



Quick Tips For Peer Leaders by Peer Leaders

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Quick Tips For Peer Leaders by Peer Leaders is featured as a Special Topics Section for *Advances in Peer-Led Learning (APLL)*. Each Quick Tip focuses on a specific challenge Peer Leaders face, such as maintaining participation, managing group dynamics, or supporting at-risk students, and offers a student-centered solution. Peer Leaders may be interested in creating their Quick Tips because they provide a platform to share creative approaches that have worked in their workshops and can help to strengthen the collective knowledge of the PLTL community. The vision for Quick Tips is that they serve as a growing library of ideas and inspiration, allowing Peer Leaders everywhere to learn from one another and continuously improve how they support their students.

Peer Leaders may submit Quick Tips for consideration for publication in APLL. This opportunity offers an avenue for Peer Leaders to start their expressive journey into creating their own contributions to the literature on learning. Do you have one? Submit yours as soon as you can.



Spurring On Your Inactive Workshop: Fixing the Doldrums

- *Arielle Dow*

It is not uncommon for Peer Leaders to encounter workshops where students are not actively engaging or participating. When students do not collaborate and participate in group work or discussions, learning and the value of workshop sessions are impacted. Some students may be hesitant to speak up, while others may choose to work individually instead of discussing or interacting with their classmates. This lack of collaboration prevents students from exchanging ideas, learning from one another, and reduces the overall effectiveness of the workshop.

One way to spark collaboration is to start the workshop with an interactive, game-style group quiz based on the previous week's material. The Peer Leader gives students five minutes to review their notes, then has them put the notes away. The quiz is for credit, without resources, and the only aid they can use is each other. In a facilitative and encouraging way, workshop participants talk, share ideas, and reason through answers together and listen to each other's active contributions.

This activity fosters collaboration, inspiring students to discuss ideas, debate answers, and help one another on the spot. Since the quiz is in a group setting and is part of their grade, all students are encouraged to talk and contribute, immediately increasing participation and engagement. Starting the workshop in this way also makes students feel more comfortable asking and answering questions throughout the rest of the workshop.

This method works because it transforms a standard quiz into a social, interactive process, makes collaboration and communication a requirement, builds confidence and allows students to experience the value of working together to achieve a shared goal.

Keywords: Quick Tips, Collaboration, Engagement, Workshop



Engage Them All, All the Time

- *Arielle Dow*

Peer Leaders often assign the same practice problem to all students in the workshop. However, when some students complete their assigned problems faster than others, it can result in less engagement and a diminished learning experience for all. Peer Leaders frequently observe and report a difference in the amount of time that students need to complete practice problems. Several reasons can cause this: students have varying levels of prior knowledge and preparation, different processing speeds, language barriers, varying levels of anxiety or confidence, as well as cognitive load.

To help address these challenges and promote student engagement and learning, an alternative approach is to divide the students into smaller groups (perhaps three students) and give each group a *different* problem. While students work on their problems, the Peer Leader checks on student progress, answers questions, and makes sure that every person in a group is working on the process of finding the solution to their assigned problem.

To foster continued engagement, students share their process in solving their problem in their smaller group. After the smaller group members agree, and other groups are working on their assigned problem, Peer Leaders could provide the group that has finished with a problem originally assigned to a different group. For students or groups who need more time or are struggling with the concept, the Peer Leader has the flexibility to dedicate time to the individual or groups to aid the students who need it most and offer targeted support.

Once all students and groups have finished their assigned problem(s), the Peer Leader gathers everyone back together and invites a member of each group to come to the board to present the steps taken to reach their solution as well as explain the steps taken, so everyone benefits from the variety of questions and approaches.

This structure keeps all students actively engaged without becoming bored, rushed or left behind, while also encouraging collaboration and discussion across groups.

Keywords: Quick Tips, Engagement, Workshops, Peer-Led Team Learning, Peer Facilitator of Learning