

ENGAGEMENT

Noticing When Students Are Not Engaged and Reacting

THE **MARZANO COMPENDIUM** OF
INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Noticing When Students Are Not Engaged and Reacting



Copyright © 2016 by Marzano Research

Materials appearing here are copyrighted. With one exception, all rights are reserved. Users with a subscription to the Marzano Compendium of Instructional Strategies may print the pages of this folio for personal use and reproduce pages marked “Reproducible.” Otherwise, no part of this folio may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means (electronic, photocopying, recording, or otherwise) without prior written permission of the publisher.

555 North Morton Street
Bloomington, IN 47404

888.849.0851
FAX: 866.801.1447

email: info@marzanoresearch.com
marzanoresearch.com

Visit marzanoresearch.com/compendium to access the Marzano Compendium of Instructional Strategies to view additional resources related to this element and others.

Director of Content and Resources: Julia A. Simms

Editorial Manager: Laurel Hecker

Production Editor: Ming Lee Newcomb

Editorial Assistants / Staff Writers: Elizabeth A. Bearden & Christopher Dodson

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
NOTICING WHEN STUDENTS ARE NOT ENGAGED AND REACTING	2
STRATEGIES	4
Monitoring Individual Student Engagement	5
Monitoring Overall Class Engagement	7
Self-Reported Student Engagement Data	9
Re-Engaging Individual Students	11
Boosting Overall Class Energy Levels	12
REPRODUCIBLES	14

INTRODUCTION

In 2007, Dr. Robert J. Marzano published *The Art and Science of Teaching: A Comprehensive Framework for Effective Instruction*. The framework, composed of three lesson segments, ten design questions, and forty-one elements, was based on research showing that teacher quality is one of the strongest influences on student achievement—that is, an effective teacher can positively and significantly impact student learning. As such, *The Art and Science of Teaching* sought to identify specific action steps teachers could take to improve their effectiveness.

In 2015, Dr. Marzano updated *The Art and Science of Teaching* framework to reflect new insights and feedback. The Marzano Compendium of Instructional Strategies is based on this updated model, presenting forty-three elements of effective teaching in ten categories. Each folio in the series addresses one element and includes strategies, examples, and reproducible resources. The Compendium and its folios are designed to help teachers increase their effectiveness by focusing on professional growth. To that end, each folio includes a scoring scale teachers can use to determine their proficiency with the element, as well as numerous strategies that teachers can use to enact the element in their classrooms. Indeed, the bulk of each folio consists of these strategies and reproducibles for implementing and monitoring them, making the Compendium a practical, actionable resource for teachers, instructional coaches, teacher mentors, and administrators.

NOTICING WHEN STUDENTS ARE NOT ENGAGED AND REACTING

During class, teachers should identify when students are not engaged. Different indicators of engagement include students' on-task behavior, positive emotions toward learning, personal investment in learning, and level of attention to instructional activities. Once disengaged students have been identified, teachers can take overt action to help them refocus on the content being presented or the activity at hand.

Monitoring This Element

There are specific student responses that indicate this element is being effectively implemented. Before trying strategies for the element in the classroom, it is important that the teacher knows how to identify the types of student behaviors that indicate the strategy is producing the desired effects. General behaviors a teacher might look for include the following.

- Students appear aware of the fact that the teacher is taking note of their level of engagement.
- Students try to increase their level of engagement when prompted.
- When asked, students explain that the teacher expects high levels of engagement.

Desired behaviors such as these are listed for each strategy in this element.

Teachers often wonder how their mastery of specific strategies relates to their mastery of the element as a whole. Successful execution of an element does not depend on the use of every strategy within that element. Rather, multiple strategies are presented within each element to provide teachers with diverse options. Each strategy can be an effective means of implementing the goals of the element. If teachers attain success using a particular strategy, it is not always necessary to master the rest of the strategies within the same element. If a particular strategy proves difficult or ineffective, however, teachers are encouraged to experiment with various strategies to find the method that works best for them.

