



TEACHING TIPS OF THE MONTH FROM MC FACULTY



Brought to you by TIDES and PALS October 2015

The Faculty Program for Active Learning in STEM ([GTSTEP/PALS](#)), the Teaching to Increase Diversity and Equity in STEM ([TIDES](#)) grant project, and [ELITE](#) are happy to bring you the "Teaching Tips of the Month from MC Faculty." Both [PALS](#) (with its focus on active learning in STEM) and [TIDES](#) (with its focus on active learning and culturally sensitive pedagogy) seek to incorporate highly engaging learning activities for diverse student populations into STEM courses; however, many of these activities can be used in any course. Interested faculty can consider applying to the [PALS 2016 cohort](#). We welcome your feedback about this publication and invite you to share teaching tips by contacting us at tides@montgomerycollege.edu.

Theme: Multi-Purpose Quizzes

Tip 1: Pre-Chapter / Day 1 Quizzes

Goals: This activity helps me find out what students already know about upcoming course content, clarify their misconceptions, and give them important information in an engaging way. I also take the opportunity to show them relevant websites and other relevant sources. It is a great way to introduce the important strategies and skills that will be covered during the chapter, unit or semester. When I use this quiz on the 1st day of the class, it helps students to become familiar and more comfortable with each other better.



Description: Divide the class into teams of three or four depending on class size. Display questions related to next chapter or unit (or course, if using on the 1st day) on the projector. Give each team enough time to discuss all the questions. Write down question numbers on chits of paper. Each team picks a chit and has to answer the question they get. I comment on each answer, pointing out additional information, clearing up misconceptions, etc.

Example: Sample questions for a 1st day quiz (**for an Academic Reading Class**):

- Is there just one way of reading?
- What is the best way to become good readers?
- What does paraphrasing mean? How is it different from summarizing?
- What is the difference between active and passive vocabulary?
- What are prefixes and suffixes? How do they alter words?

Total Time: 30 min—10 for team discussion, 20 for answers and my feedback.

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Tip 2: Multi-Purpose Start-of-Class Quizzes to Increase Engagement

Goals: Start-of-class quizzes can encourage on-time arrival and increase the expectation for all students to be prepared and engaged. Moreover, instructors can use the quizzes to equitably require student participation in class, review student names, and efficiently track attendance.

Description: At the beginning of class, I give a short quiz (5-10 minutes) based on a required reading or other task completed prior to class. For the rest of the class period, I use the pack of quizzes to call on students to give responses. Shuffle first, start at the top of the pile, put quizzes of students who have responded underneath, and continue rotating.



Example: I sometimes assign articles for reading with a few key questions. A minute or two after class officially begins, I give students a small piece of paper with questions that are related to the key questions but involve another unexpected aspect. I give 10 minutes (late students lose those points) after which I have students discuss the answers in pairs or small groups for several minutes. Using the names on quizzes sequentially, I call on students to give their responses to the class, typing them on the screen. I continue to use those quizzes to require student responses to questions and in-class activities for the rest of class.

Total Time: The quizzes should take no more than 10 minutes, followed by 10 to 20 minutes of review.

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For more tips, visit the [toolkit](#).