



Learner Engagement

The rising educator strategically hooks and sustains learners' engagement throughout a learning experience.

Key Method

The rising educator blends knowledge of learners, content, responsive planning, and appropriate instructional strategies to obtain and sustain learners' engagement from the beginning of a learning experience.

Method Components

How Can Educators Engage Learners at the Very Beginning of a Learning Experience?

In formal and informal learning environments, skilled educators take care to plan and implement learning activities that are engaging, purposeful, and tailored to the learners. The initial minutes of any learning experience are essential for setting up a sustained, quality experience.

Skilled educators possess deep knowledge of how to sequence activities, structure experiences, and engage learners. Through hands-on experiences and extensive opportunities for mentoring and reflection under the wing of a skilled veteran, rising educators make strides to develop these skills.

There are many ways to grab an individual's or a group's attention, including the use of images, stories, questions, and writing prompts, among other options. Skilled educators ensure that their selected strategies are purposefully linked to support learners' engagement and growth. Establishing an equitable classroom culture and implementing anti-bias instruction are key aspects of engaging and supporting all learners.

During their teaching experiences, rising educators are expected to strategically hook learners' attention and lay the groundwork for a successful learning experience.

Suggested Implementation Strategies

It is recommended that the lesson or learning experience you will spotlight for this micro-credential submission take place with a group of learners with whom you have worked for a sustained period. This way, you can draw upon the relationships and rapport you have cultivated with the learners.

The featured lesson or learning experience in the micro-credential submission should be planned at least one or two days in advance of its implementation. Here are some examples of questions you should consider when planning this micro-credential submission:

- What is the goal of the lesson or learning experience?
- How do I know this goal aligns with the curriculum or program for the learners?
- What do I know about my learners? How have past activities, experiences, and assessments reflected their performance?
- How can I use what I know about my learners while planning to ensure that the content and activities of the lesson or learning experience are engaging and that they support learning?



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Consider anchoring your lesson by using the “High Leverage Practices” identified by Teaching Works, which can be used at the start of a learning experience to support quality engagement. These include:

- Leading a group discussion
- Explaining and modeling content, practices, and strategies
- Eliciting and interpreting individual students’ thinking
- Implementing norms and routines for classroom discourse and work
- Specifying and reinforcing productive student behavior
- Implementing organizational routines
- Setting up and managing small-group work
- Building respectful relationships with students
- Resources on learning about students’ cultural, religious, family, intellectual, and personal experiences and resources for use in instruction
- Checking students’ understanding during and at the conclusion of lessons
- Setting long- and short-term learning goals for students
- Providing oral and written feedback to students

Facilitating an equitable classroom culture and anti-bias instruction should be embedded in the lesson planning and delivery. These are critical elements of successful teaching.

It is recommended that you prepare, deliver, videotape, and reflect on more than one lesson or learning experience before selecting and submitting the one that best represents your skilled practice.

You are strongly encouraged to write a first draft of “Part 3: Reflection” within a day of teaching and videotaping the lesson. Capturing fresh memories and insights is important, and it mirrors how skilled educators have to move quickly to reflect on teaching experiences and immediately move forward.

Educators Rising Standards Alignment

This micro-credential is aligned to the following Educators Rising Standards:

- II. Learning About Students
- III. Building Content Knowledge
- IV. Engaging in Responsive Planning
- V. Implementing Instruction
- VI. Using Assessments and Data
- VII. Engaging in Reflective Practice

Supporting Research

- Dyer, K. (2015, September 17). Research proof points: Better student engagement boosts student learning. Northwest Evaluation Association. Retrieved from, <http://bit.ly/2gEIO1m>
- Educators Rising. (2016). Educators rising standards. Washington, DC. Retrieved from, <https://www.educatorsrising.org/uploads/people/Educators-Rising-Standards.pdf>.
- Graham, L., & West, C. (2015). Want to make didactics more engaging: Don’t forget to use a hook!. *Education for Primary Care*, 26(5), 325. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14739879.2015.1079024?journalCode=tepc20>
- Headden, S., & McKay, S. (2015). Motivation matters: How new research can help teachers boost student engagement. Retrieved from, <http://bit.ly/2h8n5P8>



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- Marks, H. M. (2000). Student engagement in instructional activity: Patterns in the elementary, middle, and high school years. *American Educational Research Journal*, 37(1), 153-184. Retrieved from, <http://gtnpd46.ncdpi.wikispaces.net/file/view/Marks.pdf/538414934/Marks.pdf>