Scoring Scale

The following scoring scale can help teachers assess and monitor their progress with this element. The scale has five levels, from Not Using (0) to Innovating (4). A teacher at the Not Using (0) level is unaware of the strategies and behaviors associated with the element or is simply not using any of the strategies. At the Beginning (1) level, a teacher attempts to address the element by trying specific strategies, but does so in an incomplete or incorrect way. When a teacher reaches the Developing (2) level, he or she implements strategies for the element correctly and completely, but does not monitor their effects. At the Applying (3) level, a teacher implements strategies for the element and monitors their effectiveness with his or her students. Finally, a teacher at the Innovating (4) level is fluent with strategies for the element and can adapt them to unique student needs and situations, creating new strategies for the element as necessary.

Scale for Noticing When Students Are Not Engaged and Reacting

4	3	2	1	0
Innovating	Applying	Developing	Beginning	Not Using
I adapt behaviors and create new strategies for unique student needs and situations.	I notice and react when students are not engaged, and I monitor the extent to which my actions affect students' engagement.	I notice and react when students are not engaged, but I do not monitor the effect on students.	I use the strategies and behaviors associated with this element incorrectly or with parts missing.	I am unaware of strategies and behaviors associated with this element.

The following examples describe what each level of the scale might look like in the classroom.

Not Using (0): A teacher is so focused on getting through a lesson that he or she does not pay attention to the interest level of the class and, as such, does not notice when students are not paying attention to the material being presented.

Beginning (1): A teacher may notice when students are not interested or engaged in the materials but does not take action to re-engage the students. Rather, the teacher focuses on students who are paying attention.

Developing (2): A teacher notices when students are not engaged and uses specific strategies to re-engage them. However, the teacher does not keep track of which activities successfully re-engage students in the material and which are less effective.

Applying (3): A teacher notices when students are not engaged and, depending on the situation, effectively uses specific strategies to re-engage either individual students or boost the energy level of the entire class. The teacher also keeps track of the effects of a given strategy and how successful it is in the short term (immediately re-engaging a student) and the long term (after a chunk of time has passed during class).

Innovating (4): A teacher notices when energy levels of a class seem to be declining and pro-actively uses re-engagement strategies to boost energy levels before students are completely disengaged. The teacher often uses a combination of strategies that simultaneously boost the energy levels of the entire class and specific students who appear to be less interested than others.

STRATEGIES

Each of the following strategies describes specific actions that teachers can take to enact this element in their classrooms. Strategies can be used individually or in combination with each other. Each strategy includes a description, a list of teacher actions, a list of desired student responses, and suggestions for adapting the strategy to provide extra support or extensions. Extra support and extensions relate directly to the Innovating (4) level of the scale. Extra support involves steps teachers can take to ensure they are implementing the strategy effectively for all students, including English learners, special education students, students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, and reluctant learners. Extensions are ways that teachers can adapt the strategy for advanced students. In addition, some strategies include technology tips that detail ways teachers can use classroom technology to implement or enhance the strategy. Finally, each strategy includes further information, practical examples, or a reproducible designed to aid teachers' implementation of the strategy.

Monitoring Individual Student Engagement

Teachers can scan the room and identify specific students who appear to be disengaged to ensure high levels of classroom engagement. The teacher can do this during whole-class or small-group instruction as well as during individual seatwork. Once a student is identified, the teacher should use specific interventions to re-engage the student. For example, if a teacher notices a student gazing out the window for extended periods of time during whole-class instruction, the teacher might decide to physically move him- or herself between the unfocused student and the window as a means to draw the student's attention back to the lesson being taught.

