

Exploring Synchronous Active Learning Activities



GOAL: Explore synchronous active learning activities based on your goals for the activity.

In the following table, synchronous active learning activities are organized by the purpose or goals that each activity can serve, and whether those activities are completed individually (I) or collaboratively (C).

Activity Purpose	Synchronous Active Learning Activities	
Check understanding of concepts, readings, or skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-assessment (I) • Quick write, Minute Paper (I) • What's Missing? (I) • Aha Wall (I) • Muddiest Point (I) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entry/Exit Tickets (I) • Fact or Opinion (I) • Quiz, polling, or voting (I, C) • Backchannel Chat (I, C)
Discuss knowledge, content, or skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual Prompt (I) • Brainstorming Challenge (I, C) • Backchannel Chat (I, C) • Small Group Discussion (C) • Social Annotation (C) • Jigsaw Discussion (C) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think-Pair-Share / Think-Group-Share (C) • Fishbowl (C) • Group Grid (C) • Collaborative Summaries (C)
Apply, analyze, or practice knowledge, content, or skills	<p><i>All activities in the row above, plus...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Study (I, C) • Problem-Based Learning (C) • Posters & Gallery Walk (C) • Debate (C) • Affinity Grouping (C) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concept Mapping or Visual Modelling (C) • Collaborative Documents in Teams or Google (how-to) (C) • Role Play, Interview, or Simulation (C)
Peer input/feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Review/Assessment (C) • Think-Aloud-Pair Problem Solving (C) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Summaries (C) • Note-Taking Pairs (C)
Build community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorming Challenge (I, C) • Backchannel Chat (I, C) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Group Discussion (C) • Icebreakers (I, C)

Tools to help you select active learning activities:

- [Active Learning Design Tool](#) (filter by class size, group size, duration, learning outcome, etc.)
- [Techniques Video Library](#) (filter by environment, type, problem addressed, and learning outcome)



Active Learning in Physically Distanced or HyFlex Classrooms



[Active Learning in Hybrid and Physically Distanced Classrooms](#), Vanderbilt University
[Active Learning in Socially Distanced Classrooms and Online Courses](#), Lecture Breakers
[Teaching Tools: Active Learning while Physically Distancing](#), Louisiana State University
[HyFlex Course Design Examples](#), Kevin Kelly, San Francisco State University



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