



Elevate USA Best Teaching Strategies

Each lesson is shaped around the **3 R's** as our key strategies for how we teach:

- **Relationships** always remain the primary focus of every lesson!
- **Relevance** to the lives of urban youth
- **Rigor** expressed through focused effort

In addition to the 3 R's, every lesson incorporates the **4 C's** in content and delivery:

- **Communication**
- **Collaboration**
- **Critical Thinking**
- **Creativity**

ELEVATE'S BEST TEACHING STRATEGIES

The following strategies are the primary teaching methods that will be incorporated in nearly every ELEVATE USA lesson. Of course, if teachers want to incorporate another strategy, they have the freedom to do so. These are the strategies every teacher needs to know to be able to teach every lesson with confidence and effectiveness.

Strategy	How it Works
Think/Pair/Share	Ask the students to think silently for 30 seconds, then turn to a partner to discuss the topic for 30 seconds each.
Write/Pair/Share	Ask the students to write responding to a question, then find a partner to discuss for 30 seconds each.
Back to Back/Face to Face	Pairs of students stand back to back while the question is asked. On the prompt, students turn around and face each other and share their response for 30 seconds each. Can continue by finding a new partner in the room.
3 step interview	After Think/Pair/Share, two pairs come together to discuss.
Bell Work	Bell Work is used at the beginning of every Elevate lesson. It usually consists of a few questions for students to complete as they arrive to class and begin thinking about the day's lesson.
5.3.1	Students use higher order thinking to evaluate ideas.
Thinking Maps	Maps are a visual representation of organizing information and using critical and creative thinking skills when reading a text.
Metacognition	Strategic process to help students think about their thinking process. See this idea on "closing the loop" used for the end of class.
KWL Charts	Students answer 3 basic questions: - What do you know? - What do you want to know? - What did you learn? This can be done individually, in small groups, or whole class.
Gallery Walk	Can be used to introduce a topic or display student work. Work is displayed around the room for students to browse and observe work. Can be used with sticky notes for students to give compliments to each other or highlight what they notice. Student responses need to be Kind, Specific, and Helpful.
Chalk Talk	Teacher writes open-ended question(s) on chart paper. Students move around from chart paper to chart paper (silently) and respond in writing to the questions and each others' responses. Debrief by searching for patterns.

Strategy	How it Works
Small group work and competition	Group of 3-5 students work together to create and present the best work in the class. Present a model of quality work before beginning and offer a rubric for assessing.
Fishbowl	Divide class into an inner circle (discussion group) and an outer circle (observation group). Observers take notes on quality of discussion and group dynamics.
Debates	An incredibly effective method to expand a student's perspective is through debate. Be sure to set up the "rules" of the debate prior to beginning. *Have students switch sides and re-debate the topic!
Socratic Seminar	Teacher guides learning through questioning. One method requires the teacher to ask the first question, then 3 students respond, then the 4 th student to respond must ask the next big question. Avoid yes/no questions.
Stop/Think/Act/Plan	Four step process: - Stop (breathe) - Think (what's really the problem?) - Make a plan - Act to carry out the plan
Jigsaw	Grouping strategy where members of class are organized into groups to learn something new, then reorganized into new groups to share their learning.
Appreciation. Apology. Aha	Great to use for an Exit Ticket and in classes longer than 50 minutes. Each student shares either an appreciation, apology, or an aha around the circle.
Simulation / Role Play	Require the learner to take on the role of someone else and act out the role.
Journaling	Effective exercise for promote metacognition, utilizing reflection through writing. See this idea for timed journaling (7-minute write).
Student Presentation	Exercise where students are asked to publicly present material, utilizing speaking, reading, and writing skills.
Brainstorming	Create a list of all possible ideas as a team, then sort and analyze results
Inquiry Based Learning	Teaching that revolves around one big question . Students are encouraged to research, read, and explore to answer this question. Typically followed by creating practical projects that also answer this one big question.
Service Learning	Put learning into action taking learning outside of the classroom. Includes Little Elevate classes, service projects, and service trips.
SMART Goals	SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely. Practical way to set goals with students.
Snowball Toss	Community building strategy. Students respond to a question, ball it up, then toss it. Students pick up a "snowball" and read it out loud.
Class Discussion	Used in nearly every Elevate lesson. Goal is for every student to share their voice as well as listen to their peers.
Whip Around	Teacher asks an open-ended question, students write down as many answers within time limit, teacher calls on one student at a time and they share one answer, not repeating any other students' answers.
Rapid Review	As a warmup for class, a question is presented and students discuss in pairs. Then students stand and one person shares the answer. "Rescues" are allowed.
Participation Cards	A tool for every voice to be shared. Useful for the beginning of the school year or with students who are ELL.
Shout Outs	Community building tool. Useful as an exit ticket or after Little Elevate instruction.
Double Circle	Inner circle of students and outer circle of students. First pair with someone you know, then inner circle rotates to find a new partner. Useful at beginning of the year.
Professional Courtesy	Term used by the teacher to request students to close their laptop and give attention to who is speaking.
Community Circle	Can be used at the beginning and end of class time. A question is asked and every student takes turns to share their answer while others are actively listening. Use a physical object (plush toy) to pass around to the person speaking.