Teacher Actions

- Looking for students who show signs of low attention and engagement

Desired Student Responses

- Describing the teacher as someone who notices when they are not engaged

Extra Support

- Making note of students whose attention often wanders or who easily become disengaged and checking on those students frequently

Extension

- Asking students to signal the teacher if they find their attention is wandering or if they realize that they are disengaged

Signs of Individual Student Engagement

During Whole-Class Instruction

- Notetaking
- Making direct eye contact or following the teacher with his or her eyes
- Reacting to content being presented (for example, laughing or looking surprised)
- Following directions (for example, raising hand or moving when requested)
- Asking questions or presenting comments related to content
- Responding to questions when called upon

During Small-Group Instruction

- Interacting with other students
- Maintaining appropriate volume levels
- Referring to text or instructions while working
- Taking notes while working
- When queried, identifying the work their group has accomplished

During Seatwork

- Working quietly
- Keeping eyes focused on work at hand
- Writing in text or on handouts
- Not interacting (talking, laughing, exchanging looks) with or being distracted by other students

Monitoring Overall Class Engagement

To ensure class engagement, the teacher monitors levels of engagement exhibited by the class as a whole. When monitoring class engagement, a teacher can assess the degree to which the entirety of the class seems to be interested in the work at hand. For example, in a class with low engagement, when the teacher asks a question, students may not volunteer to answer the question (with the exception of a few of the same students). In a class with high engagement, students seem authentically interested in the material and eager to deepen their knowledge about the content.

Teacher Actions

- Identifying when the class as a whole exhibits a low level of attention and engagement
- Identifying when the class seems to have low energy

Desired Student Responses

- Describing the teacher as someone who notices when they are not paying attention
- Describing the teacher as someone who notices when the class has low energy

Extra Support

- Using a graph or chart on the board to periodically indicate the class's level of attention

Extension

- Asking students to track their own levels of attention and engagement through a class period or day

Indicators for Overall Class Engagement

High Levels of Overall Engagement

- Students are alert and attentive.
- Different students volunteer to answer questions when asked.
- Class discussion is fruitful and needs little guidance.
- Students can explain what they find interesting about the content.
- Students can work independently or as a group and stay on task.
- Students respond to cues (laughing at jokes, following directions, and so on).

Low Levels of Overall Engagement

- The majority of students seem bored or disengaged.
- Some students are disruptive or act out and successfully distract other students.
- Students regularly incorrectly answer questions about content addressed during class.
- The teacher spends the majority of his or her time dealing with problematic students rather than teaching.

Self-Reported Student Engagement Data

The teacher periodically asks students to signal their level of engagement. The teacher could ask students to self-report their engagement levels informally throughout a class or unit by asking students to raise their hands if they feel their energy levels dropping or create a system to let students consistently report their engagement. For example, each student might have three cards—a white card that signifies high engagement, a gray card that signifies medium engagement, and a black card that signifies “need help.” Students each display the card that represents their level of engagement at a particular time.

Teacher Actions

- Creating a system that allows students to signal their level of engagement
- Periodically prompting students to signal their level of engagement

Desired Student Responses

- Signaling the teacher when they are disengaged, distracted, or bored

Extra Support

- Using pictures, stories, or video clips to describe the concept of engagement and different levels of engagement

Extension

- Asking students to create their own strategies to signal when they are disengaged

Technology Tips

- Use polling software to have students report their levels of engagement. If students report low levels of engagement, they can also submit suggestions via text message about what might improve them.

Examples of Student Engagement Measurement Tools

- Students are given three cards, each signifying a different level of engagement: one that signals low engagement, one that signals medium engagement, and one that signals high engagement. The teacher can poll the class by having students hold up the card that best represents their engagement level.
- The teacher asks students to rank their current engagement during class. Students signal high engagement with a thumbs up, low engagement with a thumbs down, and medium engagement with an open hand parallel to the floor. The teacher can also ask students to rank their current interest in the material by holding up fingers with five fingers indicating very interested in the material and one finger indicating not interested in the material at all. This tool can also be used at the end of the unit to determine the interest level a class had in specific material.
- The teacher provides a scale, like the following, that ranks engagement: (0) not engaged at all, (1) hardly engaged, (2) moderately engaged, (3) engaged, or (4) highly engaged. The teacher can use this scale to assess students’ engagement during class or their overall interest

Noticing When Students Are Not Engaged and Reacting

in the material being taught. The teacher might also include this scale at the end of assessments throughout or at the end of a unit and ask students to use it to rate their interest level in the material covered.

