

Leslie Eaves's Ideas on Bringing Authenticity to Your Classroom

Idea 1. Start with a Gateway Question or Debate Topic.

- Begin your lesson with an engaging, real-world question that sparks curiosity.
 - **Examples:**
 - Serious: "Is access to clean water a human right?"
 - Fun: "Does pineapple belong on pizza?"
 - Use this question throughout the unit to guide discussions, research and assignments. This method helps students feel more connected to the content by tapping into their natural interests and opinions.
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Idea 2. Bring in Community Experts.

- Invite professionals related to your lesson topic to speak with or be interviewed by students.
 - **Benefits:**
 - Experts provide real-world relevance, helping students see the value of what they are learning.
 - Community involvement can empower students and show that their education matters.
 - **Tips on Finding a Speaker:**
 - **Start with Your Network:** Reach out to colleagues, parents or social groups to see if anyone knows a professional in the field.
 - **Look Locally:** Contact nearby universities, community colleges or nonprofits—many professionals are happy to share their expertise with students.
 - **Social Media:** Post on platforms like Facebook or LinkedIn asking for connections to experts in the topic you're teaching.
 - **Tip:** Prepare your class by having them research the topic and create questions for the guest speaker.
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Idea 3. Use Real-World Tools and Processes

- Incorporate tools and methods from real industries into your classroom.
- **Examples:**
 - For writing: Conduct peer-review workshops like professional authors.
 - For project management: Use Scrum boards or Gantt charts to teach time management and task completion.
 - For design: Utilize professional tools like Canva or industry-standard software if possible.
- Engaging students in authentic processes can make learning feel more practical and meaningful.