



EPISODE 5

1-2-4 ALL: ENGAGE STUDENTS THROUGH COGNITION



*Who is “doing the thinking” in our classroom - teacher or student?
What practices will increase students’ cognitive engagement?*

SUMMARY

- Three important facets of engagement are connection, cognition, and collaboration
- Engaging through cognition challenges students to think critically, build a deeper understanding of content, and demonstrate learning
- The 1-2-4 All strategy can draw 100% cognitive engagement from students
- Students first formulate responses independently, then share with one partner, then a small group, then the whole class
- Sharing increases response rate of reluctant participants and encourages connections and comparisons between responses

RESEARCH

- “Cognitive load” is the amount of information a brain holds at once
- Reputable teaching frameworks call for “most” or “virtually” all students to be engaged and suggests that students carry “50% of the cognitive load”
- Teachers can employ strategies to engage and strengthen student cognition

HOW TO: 1-2-4 ALL

- Teachers pose an open-ended question to the class (discussion prompt, shared challenge, etc.)
- Students independently think and write down a response
- Students pair up and exchange responses
- Pairs pair up into groups of 4 and discuss responses (similarities, differences, new ideas, critiques)
- Teacher reconvenes the class and asks for 1-2 groups to share out

CLICK FOR A DETAILED IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST



CONNECTED CLASSROOMS



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DISCUSSION

- How do we define cognitive engagement in the classroom?
- Who is doing most of the thinking - teachers or students?
- How do we increase intellectual engagement in students?
- What practices will ensure that students are carrying the appropriate cognitive load?
- If you used “1-2-4 All,” how would you expect it to impact engagement in your classroom?
- What challenges do you anticipate in implementation?
- What adaptations would you make for your grade, subject, and classroom?

SOURCES

- “1-2-4 All - SEL 3 Signature Practices Playbook.” Casel.org, 2023, signaturepractices.casel.org/1-2-4-all/. Accessed 13 Nov. 2024.
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- “Shift the Thinking Load to Students.” The Learning Professional, vol. 41, no. 1, Feb. 2020, pp. 58–62, learningforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/shift-the-thinking-load-to-students.pdf. Accessed 13 Nov. 2024.
- “The Framework for Teaching.” Danielson Group, 13 Apr. 2022, live-danielson-group.pantheonsite.io/the-framework-for-teaching/. Accessed 13 Nov. 2024.
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