- If a teacher wants to provide an anonymous way for students to identify their engagement levels, the teacher can pass out index cards to the class and ask them to write down the answers to two questions: (1) How engaged are you right now? and (2) What can I do to make class more engaging? The teacher then collects the responses and reviews the answers, taking into consideration students' suggestions.
- The teacher creates some sort of visual cue that students can use to signal that they are beginning to disengage during class. For example, the teacher might provide a "speedometer" made out of paper at every seat that students can use to represent their engagement level. If the teacher notices a student moves the needle on his or her speedometer to zero, the teacher uses specific strategies to re-engage the student.

Re-Engaging Individual Students

Once a teacher identifies a student who is not engaged or reacting to the content being presented, the teacher should take action to re-engage the student. There are a variety of actions that teachers can take to re-engage students who are not paying attention. For example, if a teacher notices that a student is doodling rather than taking notes, the teacher can call on that specific student and ask him or her for input related to the content being taught.

Teacher Actions

- Engaging the class in activities to help unfocused or disengaged students re-engage
- Assessing which activities are best suited to re-engaging unfocused or disengaged students

Desired Student Responses

- Re-engaging in response to teacher interventions

Extra Support

- Providing students with visual tools to allow them to signal the teacher when they feel disengaged

Extension

- Asking students to identify two to three personal strategies they can use to re-engage if they find their attention wandering

Re-Engagement Tactics for Individual Students

The following tactics are tailored to re-engage individual students.

- **Remove the distraction:** If a student is disengaged because of a specific person, object, or situation, the teacher identifies and removes the distraction. For example, if a teacher notices that a student is being distracted by something outside of the classroom, the teacher can close the window blinds or shut the classroom door. If a student is texting on his or her cell phone or is being distracted by his or her neighbor, the teacher can confiscate the cell phone or physically separate the two students.
- **Directly call on the student:** If a student appears to be bored or not paying attention, the teacher can directly call on the student for his or her input on the content being taught. Alternatively, the teacher can simply say the student's name to subtly let that student know that he or she is aware of the lapse in attention.
- **Ask the student:** If a student seems particularly disengaged during class, the teacher might choose to query the student about his or her engagement levels either after class or during a class transition. For example, as the lesson switches from direct instruction to small group work, the teacher might pull the student aside, explain that he or she noticed the student's low level of energy, and ask why this is the case.

Boosting Overall Class Energy Levels

If a teacher notices that the energy levels in the classroom are low or that more than a few students are disengaged, the teacher can use specific activities to re-engage a group of students or the entire class. For example, a teacher might notice halfway through a lecture that a group of students in the back of the classroom do not seem engaged. The teacher might pause his or her lecture and ask all students to pull out their journals and write a few comments and questions about the content thus far. After giving a few minutes of working time, the teacher might choose a student from the initially disengaged group to share what he or she has written.

Teacher Actions

- Identifying when the energy level of the class overall is low
- Identifying specific groups of students who are disengaged
- Choosing appropriate activities to re-engage students

Desired Student Responses

- Focusing their attention on class activities in response to teacher interventions

Extra Support

- Providing students in the class with visual tools to help them signal to the teacher that they need a break or have low energy

Extension

- Having a class discussion about the causes of low energy and strategies for the teacher to use to keep energy levels high

Technology Tips

- Ask students to respond to easy questions using polling technology; the percentage of students who answer the question correctly and the time it takes them will indicate students' levels of attention.
- Organize students into small groups and post the groups on an interactive whiteboard page. When a particular group appears disengaged, post a symbol beside the group's name.

