

Bringing Active Back

How To Make Your Personalized Learning Environment More Relevant and Engaging

FACT #1

Active Learning was popularized more than a hundred years ago by John Dewey and is echoed in philosophies that span decades from Montessori to Experiential and Project-Based Learning.

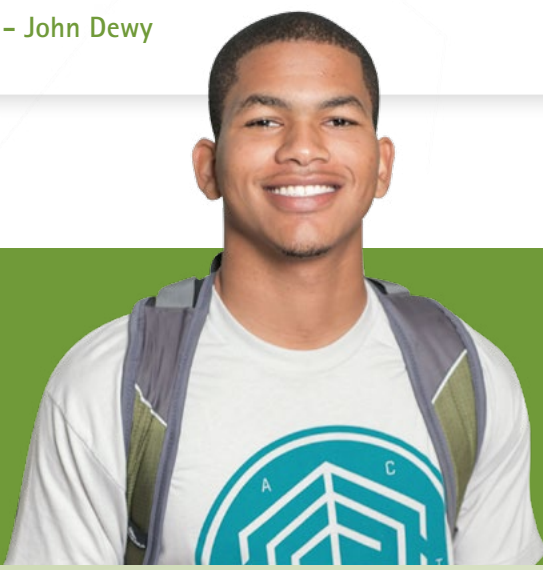
The intersection between active and personalized learning yields **an engaging and relevant experience** that increases student achievement.

FACT #2

Active learning is critical for 21st century education

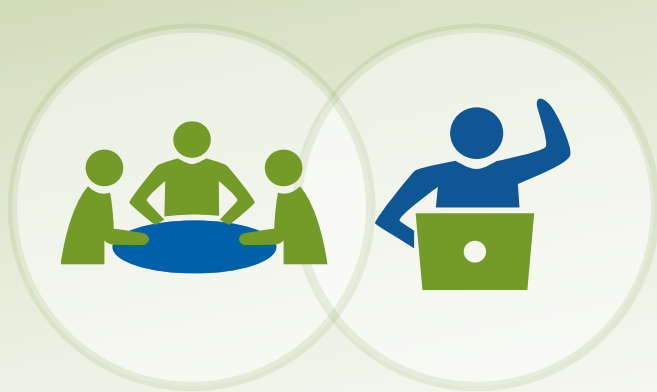
"Give the pupils something to do, not something to learn; and the doing is of such a nature as to demand thinking; learning naturally results."

– John Dewey



Active + Personalized for engaged and relevant learning experiences

In new, personalized and blended environments, the new question becomes *how to ensure that students remain actively engaged in new models of learning.*



Digital Content

Are the tools and curriculum used designed to support active and personalized learning?



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Instructional Design

Do lessons and classroom practices support active and personalized learning?



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School Design

How do school systems, structure and schedule support active and personalized learning?

Students Should be Asked to...

When teachers evaluate online and blended tools, they can look for these key verbs that signal active engagement. Specifically, does the digital content ask students to:



OBSERVE. Look at this. What do you see? What's different? What's the same? Are there patterns? Observing is very similar to exploring and allows students to see and discover different things. It happens naturally when curiosity is present.



INQUIRE. What do you wonder? What questions do you have? What information are you looking for? What information should you look for? Reflect.



CONFIRM. Get answers to your questions. Show me how that works. Help me check my work. Make sure you've got it. Say it in your own words. Summarize what you know. Check your facts. Check your understanding. Check to see if your prediction was accurate.



CONNECT. What are the relationships between these things? Are there categories and subcategories? Is this related to my life or to something else I've studied? Is this claim supported by the information? What parts make up this whole? What's it like? What's it not like? Can I analyze it?



CREATE. Try it. How would you solve this problem? Make or say something that hasn't been made or said before. Write, compose and draw. Synthesize. Express.

Elements of Supportive School Design

There are several influential factors of school design that either advance or block the implementation of active, personalized learning opportunities. These include:

GOALS

A shared picture of active and personalized learning experiences, in addition to desired academic outcomes, lead to targeted objectives.

CULTURE

Shared norms, rituals, incentives and policies drive behavior. Does your school value compliance or creativity, quiet or a buzz of activity? Do young people have a voice and choices within the life of the school?

DATA

Active and personalized learning require rich, formative feedback as well as engagement measures and qualitative feedback from teachers and students. Measurement should be regular and intentional.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Active and personalized learning is not just for students. Teachers deserve blended and personalized learning, including just-in-time resources, collaborative team learning experiences and support from school leadership.

RELATIONSHIPS

Sustained relationships in a secondary school can be supported through an advisory structure that helps students figure out who they are, where they're headed and how they're going to get there. Advisors support course selection, academic monitoring and postsecondary planning, and they provide links to support services.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Active and personalized learning creates the need for community partners that support project-based learning, work experiences and service learning.

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Students should engage in demanding academic work that requires strong and personalized supports and links to youth and family services.



A common misconception exists that active learning is only "hands-on offline," and personalized learning stays "online." But both online and offline elements of a blended learning environment can be active and personalized.

The power of blended learning lies not in simply digitizing traditional models of teaching and learning. The true potential of blended learning is to enable both personalized and active learning at scale—for all students.

Apex Learning (@Apex_Learning)
Getting Smart (@Getting_Smart)
#blendedlearning



For more information, download the full paper:

Realizing the Potential of Blended Learning: Beyond Personalized to Active Learning