Resources

Example Unit and Lesson Plans

- Exemplars of Common Core State Standards Instructional Materials
<http://www.achieve.org/equip/exemplars>
- Sample Literacy Units and Lesson Plans
<http://on.nyc.gov/2h4JhsY>
- Share My Lesson
<https://sharemylesson.com/>

Sample Videos of Formative Assessment in Action

- National Board videos (access to this resource requires a free Educators Rising account)
<https://www.educatorsrising.org/virtualcampus/getinspired/national-board-videos>
- Teaching & Learning Exploratory, University of Michigan (subscription required)
<https://tle.soe.umich.edu/>
- Teaching Channel
<https://www.teachingchannel.org>
- WeTeachNYC
<https://www.weteachnyc.org/resources/collection/exemplar-practice-video-library/>
- LearnZillion (account required)
<https://learnzillion.com>

Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

To complete the application for this micro-credential, the rising educator will complete the Educators Rising Learner Engagement submission form. To earn the micro-credential, the rising educator must earn a score of "Highly Skilled" or "Commendable" on all components of the Part 1, 2, and 3 rubrics. If the rising educator does not earn the micro-credential, he/she is encouraged to reflect on where the submission fell short, address those areas successfully per the rubric, and resubmit. Remember to download the Educators Rising Learner Engagement submission form for compiling your submission here:

<http://bit.ly/EdRisingLearner>

Part 1. Overview Questions

- **Instructional Context Overview:** Complete the questionnaire provided in the submission form.

	"Highly Skilled"	"Commendable"	"Developing/Emerging"
Comprehensiveness	All the required contextual information is provided, and the	Much of the required contextual information is provided, and the descriptions are aligned	A significant portion of the required contextual information is missing, irrelevant, and/or unclear.



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Writing: Clarity and Mechanics

descriptions are thorough, highly relevant, and clear.	and clear.	
Flawless execution	There are one or two unclear moments or errors in mechanics, usage, spelling, punctuation, or grammar.	There are three or more unclear moments or errors in mechanics, usage, spelling, punctuation, or grammar.

Part 2. Artifacts

▪ **Lesson Plan**

Submit the fully developed lesson plan that you created for the lesson featured in the video. It is recommended that you develop this in a separate document and then paste it into the submission form for this micro-credential.

The lesson plan must include:

- A clear goal and objective
- Alignment to relevant learning standards
- Essential questions
- A clear progression of strategically selected activities in the lesson that will maximize engagement of all learners
- A plan to assess learners' understanding of the content of the lesson

	"Highly Skilled"	"Commendable"	"Developing"	"Emerging"
Learning Goals	The lesson objectives and essential questions are powerfully articulated and demonstrate the opportunity for purposeful and rigorous learning, and they are clearly formulated in response to the learning needs of the students who will be engaged in the lesson. The objectives are also well-aligned with targeted learning standards.	The lesson objectives and essential questions are clearly articulated, and they reflect the opportunity for targeted learning and indicate that the needs of the students have influenced the selection of learning goals. The objectives are also clearly linked with appropriate learning standards.	The lesson objectives and essential questions are stated but not well developed, and they suggest an opportunity for only basic levels of learning. There is no explication of how the needs of the students were considered in the selection of the lesson's learning goals. The plan offers only superficial attention to the relevant learning standards.	The lesson objectives are unclear and/or missing, and they indicate that the levels of learning opportunities provided to students are unsubstantial and not in any way linked to their learning needs. The plan does not show a connection to the relevant learning standards.
Instructional Activities	The lesson plan seamlessly	The lesson plan incorporates multiple	The lesson plan attempts to	The lesson plan reflects a limited



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	incorporates a strategic variety of high-leverage instructional practices that are responsive to the students' identified learning needs, which are described in full detail to maximize student engagement and meet the lesson objectives.	instructional strategies and provides a rationale for this selection of activities that refers to the learning needs of the students and the explicit lesson objectives.	incorporate several instructional strategies, but the rationale lacks clarity, feasibility, or applicability to the students' needs as learners.	understanding of instructional methods to support student learning or meet the lesson objectives.
Lesson Organization and Materials	The progression of the lesson and the selection of curricular and resource materials are powerfully designed and articulated to maximize student engagement and meet the lesson objectives.	The progression of the lesson and the selection of curricular and resource materials are described in reasonable detail.	The progression of the lesson and the selection of curricular and resource materials are described in only partial/limited detail, thus making it unclear how each aspect of the lesson will contribute to students' learning or the achievement of the targeted learning objectives.	The progression of the lesson and the selection of curricular and resource materials are vague, incomplete, or illogical given the stated lesson objectives.
Writing: Clarity, Formatting, and Mechanics	Flawless execution	There are one or two unclear moments, distracting formatting choices, or errors in mechanics, usage, spelling, punctuation, or grammar.	There are three or four unclear moments, distracting formatting choices, or errors in mechanics, usage, spelling, punctuation, or grammar.	There are four or more unclear moments, distracting formatting choices, or errors in mechanics, usage, spelling, punctuation, or grammar.

