



Typically when students study, they spend their time reading over course materials. While this kind of review can be helpful, it is passive and not as effective as active studying. Active studying requires action: creating something new and tangible such as note cards or concept maps, or engaging in interactive conversation with a study buddy. With active studying, you'll find that you have a stronger chance of retaining, retrieving, and manipulating the information on exam day.

Here are some fun, interactive, active study strategies:

Test Your Knowledge

If you have flashcards or a study guide, ask your partner to quiz you.

How does verbalizing your ideas help to further solidify your understanding of key concepts?

Illustrate Ideas

Use a dry erase board to illustrate a concept. Invite your partner to ask you clarifying questions about it.

How does creating a visual help you to better understand or explain complex ideas?

Connect Ideas

1. Draw a concept map that helps you to connect course themes or a complex idea that will be on your exam.
2. Explain the concepts to your partner.
3. Answer any questions they have.

How can teaching others help solidify your own understanding of course material?

Key Figures

Think of a key figure from your course whose actions or ideas might be on the exam. Describe this person, their significance, and their relevance to the ideas of the course.

How do people help us to remember key ideas?

Breaking Down Exam Questions

Find a practice question (from a study guide, previous exam, or textbook). Before answering the question, practice breaking down the question. Annotate the question, put it in your own words, and or draw a visual of it.

How critical is it to understand the question before even beginning to answer it?

Provide an example IRL

Look at the list of terms that will be on your exam. Provide real life examples of 5 terms. Answer any questions that your partner has.

How does connecting class terms to real world examples further solidify your understanding of the concepts and their practical application(s)?

The Brain Dump - Part 1

Set a timer for five minutes. During that five minutes, each partner writes down as much as they can recall of concepts that will be on their exam. Compare your brain dump to your notes. Revise incorrect information.

How can the braindump exercise help you test your knowledge before exam day?

The Brain Dump - Part 2

Set a timer for 10 minutes. For 10 minutes each, quiz each other on the information that was written down (and corrected) during/after your brain dump.

How can the braindump exercise help you improve your recall prior to exam day?

Dig into an old exam - Part 1

- Select an old exam whose concepts will be on the exam.
- Select a page with more challenging concepts
- Explain the question stems to your partner in your own words
- Consider each sentence and the underlying 'ask' that your professor is making of you.
 - An 'underlying ask' may be the knowledge your professor is asking you to demonstrate in your response to this question.
- If you missed the question on the exam, explain to your partner how your reading of the question might have impacted your outcome.
- Answer any clarifying questions

How does explaining the question stem impact your understanding of the question?

Dig into an old exam - Part 2

- Select an old exam whose concepts will be on the exam.
- Select a page with more challenging concepts
- Explain several answers your partner
- Answer any clarifying questions

How does returning to old exams positively impact your understanding of course material?