Re-Engagement Tactics for Groups of Students

- **Incorporate movement:** If energy levels in the class seem low, the teacher can ask all the students in the class to stand up and stretch for a few minutes. This will break up the content and allow students to burn off extra pent-up physical energy which, when built up, can sometimes cause anxiousness.
- **Take a break:** The teacher announces to the class that he or she recognizes that the class's energy seems low. The teacher then asks whether or not a quick break from the material (no more than five minutes) would be helpful, but the teacher only grants this break with the understanding that the students will come back and focus on the material at hand.

Noticing When Students Are Not Engaged and Reacting

- **Incorporate student participation:** If student engagement seems low, the teacher can find ways to get students to participate. For example, rather than calling on students to respond to questions, the teacher might use a ball or other object to determine who answers a given question. The teacher then throws the ball to a student and has that student pass the item to a student of his or her choice.
- **Adapt the lesson:** If a teacher notices that students seem to be bored by the content being taught, the teacher may want to find a way to tailor the lesson to be more engaging. For example, if students seem to have low energy during a direct instruction lesson, the teacher might ask students to get into small groups and discuss the content that was just presented. The teacher can then go around to groups, identify areas of confusion, and correct misconceptions.
- **Incorporate competition:** If energy levels seem low, the teacher can use the prospect of an academic game to help students focus. For example, if the teacher senses the class seems to have low energy, the teacher might hint that at the end of the period, the class is going to play a game that relies on knowledge of the content being presented.
- **Increase enthusiasm:** If the teacher senses that the class is bored, he or she may make an active choice to become especially enthusiastic about the content being presented. By modeling enthusiasm, some students may find the material to be more engaging.

REPRODUCIBLES

Teachers can use the following reproducibles to monitor their implementation of this element. The reproducible titled Tracking Progress Over Time helps teachers set goals related to their proficiency with this element and track their progress toward these goals over the course of a unit, semester, or year. Tracking Teacher Actions and Tracking Student Responses allow observers in classrooms to monitor specific teacher and student behavior related to this element. Teachers themselves can also use the Tracking Student Responses reproducible to document instances of student behaviors during class. The Strategy Reflection Log provides teachers a space to write down their thoughts and reflect on the implementation process for specific strategies related to this element. Finally, this section provides both a student survey and a teacher survey, the results of which provide feedback about teachers' proficiency with this element.

Tracking Progress Over Time

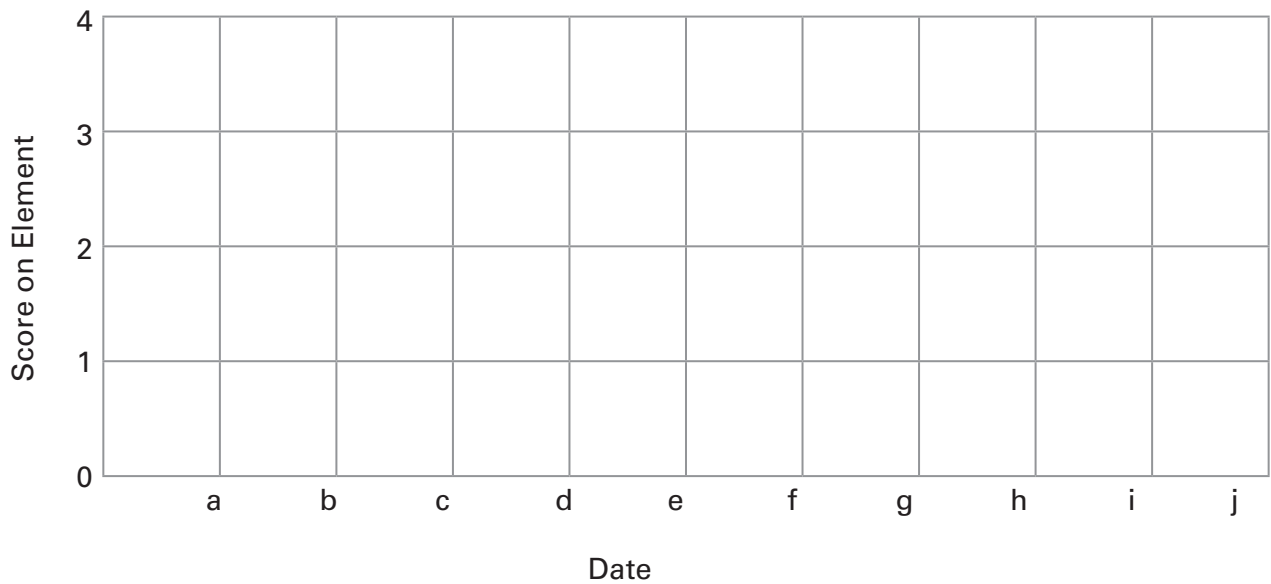
Use this worksheet to set a goal for your use of this element, make a plan for increasing your mastery, and chart your progress toward your goal.

