

Breaking Up the Monotony of the Flipped Classroom

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So, you've implemented a flipped classroom and you are no longer the "Sage on the Stage." Congratulations! It seems like you are done, you've arrived, right? Wrong! A flipped classroom can result in testing and performance fatigue for students, especially veterinary students who literally will fight you for every point. So, in a flipped classroom, if every classroom session begins with a mini-quiz (often known as a readiness assurance test or RAT) or even has grade points associated with it, no matter how low-stakes an instructor makes it, students can get testing fatigue. Despite making the class or session only worth 1% of their grade, veterinary students often just can't relax, sit back, hazard a guess, make mistakes, and learn in such a high pressure, but low stakes environment. This can lead to flipped classroom monotony, where every session becomes a TBL (Team Based Learning) or PI (Peer Instruction) session and instead of working towards a large midterm or final, students get performance fatigue.

What's to be done? How can we stay in the spirit of discovery and self-learning, but remove some of the testing pressure and have some fun? This session will present learning activities that have worked in the Gastrointestinal Organ System Course at the University of Arizona College of Veterinary Medicine including felt boards, QR code voting, memory games, "pin the tail on the donkey", twister, sticker fun, and more. These activities still require pre-work from the students, but allow learning to occur while just plain having fun! But do students learn? We'll talk briefly about how to devise and analyze post-session assessments that let the instructor see if there are still learning gaps left after the fun has ended.