about engineers (7:49)
Grouping structures	Small group: turn and talk (1:38), Unifix cubes (2:45), zoo and bridge projects (3:24), dinner party (4:00), boat design (5:01), shapes (7:12) Large group: Unifix cubes (2:08), phonics lesson (1:34), zoo presentation (4:23), read aloud story (6:11)
Pacing of the lesson	Movement break/transition (6:47), other examples are found throughout the video
Teacher enthusiasm	Teacher fireworks (1:52), silent sheer (2:50), boat experiment (5:11), read aloud story (6:11), music and movement break (6:47), geometric shapes in bag (7:36)
Positive relationships with children and between children	Teacher fireworks (1:52), station helpers (2:28), bridge (3:47), dinner party (4:00), zoo presentation (4:27), boat design (5:05), boat experiment (5:15), turn and talk (5:55), movement break (7:00)
Balance between direct instruction and student choice	Zoo and bridge projects (3:24), dinner party (4:00), boat design (5:00), wipe-off boards (6:20), story about engineers (7:49)

Reflection Questions to Ask Participants:

- How do the ideas in the video align with your current practices?
- What ideas from the video could be incorporated within your instructional design to increase student engagement?
- What is one idea you plan to incorporate in your classroom immediately?

Student Engagement Note-Taking Sheet

Aspect of Student Engagement	Evidence Found Within the Video
Student interest and involvement	
Multiple modalities for presenting information	
Grouping structures	
Pacing of the lesson	
Teacher enthusiasm	
Positive relationships with children and between children	
Balance between direct instruction and student choice	

Reflection Questions:

- How do the ideas in the video align with your current practices?
- What ideas from the video could be incorporated within your instructional design to increase student engagement?
- What is one idea you plan to incorporate in your classroom immediately?