Hook ‘em into Learning: Active and Creative Teaching in the University Context

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“The purpose of a UT education should be to learn how to use knowledge and skills for developing sophisticated understanding and wisdom. To be creative. To be ethical. To communicate. And to lead. Students must be motivated for learning their entire lives no matter where their career paths take them.”

President Gregory Fenves, Inaugural Speech, 2015
- What is active and creative teaching in the university context?
- How can I use active and creative teaching in my classes?
Why ART?

“At its core, art is creative expression, and art-making is the process of that expression - the inquiry and engagement, research and experimentation, trial and error, risk-taking, reflection and re-evaluation, and growth and discovery.” (Polster, 2013, p. 21)
Students with an education rich in arts-based pedagogy benefit from:

- Improved “habits of mind”;
- Improved academic achievement;
- Improved student engagement and motivation;
- Improved cultural literacy; and,
- Improved personal and social skills (PCAH, 2011)
What is drama-based pedagogy?
Drama-based pedagogy (DBP) uses active and creative approaches to engage participants in academic, affective, and aesthetic learning through dialogic meaning-making.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVE</th>
<th>CREATIVE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Embodiment</strong></td>
<td><strong>Imagination</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>production of cultural</td>
<td>create beyond oneself; understand</td>
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<tr>
<td>experiences/social</td>
<td>alternative perspectives and ideas;</td>
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<td>interaction; demonstrate</td>
<td>make sense of things</td>
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<tr>
<td>understanding</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ensemble</strong></td>
<td><strong>Narrative</strong></td>
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<td>sense of belonging; pro-</td>
<td>learn how to consider, build, analyze,</td>
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<tr>
<td>social skills</td>
<td>pull apart and synthesize</td>
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Dialogic Meaning-Making

Interactive exchange between people and environment; with a focus on listening, responding, and building upon.
Drama for Schools

Professional learning in drama-based pedagogy for K-12 schools interested in improving the learning culture of the classroom
Where has DBP been?

Galena, Alaska (10)
Tyler, Texas (2)
Victoria, Texas (6)
McAllen, Texas (3)
Washington D.C. (1)
Hartland, Wisconsin (3-current)
Austin, Texas (4-current)
South Australia (2-current)
Zagreb, Croatia (1-current)
Where is DBP going?

The Provost’s Teaching Fellows Program is designed to strengthen faculty participation and governance in the Learning Sciences, enhance faculty collaboration across disciplinary and institutional boundaries, and support specific faculty-led projects to improve teaching and learning.
Poster Dialogue
Poster Dialogue Example: FA308 Arts Integration

Arts integration is:

- Using art to teach others and learn more about ourselves.
- Learning a subject through the use of fine arts.
- Employing the arts to demonstrate understanding.
- Visual, verbal, musical, fun, ways to learn.
- Incorporating arts in the learning process.
- Using many different parts of my brain to learn.
- Arts incorporated with academic subjects.
Sociometric: Vote from Your Seat

1. Teaching is easy.
2. Learning is easy.
3. Every student wants to learn.
4. Students learn best from their professor.
5. Responding with a good question, is better than knowing the right answer.
Sociometric Example:

McCombs School of Business
Career Services
MBA New Student Orientation

• I know how to get a job.
• Getting a job is easy.
• Graduating from this MBA program means that I should be able to get a 6-figure salary in the field of my choice.
• The best jobs go to the most qualified people.
• I have always followed my passion in my career.
• My career is my passion.
Sociometric Example:

College of Education, Education Psychology
EDP 363M  Adolescent Development

1. Public schools provide sufficient instruction in the core content areas of math, science, reading, and social studies.

2. All students can achieve grade level standards in core content areas.

3. Standardized tests are a good measure of what students learn in class.

4. Parents should have a choice about where their students attend school.
**ACTIVATING DIALOGUE** strategies use a multimodal (verbal, written and/or embodied) dialogic approach to analyze and synthesize participants’ understanding in relationship to a larger inquiry.

**ACTIVATING DIALOGUE** strategies help us to:
- Make thinking visible
- Engage with multiple perspectives
- Promote dialogue as a means of learning

**ACTIVATING DIALOGUE** categories:
- Rituals to begin and end
- Text Based/Visual Dialogue
- Sociometrics/Embodied Dialogue
Great Game of Power
Image Work Examples
Image Work Examples

Staging an author’s argument

An image-based response
Image Work Examples

Reflecting on an individual or collaborative process
Analyzing an argument, process, or narrative
**IMAGE WORK** strategies use an object or the body to represent an idea, feeling, character, relationship, force or setting.

**IMAGE WORK** can be used to develop:
- Multimodal skills in communication (visual/embodied)
- Complex understanding of relationships
- Engage with multiple perspectives

**IMAGE WORK** categories:
- Object as Image
- Body as Image
- Images in Action
Where can DBP go... ROLE WORK

• **Community-Engagement** – Students present project portfolios to colleagues “in role” as members of grant funding board. (17)

• **Applied Theatre** – Students “in role” as editorial board making decisions about a reading assignment. (20)

• **McCombs Career Services** – Students “in role” staging scenes about reneging on job offer. (50)

• **Educational Psychology** – Graduate students in role as famous theorists attending a cocktail party and engaging with others about their work. (40)
, it made me think.
Thank you!