

Online Instruction

connecting with students

Be Vulnerable

Invite students into your own experience. Model humility, a desire to improve, and a willingness to change your mind. Ask students what is working or not working and use that to guide practice. Be transparent about how student feedback is changing your practice.

Offer Kudos

Offer students public and private kudos on work well done and as they connect with one another, invite them to offer kudos on a "kudos" discussion board, Padlet, or Google Jamboard. For instance, "I really appreciated that thoughtful post that got the discussion going this week!"

Note Student Interests

Find ways to interject these interests into the class discussion activities, relating them to the content where possible. There are so many ways a love of hiking could make its way into the curriculum!

Use "Oops Tokens"

These are like get out of jail free cards that give students a chance to turn in work late or to redo an assignment. This recognizes that life happens and that's ok sometimes.

Use Icebreakers

Icebreakers are not just for the start of a course. They can help to build community throughout the course day to day. Take a few moments each week to get to know one another and to build that class community so students feel like they are a part of something meaningful.

Schedule "Coffee Talks"

Invite students online to just shoot the breeze about a host of topics—gardening, recent trips, how to make a great pie crust. You can learn a lot about your students by starting up a conversation this way and it builds a foundation of trust.

Let Students in on Decisions

Give students an opportunity to co-construct learning experiences by offering suggestions for discussion or project topics. For instance, "which of the topics that we covered this week would you like to explore in the discussion board?"

Invite Student to Share Tips

Whether it is a tip on studying, navigating a group project, or even how to brew a great cup of coffee, give students a chance to share something with their peers.

Share Small Celebrations

Invite students to share small celebrations like a favorite new show or song that just came out. Did something great happen over the weekend or over break? Be sure to share your own celebrations as well!

Host Digital Spirit Days

Have students represent the content in some fun way. Can they find memes or cartoons to share, or post pictures of themselves wearing t-shirts that apply to the content? For instance, in Chemistry: "Never trust Atoms; They make up everything."