ARS Engagement Strategies

The ideas presented below will give you ideas on integrating an audience response system (ARS) such as Poll Everywhere into your teaching. We’ll start with a timeline breakdown of when the strategies can be used, then explain the strategies.

Timeline of Strategies

**Basic Approaches**

These approaches will get students onboard and participating, and don’t require a great deal of advanced preparation.

- **Identify a Knowledge Baseline** - e.g. “Where are you in your educational program?”; “How familiar are you with the subject of this course?”
  
  When: start of class session; often at the first class session of the course
  
  Recommended format: multiple choice, open-ended

- **Ice Breakers** - these are intended to be fun, casual, and give the students a chance to get to know one another. E.g. “What one word describes you?”; “Are you the first in your family to attend professional school?”; “What area of medicine is of greatest concern to you?”
  
  When: usually at start of class; often at the first class session of the course
  
  Recommended type: open response poll, word cloud

- **Administrative Questions** - e.g. “When is best time for you to attend office hours?”; “Who do you contact if you are having attendance problems?”; “How many weeks left until the midterm exam?”
  
  When: any time during class session
  
  Recommended type: ranking poll, multiple choice

- **Check-in** - e.g. “How prepared are you for class today?”; “Did you complete the reading?”; “Do you follow up with your study group this past week?”
  
  When: start of class session
  
  Recommended type: multiple choice

- **Planning Ahead** - e.g. “What subject will you be researching for your upcoming paper?”; “What do you have to learn now to be prepared for your clerkship next year?”; “How much time will you spend this week to prepare for the small group session?”
  
  When: end of class session
• **daily reflection** - e.g. “How do you think this discovery will affect medicine in the years ahead?”; “Where will current research take us?”
  when: start or end of class session
  recommended type: open-ended; multiple choice

• **presentation voting** - all students give a presentation; at conclusion of presentations, students vote on their favorite.
  when: end of class.
  recommended type: Q&A/Brainstorm, multiple choice

• **pre-exam exploration** - give students an opportunity to raise questions about the exam, the material it will cover.
  when: any class session, before an exam
  recommended type: open-ended

• **survey** - furnish students with a link to a poll survey at conclusion of lecture. The instructor can share the results of the survey at the next class session.
  when: after lecture
  recommended type: (using survey view) any

**ADVANCED STRATEGIES**

Planning in advance will be required to write polls with this level of lecture integration.

• **lecture review/self-assessment (informal quiz)** - gauge recall of material presented in class. If lecture is broken up into several 'mini-lectures', this technique can be used to cap the end of each segment with one or more questions.
  when: any time during class session
  recommended type: multiple choice; clickable image

• **‘Introduce, Reinforce’ method** – Involves spaced repetition. Similar/identical questions are presented throughout class. Early questions may prime students; later questions may assess understanding. This can improve long-term knowledge acquisition.
  when: any time during class session
  recommend type: multiple choice, clickable image

• **collaborative learning (a.k.a. think-pair-share)** - after presenting the question, ask students to break up into pairs (or small groups), discuss, then answer together. Can also be used as part of a Peer Instruction strategy.
  when: anytime during class, often at the start
  recommended type: Q&A/Brainstorm, open-ended

**FLIPPED CLASSROOM TECHNIQUES**

• **active review (informal quiz)** - review the material students were expected to learn before class to gauge their recall. E.g. “What are the four chambers of the heart?” This incentivizes pre-class participation. Usually paired with steering the lecture (see below).
  when: start of, or throughout, the class session
  recommended type: multiple choice, clickable image

• **steering the lecture** - e.g. “what topic would you like to review today?”; “which reading topic was the most difficult for you to understand?”. Instructor can use this to shift focus of lecture to walk through difficult concepts & cases.
  when: start of, or throughout, the class session
  recommended type: Q&A/Brainstorm