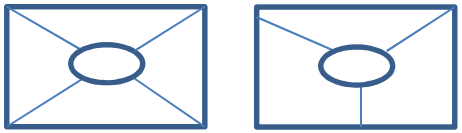
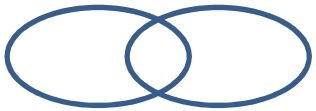
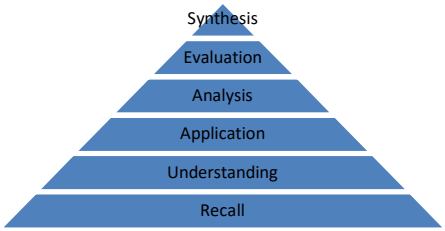
Elements of an Effective Learning Environment	Instructional Approach	Example
Individual Accountability vs. Safe Learning Environment	Wait time	Give students time to think before looking for an answer to a question.
	Think-Pair-Share	In addition to wait time, provide students with the chance to discuss with a partner before sharing with the class. This provides an even safer environment and allows for individual accountability as everyone is encouraged to participate.
	Feedback to students' responses	Be careful with the type of feedback you provide to a student's response. If you say: *"Thanks Bill, that was a brilliant answer"* you may have killed the discussion (because how can anyone else live up to that?)
	Ask questions that do not elicit a right or wrong answer	Students may not participate due to fear of being wrong. A question such as *"this is an example of what?"* allows for a number of wrong answers but only one right one. Open-ended questions such as *"how do you feel about this?"* or *"what does this look like to you?"* put students in a more favorable position. (McKeachie Ch. 5)
	Get to know your students	Get non-participants into a discussion by relating a problem to an area about which they are already knowledgeable. (McKeachie Ch. 5)
	Use rules or guidelines	Explicitly state the rules/guidelines of your classroom: I.e., *"Criticize ideas, not people"; "There is no such thing as a stupid question"* or *"Speak up and share your ideas."* You can easily refer to these rules later if a situation gets tense.
	Framing Questions	Avoid asking questions such as: *"Who can tell me what is the formula for…?"* Instead, ask questions in a way that makes each student accountable to think: *"Think to yourself for a few seconds and then I'll choose one person to respond. What is the formula for…?"* Everyone is held accountable but is allowed time to think and process a response in a safe way.
Pique Students' Curiosity	Intriguing Question	Start or end the class with an intriguing question that students will be able to answer by the end of the class or the following one.

Elements of an Effective Learning Environment	Instructional Approach	Example
	Problem	Present a problem to the group. Partners or small groups must apply the information learnt so far to address the problem. They may address the problem deductively (determine what is causing the problem) or inductively (analyze the issues and identify the problem).
	Case Study	Provide students with a scenario related to a concept/theory/topic recently covered in class. The case should encourage the students to engage in analysis and application of what is being learnt in class. Students might work in groups during class time, while you oversee and support their work. You could also ask students to develop (individually, in pairs, or in groups) their own case studies, and exchange them with others for discussion and analysis.
Active Learning Strategies	Place-mat 	Place-mat is a brain storming technique that encourages all members of a group to participate and then collaborate. • Each student brainstorms and writes their ideas in their area of the Place-mat • Students then share their ideas with their group • The group discusses and summarizes the ideas in the middle section of the place-mat.
	Ranking Ladder	Ask students to rank ideas in order of importance. Make sure students pay attention to the criteria by which they rank which triggers higher order thinking. Also, ranking triggers an emotional response, which makes it easier to recall later on.
	Venn Diagram 	A Venn Diagram is a graphic organizer. It helps students in the analysis (comparing and contrasting) of new concepts or ideas.

Elements of an Effective Learning Environment	Instructional Approach	Example
Active Learning Strategies	Active Reading for Homework	Use study questions to guide reading. Focus study questions on analysis, relationships, synthesis, applications, evaluation, etc., not on recalling facts from the readings. Reading pre-questions can also be used to focus readings on the big ideas of the course. (McKeachie Ch. 4) Contextualize assigned readings: Share why you chose the reading (your goals), how it fits into the course, suggest a process to guide their reading approach, etc. (McKeachie Ch. 4)
	Bloom's Taxonomy 	Bloom's taxonomy can help faculty determine the level of thinking that the students need to engage in for a given learning objective/activity. Once you have determined what level of Bloom's is required, you can create activities that support this level of thinking. Venn Diagrams and Concept Maps, for example, usually require higher levels such as Evaluation and Synthesis.
Checking for Understanding	Cues	Add cues to your notes to remind you to look up and check whether the class is still with you before you press on.
	Minute Paper	A very short writing exercise that encourages reflection, and that can be collected for your review between classes to determine what areas will need more attention. For example, students might answer "what was the most important thing you learned from the readings / during this class?"
	Muddiest Point	Students answer the question: "What was the muddiest point in _____ ? Collect the answers for review between classes to determine what areas will need more attention.
Evaluate your Teaching	Get Student Feedback	On their Learning: *"What has helped you learn the best?" "What interferes with your learning?"*
		On your teaching: *"What have you liked about the course so far?"* *"What should I do more of? What should I stop doing?"*

Resources:
McKeachie, W.J., and Sviniki, M., Eds. *McKeachie's Teaching Tips, 13th edition.* Belmont: Wadsworth Cengage Teaching, 2011.
Angelo, Thomas A. and K. Patricia Cross. *Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers, 2nd Ed*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1988.
Barrie Bennet and Carol Rolheiser. *Beyond Monet, the Artful Science of Instructional Integration*, Bookation Inc, Toronto, 2008.