Successful strategies

- Setting welcoming/safe tone (spend time getting students comfortable)

- Showing enthusiasm so students start participating

- Ask questions to students to lead them to the answers, instead of just giving answers

- Refresh students memories about previous lessons

- reiterate office hours

- Give enough time so student can answer questions e.g. sing happy birthday in your head.

Challenges

- Lost control of 'group formation'. Try to give precise instructions about organization

- Students getting overly excited and chatty

- Not knowing the answers to a question. Feeling unable to help.

- Unable to remember everyone's names

Strategies for each skit

1. The Monopoliser

- Call on specific portions of the group. (so everyone can participate)

- talk to over participating student individually

- have ground rules to begin with

- ask for contributions from someone who has not talked yet (but be careful on not single out a particular student)

- have students written answers down (as an outlet)

2. The unprepared student disrupting flow of lesson

- Invite unprepared student to talk after class, acknowledge that the question is valid

- be honest with students

- turn questions to the class. Use the incident as a teachable moment.

- inquire about the student background

- Always be respectful

3. Unresponsive group

- Get students attention first

- Start writing stuff down in the board to show that the class has started

- reorganize classroom. Divide and conquer

- shhh the class, use lights, bells, whistles

- use buzzwords (eg exam)

- start talking in a different language

- walk around and stand by chatty students

- have student do something physical (jumping jacks or impersonate to answer to a question)

4. Chaos in group

- Clarify course content and course schedule. No debate about course content

- Acknowledge that there are two sides to an argument (remove issue from individual)

- Reiterate that it is important to respect each other’s opinion

- Differentiate beliefs from course content

- Linking and/or difference between belief and science (evidence based)

- Stay as objective as possible

- Re focus

5. Unbalanced attention to groups

- get students attention

- address the part that is most confusing

- reiterate that readings should be done before coming to class/lab

- deal with monopolisers questions (answer or give different parts of the answers) and then move on to other groups. Give equal attention to everyone in the class

- acknowledge wrong answers and use them as teaching moments

- be proactive. Know ahead of time what will likely go wrong and provide extra instructions. Ask experienced TAs about these situations.

- break groups so you have unprepared students with more prepared ones.

- have pre quizzes or flow charts

TOP FACILITATION STRATEGIES

* Establish respect (TA- students)
* Having control of the classroom
* Be fair and inclusive (explicitly)
* Be proactive-establish guidelines and class environment
* Communication! Approachability
* Awareness of entire classroom (catch potential issues early)
* Be prepared and confident
* Engagement/getting feedback