

## Authentic Pedagogy: An Introductory Activity

Authentic Pedagogy is an “umbrella” concept developed by Fred Newmann at the University of Wisconsin, Madison to enhance meaningful learning. Students engage in the Construction of Knowledge through Disciplined Inquiry and Substantive Conversation in activities with Value Beyond the Classroom. The assessment tasks foster Elaborated Written Communication to support the learning process. Students are engaged in thoughtful, meaningful learning as active learners with high expectations for in-depth understanding of rigorous academic content which has value to them personally. Authentic Pedagogy is designed as a reflective tool for teachers to assess their teaching.

This activity briefly introduces the key components of Fred Newmann’s Authentic Pedagogy by using Substantive Conversation to address a question for each component of Authentic Pedagogy: Construction of Knowledge, Disciplined Inquiry, and Value Beyond the Classroom. This activity is adapted from an original activity developed by Charlie Skemp, Minnesota Social Studies Coordinator.

- Step #1: Answer the questions individually, jotting key responses to each question
- Step #2: Divide into small groups of 3-5 persons
- Step #3: Discuss each question, allowing time for each participant to share their responses before discussing the other questions.
- Step #4: Review responses to the questions as a large group and reflect on Newmann’s Authentic Pedagogy

Alternative: Instead of keeping the same group, modify the composition of groups with each question so new groups are constructed. This will increase the diversity of responses and enable participants to become better acquainted with one another.

Discussion Questions

**What strategies do students use to successfully learn in your classroom?**

**What role does geography play in students' understanding of global conditions?**

**What are your biggest obstacles to teaching as effectively as you would like?**