

Anchor Activities

I'm done. Now what?

What are anchor activities?

- specified ongoing activities on which students work independently
- ongoing assignments that students can work on throughout a unit
- self-directed
- include aspects that can be completed on an ongoing basis
- relate to the concepts and the content being learned
- engaging, meaningful tasks, not busywork or packets of worksheets
- activities that everyone in the class will have a chance to do

Why use anchor activities?

- provide a strategy for teachers to deal with “ragged time” when students complete work at different times
- they allow the teacher to work with individual students or groups
- provides ongoing activities that relate to the content of the unit
- provide differentiation due to student choice of activities ([DI Bingo](#))
- allow the teacher to develop independent group work strategies in order to incorporate a mini lab of computers in classroom

When are anchor activities used?

- to begin the day
- when students complete an assignment
- when students are stuck and waiting for help

How can I assess anchor activities?

Help students to take responsibility for their roles in classroom routines. Clear expectations, rationale for expectations and student self evaluation are integral to developing classroom procedures and student ownership within the learning environment.

How can I assess individual anchor activity work?

- Ongoing anecdotal records and checklists
- Student conferences for evaluation and goal setting
- Learning journals
- Learning Contracts
- Student portfolios
- Rubrics
- Random checks
- Peer review

How can I manage the classroom?

- “The brain seeks to make order out of chaos....You can establish patterns of appropriate behavior and systems for doing things in a classroom... Confusion and frustration will be reduced as the brain feels secure in knowing and detecting the pattern for appropriate behavior.”“Begin with the Brain” Martha Kaufeldt, 1999

- Post a daily or weekly AGENDA
- Create simple PROCEDURES for the expected behaviors on how things are to be done in the classroom
- Guide students to create personal GOALS for themselves.
- Establish routines, rituals, celebrations
- Practice

Anchor Activities

Language Arts	Math
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Silent Reading • Journaling • Guinness Book Scavenger Hunt • Brain Quest • Respond to the quote of the day. • Create own Brain Quest questions • Word analogy games and puzzles • Word Wall Bulletin Board • Free computer time • Fluency tests • Write Jingles – to help recall content • Create Magnetic Poetry • Mad-gabs or Mad-libs • Word Sorts (Parts of Speech) • Sentence sequencing • Check out and read a biography about the life of someone you are interested in learning about. Then, prepare a short biography in your own words to share with the class. • Write a letter to the author of a book you've enjoyed. • Create a best-seller list for your ten favorite books! • Compare and contrast two books by the same author. • Find two works that could be apired together. (a nonfiction book about WWII and a poem about WWII) • Compare and contrast two books from the same genre (i.e.: fiction, biography, mystery, realistic fiction, humorous, etc). • Forecast the sales of a new book in a series or by a certain author. Justify your sales forecast. • Rewrite the ending of a book you've read and make it end a different way. • Create an original dialogue between two characters from a book you've read. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create test questions/Story problems • Do “Problems of the Week” • Create a folder of review activities • Create a folder of problem solving activities • Puzzles and math games • Create math games • Manipulatives • Magazines (Have kids connect articles to math) • Extended activities/Module project • Math journal writing • Research a math topic • Computer programs • Practice budgeting (holiday shopping, check book, weekly allowance) • Review electric bills/water bills from the last three months. Find an average amount spent for the three months. Think of a list of ways we might be able to reduce the amount of energy or water we use to save money and resources. • Research calendars or other time-keeping devices. Find out when and by whom they were first used. • Research money and bartering systems. Work to discover where and when these systems originated. • Find out the names and values of at least 5 different types of foreign currency. Be sure to tell where the currencies come from and what denominations they come in. • Imagine a trip you'd really like to take. With permission from your teacher, visit a travel website (such as travelocity.com) and check on available plane tickets and lodgings. Add up the total amount it would cost you to take the trip. How could you get the best deal? • Plan a road trip across the U.S. stopping by at least 5 famous landmarks. Use a map/map scale to measure distances. Then, add up the total amount of mileage the entire trip (round trip) would take. Decide how many days you'd be gone and calculate the cost of gas, motel rooms, and meals for a family of four. What would the total cost of

