**Retrieval Activities**

**a. Last Class Recall**

This activity brings lapsed classmates up-to-date.

1. At the beginning of class, ask students: *“What did you learn last class?”*

2. Have students briefly recap the material studied to update any previously absent students.

**B. TOTAL RECALL**

This is a supreme study tool. It get students to commit their learning to long term memory and self-assess.

1. After reviewing a lesson in a book or notes, students put away their notes.
2. Students write down everything they can remember about the lesson.
3. Students open the book or notes and check their work. They highlight errors. They write keywords for any areas of omission.
4. They put away their notes/book. They correct the highlighted areas and elaborate on the areas of omission.

**c. PRE-TEST & Post Test**

This activity activates student schema thereby enhancing their new learning. It also alerts students to what they will learn, and helps them monitor their progress.

1. Identify information students will learn, or problems students will solve by the end of the class.
2. Compose a simple test with 1-3 items. For example:
* Dictate two statements. Ask students if they agree/disagree.
* Dictate two statements: Ask students if they are true or false.
* Dictate information questions about the content you will teach. Questions beginning with: *What, where, when, how long, how much, who*?
* Dictate open-ended questions about the content you will teach. Questions beginning with: *Why or how*?
* Write a few multiple-choice questions on the board.
1. Don’t discuss students’ answers. Tell them to put their answers away until later.
2. At the end of class, administer the test again. Ask students if their answers had changed and why.

**D. ANTICIPATION GUIDE**

Use this with readings, or at the beginning and end of class.

**Step 1:** Read each sentence. Guess.  Is it true or false? Mark your answer in the left columns.

**Step 2:** Read the article.

**Step 3:** Read each sentence again. Is it true or false? Mark your answer in the right columns.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Before Reading | What do you know? | After Reading |
| True | False |  | True | False |
|  |  | 1. |  |  |
|  |  | 2. |  |  |
|  |  | 3. |  |  |

**E. Recall with a Picture**

This gets students to retrieve what they remember from their learning. It also gets them to development new connections and associations with what they learned.

1. Show a picture that relates to content students have recently learned. Do not use a picture students have already discussed.
2. On the board write a prompt, such as:

ESOL: *What do you see?*

Social Studies: *What is happening in this picture? How do you know?*

Math: *What kind of math is needed for this situation?*

1. Individually or in pairs students write their responses.
2. Corrective feedback: Students call out the words and you write what they say, or they write them on a board and the class corrects them together.

**F. Vocabulary Recall**

This gets students to retrieve what they remember from their learning. It also gets them to develop new connections and associations with words they learned..

1. Call out a category, for example:

*past tense irregular verbs / names of shapes / important historical events*

1. With a time limit of 2 minutes, students individually write a list of words that fit the category.

**G. MARK THE MARGINS**

This is a strategy to get students to think consciously about their comprehension as they are reviewing readings, homework assignments, and class notes.

1. Students use the following symbols to mark the margins of their class notes and homework:

✓ - I understand

? - I don’t understand

1. In class they show you their questions by pointing to their question marks.

**H. Question Cards**

This activity gets students to self-test and recycle.

* At the end of every class, have students write down one or two questions they learned to answer.
* At the beginning of the following class, have students put their cards on the table. They take turns picking up a card from the other student’s pile and asking their partner the question.
* Have students randomly recycle the cards over the course of your semester.

**Organization tip:** Have students use a different colored card for each content unit, so they can see the questions belong to different units.

**I. Vocabulary Flashcards**

Have students make a flashcard of each new vocabulary item in class. Between class activities have pairs of students quiz their partners on their flashcards. Prompt them with one of these questions.

* Spelling: How do you spell \_\_\_\_\_\_?
* Pronunciation: Look at the word. How many syllables does it have? Which syllable is stressed?
* Meaning: Sort words by categories:
* verbs/ nouns/ adjectives/ etc
* have three or more syllables
* math words / everyday words
* academic words / everyday words

**J. CLASS RECAP AND REFLECTION**

1. Erase the class agenda.
2. **Ask:** *What did we do in class today?*

Have students reconstruct what they did in class as you write their ideas on the board.

1. Ask each student to reflect on the class today and answer the following questions (orally or in writing):

**Ask:** *What was the most important part of today’s class for you? Why?*

**Ask:** *What do you want to practice more?*

**K. Exit Ticket**

Before leaving class, students write on a slip of paper something they learned in class today. They hand you the “ticket” as they leave the classroom.

* You can be specific or open ended. Some teachers just say “*Tell me about one thing you learned in class.*”
* Other teachers request a number of specific items. The prompt can focus on language features or content. For example:
* ALL: *3 new words you learned*
* ESOL: *3 past tense verbs you learned*

**Student Elaboration Activities**

**Retell with Key Words**

After learning a new point, have students explain their learning to one another.

1. Individually students identify three key words.

2. Students turn and talk with a partner to share their key words and explain why they selected them.

**Five T’s**

1. Give students Time to Think (TTT) about a question.

2. Then students Turn and Talk (TT) and share their thinking.

**Select a Sentence & Elaborate**

Elaborating on a reading.

1. After students have moved through all the steps of comprehension of a reading passage, they select one or two sentences that are particularly interesting to them.

2. They copy the sentences on a separate paper.

3. In pairs or groups of three students answer these two questions:

*What is your sentence? Why did you choose it?*

**Retell What a Classmate Said**

After a student answers a question, ask another students to retell what the classmate said.

**Explain Your Thinking**

When reviewing answers on homework or worksheets, ask:

*What’s the answer?*

*Why do you think so?*

*How do you know?* (*Where is the evidence?)*

Ask this when answers are right or wrong. Encourage students to disagree with one another and explain their thinking.