

Active Learning

How do we organise education today?

For ages our framework of educational interaction has been quite simple. In the classroom, the students faced the teacher and the teacher guided them step by step through the learning process.

Nowadays new pedagogical concepts have arrived and yes, teaching has become more complicated. We want our students to be more active in the classroom. We want them to be independent and collaborative. Students must be critical thinkers and creative, problem solvers. Learning activities should involve and engage everyone in the classroom. Now that's a lot.

Next to changes in pedagogical views, there is technology. We all love technology. Like many of our students, we carry mobile devices and we connect on social media. Industry has created many apps and pieces of hardware that can be integrated in the learning process. But, how do we make it work so that technology gives an added value? And what about the safe and responsible use of the internet?

The design of the learning space is another important parameter. Does the traditional learning environment still meet our needs? We see that schools take initiatives to adapt or design learning spaces so that they facilitate active pedagogies and technology enhanced learning.

Active learning is when you find the perfect blend between pedagogy that make students build 21st Century skills, and technology, as well as a learning space, that gives an added value.

Nowadays many schools and teachers make changes to the traditional educational framework. Some schools design a different type of learning space as well and build Future Classrooms. An example is of a Future Classroom is the Future Classroom Lab of European Schoolnet in Brussels.

Future Classrooms offer more than a traditional classroom and they encourage active learning. They have different learning zones. The zones are physical areas representing different pedagogical concepts.

The FCL in Brussels consists of 6 zones. The traditional classroom set-up where a teacher interacts with students is still part of the learning framework. In the Future Classroom the interaction between teacher and students is a 2-way communication in which all students are involved.

The space and the furniture of the Future Classroom make it easy for the learners to collaborate and exchange.

In a Future Classroom, students have the space to do their own research and find answers to engaging driving questions. Students are content creators as well and they create a wide range of products they can present to their peers to get feedback.

The Future Classroom also has spaces where students can learn in an informal and independent way to prepare them to become lifelong learners and to develop their learning goals.

True, not all teachers have the opportunity to be a teacher in this type of environment, but for sure, it is possible to organize active learning in your own context. And don't forget, In the end it will be the teachers who make the difference.

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