



News for Adjuncts

January 1, 2014



Special Interest Notes:

- Keep it simple
- Pay attention to words and body language
- Learn names as they learn each other's

First Day Activities

Everyone, no matter how long they have been teaching, has to get each class started meaningfully each semester. The best “ice breakers” are those that are comfortable for you and allow you to find out something unique about each of your students.

First, choose an activity that you have made relevant to your subject area. In writing classes you might have them write about why they should be chosen to stay in your class, pretending that at least half cannot. The next class period can be a segue into the rhetoric of writing by discussing what they anticipate about the “audience,” their teacher. Do keep these papers on file (they promise amazingly positive behavior) and occasionally remind them what they have said.

Secondly, you may prefer getting them talking. In that case, you may begin revealing an amusing foible about yourself, while introducing yourself. They will then be assigned to do the same in pairs. After an appropriate length of time, have them introduce each other and relate each other's amusing foible. This whole project can be a way of teaching appropriate self-disclosure and learning names.

You may also want to prepare them for future class participation. You can go around the room and assign each student a number, one through twelve. After placing these on a dial clock face, you have an instant mechanism for mixing groups; on

subsequent group activity days, simply ask that any two times get together - - remember to mix up those times.

The most important aspect of any first-day activity is for you to learn the names of your students as they learn each other's, and for your students to learn to speak out comfortably in class. With that in mind, use and then share your favorite assignment for this important day.

Help your students develop patterns for success from the first day in your class. Introduce the tools they will need to succeed in college and in the workplace through each assignment in your class, including the first-day activities.

New beginnings are essential for everyone, even our most jaded and “cool” students. Make assignments with adequate explanation and modeling, but without apology.

Avoid potential silences down the road by building trust and confidence from the first day forward!

Happy New Semester!

Individual Highlights:

- Make ALL Activities Relevant
- Include ALL Students
- Model Desired Behavior FIRST
- Offer Comments Later

