EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION: A KEY TO STUDENTS’ LEARNING

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Classroom participation is an important ingredient in learning if managed effectively. Students’ involvement in class discussion can lead to intelligent remarks, healthy conversation about the lesson, interesting and varied insights, stronger bond among students, and a great amount of zeal to acquire knowledge. Every teacher would want a classroom filled with enthusiastic and energetic students who are eager and interested to learn. However, sometimes reality does not only bite; it can also swallow you whole with the truth that most often than not, students are becoming more and more unresponsive and uncooperative. This may not only frustrate the teacher, but may likewise result to the teacher questioning his ability to teach and the effectivity of his classroom management techniques.

As teachers cannot curl up in bed and wallow in the sad actuality of an impassive classroom, a positive outlook might be useful by taking this up as a challenge to ensure that learning and active student engagement will happen inside the four-walled teaching space. Below are some of the schemes to consider to promote student partaking.


One will discern where to go if given the right direction. Same thing goes with encouraging a lively input from a class. Students will know what to do and how to do it if they were presented with specific and clear definition of participation and the ways it will be evaluated. Oftentimes, participation is used interchangeably with discussion, which usually means prolonged conversation with the students. However, tiny but
meaningful interactions among students or between a student and a teacher can also be considered as significant classroom contribution.

To create a better description of class participation, the teacher might begin stimulating this by allowing students to share their own definition of it and to chip in some ideas on how they think their inputs should be assessed. You will eventually realize that students contribute willingly and abide to something that they have helped create in the first place.

2. Instill the philosophy of participation as a shared responsibility.

Learning is more fun if done collaboratively. To achieve this, every student must have his fair share of thoughts, experiences, and responses. As facilitators of learning, teachers must motivate and inspire the students that any form of quality class input is a valued contribution to a collective experience. Students need to see the importance of their role in class and the impact they can make to advance not only the acquisition of knowledge but likewise the relationships and connections made among peers. Consequently, participation will no longer be just merely a requirement to pass a subject, but it will become an indication of one’s accountability and responsibility.

3. Teachers must be ready with varied teaching styles and activities.

According to Dr. Howard Gardner, an American developmental psychologist, everyone has multiple intelligences - linguistic intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, musical intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, spatial intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence and naturalist intelligence. Even though one might possess all of them, his theory believes that one excels or is more inclined with particular ones than the others; yet one can shine at any chosen intelligence by an extensive course of learning. Considering multiple intelligences theory in achieving effective classroom participation, the teacher must be prepared with diverse, stimulating, and thought-provoking activities to capture every student’s distinctive way of learning.
Learners are unique; hence cannot be placed inside a single classification nor be treated the same way.

4. Always remember that the classroom is learner-centered.

   Teachers are guide on the side. This can be taken figuratively or literally as the teacher may contemplate his spot inside the classroom. Most of the time, if the teacher is always situated in front, it creates an idea that everything about the lesson must come from him which may result to the whole class becoming passive learners. Try leaving the floor to the students and consider transferring either to the side or at the rear part of the classroom. After all, there is no harm in experimenting once in a while.

5. Let the students reflect on their own performance.

   In order to see the progress of student participation, one must have had a starting point. At the beginning, students must plan their participation target – specific, concrete, and realistic. As the class advances, allow the students to internalize and assess their class participation based on the criteria that the whole class have initially crafted. Seeing their progress might motivate the students. On the contrary, if they fell short on the goal, personal reflection might help them re-evaluate and do better.

6. Create your own process of assessing student participation.

   Keep records of noteworthy events inside the classroom. Know each students. Take pictures or videos. Devise seating arrangements. Check daily attendance. There is no perfect method in doing assessment nor a single process of evaluation that might be fit for any teacher. However, it is necessary that whatever mode of assessment is chosen, it has to be objective and not burdensome to both the teacher and the students.

   These are only some of the many strategies to wonder about when it comes to achieving effective classroom participation. The 21st century has transported massive transformation in education. As classroom setting continuously evolves, one goal
remains the same: to ensure students’ learning so that in the long run, they can become productive citizens of the society.

References:

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