	the trip be?
Social Studies	Science
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create vocabulary flash cards • Map activities • Board games • Create brochures guides • Summarize chapters in FUN ways (TV Guide) • Independent reading (Historical Fiction) • Create a mini-activity menu • Create a crossword puzzle • Journal • Write a song to help you learn • Brain Teasers • Design a monument • Create a play or skit • Write a biography about your historic hero • Choose an important event that took place in U.S. or world history (example: the first atomic bomb explosion during WWII). Explain how science advancements at the time made the event possible. • Choose an important individual from some part of U.S. or world history. Then, write a first-hand journal entry that might have been written by him/her during that time period. • Find similarities and differences between two events that took place at different times in history. You may want to illustrate the comparisons with a Venn diagram. • Critique a political leader's "platform" on a debatable issue in current events. Create an imaginary continent. Then, draw and name the countries on that continent. Be sure to include borders, capital cities, etc. Then, write about one of the countries. Explain its government, culture, and laws. • List the populations of 8-10 countries in order from greatest to smallest. Explain why you think the populations are the way they are. • Brainstorm ways you could've contributed to your family's well-being during the depression if you lived during that time. • Research a famous entrepreneur of the "gilded age." Find out how he/she earned a fortune and what he/she did with it. • Find an interesting book written during a particular period in history. Explain how this book might've had an impact on how people thought about issues during that time period. • Come up with a "get rich quick" scheme you could've used during the "roaring twenties" to make your fortune. Write a business plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini-lab centers • Science "Question of the Week" • Learning log • Read science articles • Create a mini-experiment • Science puzzles and games • Draw vocabulary pictures • Create a review game • Act out vocabulary • Add to "Science in the News" board • Write content songs • Add illustrated words to the word wall • Add to class timeline • Write scientist biographies • Write a letter to a member of the government about an environmental issue we've talked about in class. • Write a letter to a famous scientist or person who has contributed to science. Be sure to include questions you'd really like this person to answer for you. • Come up with a list of new "essential questions" you'd like to have answered about our unit of study (or future units from our web). • Create a perfect "habitat" for an animal of your choice. Use any format you'd like to illustrate your habitat. • Write an experiment you could conduct to teach others about a science concept you've learned in class. • Create a mind map/web using Thinking Maps on the computer to illustrate a science concept to share with others. • Research an important event or invention in Science. Find out what was going on at the time of this event in world or U.S. history. • Make a list of what you think are the top ten environmental issues in today's world. Be sure to put them in order of importance. • Make a list of ten things about life that are difficult and/or inconvenient and come up with ideas for inventions that could help make these things easier or more convenient. • Go to the library and find a non-fiction book about something scientific that interests you. Become the "resident expert" for our class and share your findings during class meeting.
Miscellaneous	Individual Inquiry
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Games and puzzles • Reading • Logic Activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer Search • Novel/Short Story Writing • Research project

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analogy Activities • Mapping • Graphing • Computer Time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life Plan project • Social action project • Career Planning • Hobby or Passion
Music/Art	Physical Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play piano with headphones • Create new rhythm pattern • Read “Music Alive” or Art Articles • Create rap or song or visual mnemonic for another content area • Create a new melody (choose instrument) • Research favorite music or art, musician or artist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice sports drills • Walk or jog • Do stretches • Yoga or aerobics • Research a PE or health topic • Meditate

Anchor Activity Planning and Implementation

Indicators and Outcomes: Have all the skills and/or concepts been taught previously?

Name and description of Anchor Activity:

Differentiation of Anchor: How will you make it respectful of each ability level/ learning profile in the class?

Instructional Task: What do you have to do so all students can work on the anchor independently?

Materials needed: What will students need? Where will the materials be?

Management and Monitoring

Expectations: When do you expect students to work on this?

Due date: How much time do you want it to take? Will there be checkpoint due dates along the way?

Points and/or rubric: What is the activity worth as a grade? Do you want to grade them or just give credit?

Accountability: What’s collected? Where does finished work go? What is checked by the teacher? the students?

Additional Implementation Suggestions:

- Go over the entire anchor activity with the class.
- Model all of the games.
- If you are using contracts, go over the contract with everyone and make sure they all understand the expectations.
- Hand out rubrics and review them.
- Point out where materials will be kept.
- Be clear on expectations.
- Review management strategies with the class so they know what to do if they have a question and you’re busy.
- Let students know if any of the activities can be done at home or if they’re all meant to

be done in class.

Sample Generic Rubric

4	Exceeds the requirements (ex: does more than the minimum number of constructions), more creativity displayed, understanding of concept demonstrated at a deeper level
3	Meets all requirements of task, all mathematics is accurate, understanding of the concept is demonstrated, creativity is demonstrated
2	Most of the requirement is accurate, understanding of concepts partially developed, some or little creativity displayed
1	Some or little requirements correct, understanding of concept poorly developed, little or no creativity

Sample Student Contract for Anchor Activity

Title: _____

Name _____

I will complete the following activities: _____ Activity Completed

_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>

Check point due dates _____

Due date signatures _____

FINAL DUE DATE _____

student signature _____ parent signature _____

teacher signature _____

Sources:

- <file:///E:/Strategies%20Materials%20for%20Participants/Anchor%20Activities/anchoractivities.htm>
- http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/files/nagc_anchor_activities.pdf
- <http://www.webster.k12.mo.us/education/components/docmgr/default.php?sectiondetailid=40844>
- http://www.beginwiththebrain.com/resources/I_M%20DONE_NOW_WHAT_ASCD_07_comp.pdf