- **Teaching Video (4–6 minutes)**

Submit an unedited video, no shorter than four minutes and no longer than six minutes in length, of you leading instruction at the start of the lesson or learning experience you described in the lesson plan. The video must clearly show you leading instruction, and the spoken words in the learning environment must be clearly audible.

To maintain student privacy, we recommend pasting the link to an unlisted YouTube video of your teaching in the submission form. The video will be used by Educators Rising exclusively to score your micro-credential submission, and it will not be shared publicly.



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	“Highly Skilled”	“Commendable”	“Developing”	“Emerging”
Execution of Instructional Plan	The video shows evidence of the strategic incorporation of multiple methods of instruction to maximize student engagement and learning following a well-scaffolded instructional progression.	The video shows evidence of the use of multiple methods of instruction in an attempt to support student engagement and learning, showing evidence of a logical instructional progression.	The video shows that the candidate attempted to utilize more than one mode of instruction to engage student learning and attempted to follow the planned lesson progression.	The video showcases the candidate’s limited understanding of the deployment of instructional strategies to engage student learning, and the lesson’s instructional progression is not logical.
Relationship with Students	The interactions between the candidate and his/her students are highly respectful, and they reflect palpable warmth and caring for students. Students also convey their respect and caring for the candidate as well as to/with one another.	The interactions between the candidate and his/her students are friendly and suggest general concern and interest for the students. Students also convey their liking for the candidates and treat one another with decency.	Patterns of classroom interactions, both between the candidate and students and among students, are mostly positive, yet there are indications of occasional inconsistencies in the tone, demeanor, and behavior of the candidate towards the students.	Patterns of classroom interactions between the candidate and students are mostly negative and conflict-ridden. Students’ interactions with one another are also inappropriate.
Overall Impact	All or almost all the students are engaged in meaningful learning for the duration of the video.	Most students actively participate in the lesson during the video but a few do not; while the majority of the students are engaged, the substance of the learning is uneven.	Some students engage in the lesson while others do not; the substance of the learning through the lesson is unclear.	Only a few students appear to be participating actively in the lesson or following along with the instruction; most students appear to be disengaged from learning throughout the video.

Part 3: Reflection

Compose a reflective essay using the following guiding questions (500-word maximum; use the provided submission form).

- How and why did you select and create this lesson?
- How successful do you feel the learning experience was for your students and why? Please include an analysis of the lesson or learning experience implementation.



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- What would you do the same or differently moving forward? Please include your ideas for next steps after this lesson.

	"Highly Skilled"	"Commendable"	"Developing"	"Emerging"
Depth of Analysis	The rising educator demonstrates substantive insight to reflect candidly and deeply on all facets of the instructional process, including planning, delivery, and evaluating effectiveness.	The rising educator exhibits meaningful reflection on his/her experience(s) with the teaching process but does not dive deeply into all aspects of the process (planning, delivery, and evaluating effectiveness).	The rising educator reflects on several aspects of his/her lesson, yet the range and depth of the analysis is limited and uneven.	The rising educator demonstrates partial and/or superficial reflection of his/her lesson and produces only generic insights into experience(s) with the teaching process.
Identification of Appropriate Next Steps	The rising educator demonstrates substantive insight into planning strategic next steps to maximize ongoing student learning and engagement.	The rising educator demonstrates thoughtful planning for appropriate next steps to engage ongoing student learning.	The rising educator provides very basic or generic next steps to better engage students that do not clearly advance students' learning or that are not well-aligned with the educator's assessment of the lesson's weaknesses or strengths.	The rising educator's next steps are not clearly articulated or are not connected to his/her assessment of the weaknesses/limitations of the featured lesson.
Writing: Clarity and Mechanics	Flawless execution	There are one or two unclear moments or errors in mechanics, usage, spelling, punctuation, or grammar.	There are three or four unclear moments or errors in mechanics, usage, spelling, punctuation, or grammar.	There are more than four unclear moments or errors in mechanics, usage, spelling, punctuation, or grammar.

