

ELICITING PRIOR KNOWLEDGE in remote/online settings

SUMMARY HANDOUT

Prepared by Raffaella Borasi, Center for Learning in the Digital Age

Illustrative examples:

(S=synchronous session or F2F; A=asynchronous online or regular homework)

- A. Responding to an anonymous online survey (with no sharing of results) (A)
- B. Taking an ungraded pre-test (A/S)
- C. Writing an online “baseline” private journal (A)
- D. Initial discussion board related to the content (A)
- E. Participating in a synchronous electronic poll (w/ immediate sharing of results) (S)
- F. Synchronous online discussion (possibly in breakout rooms) (S)
- G. Sharing a memorable story/experience relevant to the topic (A/S)
- H. Initial open-ended task requiring to use prior knowledge (A/S)

Key tips:

- Word your prompts carefully and keep them open-ended, so as to avoid “leading” questions
- Don’t assign a grade, so students will feel “safer” in sharing what they do not know
- To spark interest in the topic, whenever possible elicit and show a diversity of responses
- To show learning/ growth, create and revisit records at the end of the unit/module

Key decisions to be made (and related options to consider):

WHEN:	Level of PRIVACY:	RECORDS created:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Prior to a task</i> • <i>At the beginning of a task (as part of the task itself)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Public (shared with the class)</i> • <i>Private (shared only with instructor)</i> • <i>Anonymous</i> • <i>Not shared</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Individual</i> • <i>Collective (class/ small group)</i> • <i>None</i>

Useful online tools:

- Online assignment/journal feature (*private + individual*) – any LMS
- Online quiz/test (*private + individual*) – any LMS
- Online discussion board feature (*shared + individual*) – any LMS, Padlet, Flipgrid
- Online anonymous survey (*anonymous + collective*) – most LMSs; Survey Monkeys
- Synchronous electronic poll (*anonymous + collective*) – Zoom; Poll-Everywhere
- Synchronous session (*public +collective/none*) – Zoom; Google Meet; Skype; etc.

Reflective questions about specific implementations of this practice:

- *What did you do to elicit your students’ prior knowledge?*
- *What decisions did you make (and why) about WHEN, PRIVACY, and RECORDS?*
- *What worked/didn’t work and why?*
- *What may you want to do differently next time?*