



Engage/Connect comes at the beginning of the lesson cycle to set the context and prime the brain for learning. This is when the teacher piques student interest, and begins to focus their thinking. This interest may stem from the teacher's introduction with visual stimuli, problems, questions or personal experiences. Making connections between new and prior learning is embedded in the Engage/Connect practice to help students see the relevance of the new learning. Studies show that students who make connections command a deeper understanding of concepts learned and they are better able to transfer those skills in other areas. Students can relate materials to themselves, items they have read, and the world around them.

- Identify the learning objectives.
- Choose an engaging activity that compliments the learning objective and will spark the interest of students. For example: comic strips, photographs, song lyrics, word problems, riddles, use of multimedia, humor, grouping strategies and kinesthetic movement.
- Embed opportunities to assess students' prior knowledge into the engage activity.
- Present the engage activity selected in the prep work to elicit student interest, curiosity or prior knowledge at the beginning of the lesson.
- Instruct students to respond to presented material by discussing in whole groups, with a partner, or individually in written form. Encourage students to make connections with the world, other text, and with their personal experiences.



## Additional Tools

### *Do Now*

A Do Now is a short independent activity that connects prior knowledge to the day's lesson.

### *Advanced Organizers*

This Marzano High Yield strategy focuses on a visual representation of essential information. It can be used to assist in the recall of details or to process information later in the lesson or school year.

For more strategies and/or resources, visit [houstonisd.org/EffectivePractices](http://houstonisd.org/EffectivePractices)



## ALERTS

Teachers may spend too much time on Engage/Connect. This practice is quick and is not content heavy.



## QUICK TIPS

As students are making connections, consider asking how the connections they make deepen their understanding of the content.