Element: _____

Initial Score: _____

Goal Score: _____ by _____ (date)

Specific things I am going to do to improve: _____



a. _____

f. _____

b. _____

g. _____

c. _____

h. _____

d. _____

i. _____

e. _____

j. _____

Tracking Teacher Actions

During an observation, the observer can use this form to record the teacher's usage of strategies related to the element of noticing when students are not engaged and reacting.

Observation Date and Time: _____ Length of Observation: _____

Check Strategies You Intend to Use	Strategies	Description of What Was Observed
	Monitoring Individual Student Engagement	
	Monitoring Overall Class Engagement	
	Self-Reported Student Engagement Data	
	Re-Engaging Individual Students	
	Boosting Overall Class Energy Levels	
	Other:	
	Other:	

Tracking Student Responses

A teacher or observer can use this worksheet to record instances of student behavior to inform planning and implementation of strategies associated with noticing when students are not engaged and reacting. Any item followed by an asterisk is an example of undesirable behavior related to the element; the teacher should look for a decrease in the number of instances of these items.

Observation Date and Time: _____ Length of Observation: _____

Behavior	Number of Instances
Seeming alert and engaged	
Reacting to cues	
Correctly responding to questions	
Making eye contact	
Taking notes	
Seeming disengaged or unfocused*	
Acting out in class or causing distractions*	
Describing the teacher as someone who notices when they are not engaged	
Other:	
Other:	

Strategy Reflection Log

Use this worksheet to select a strategy, set a goal, and reflect on your use of that strategy.

Element: _____

Strategy: _____

Goal: _____

Date	How did it go?

Student Survey for Noticing When Students Are Not Engaged and Reacting

1. My teacher notices when I'm not interested in what he or she is teaching.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	-------------------------------	-------	----------------

2. My teacher makes learning interesting.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	-------------------------------	-------	----------------

3. If students are bored, distracted, or not paying attention, my teacher notices and does something about it.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	-------------------------------	-------	----------------

4. I look forward to class.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	-------------------------------	-------	----------------

5. When my teacher asks me to pay attention, I do.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	-------------------------------	-------	----------------

6. My teacher wants me to be excited about and interested in what we are learning.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	-------------------------------	-------	----------------

Teacher Survey for Noticing When Students Are Not Engaged and Reacting

1. I notice when specific students or groups of students are not engaged.

Often Sometimes Rarely Never I don't know

2. I notice when the energy level is low in the classroom.

Often Sometimes Rarely Never I don't know

3. I take action to re-engage students.

Often Sometimes Rarely Never I don't know

4. My actions to re-engage students are successful.

Often Sometimes Rarely Never I don't know

5. Students would describe me as someone who notices and reacts when they are not engaged.

Often Sometimes Rarely Never I don't know

6. Students would describe me as someone who expects high levels of engagement.

Often Sometimes Rarely Never I don't know

7. I create ways for students to signal they are not engaged.

Often Sometimes Rarely Never I don't know