

# Nine Effective Distance / Hybrid Learning Strategies

Mike Roberts

thebaldenglishteacher.com

@BaldRoberts (Twitter)

thebaldenglishteacher@gmail.com

## 1. Bring the Mojo!

- You need to model for students how to make the best of a situation. Talking about how strange being online is or saying that in-person teaching is better sets a negative tone for everyone.
  - Smile and use lots of inflection when you speak. Make some lemonade of this situation.

## 2. Be Proactive

- Chances are that you or your students will be kicked out of a meeting at some point. To offset this, walk through with your class what needs to be done if this ever happens. This will help to both ease fears and avoid confusion.
  - Do a practice drill or two to prepare.

## 3. Remember That You're Not in a Classroom

- Teaching online is different from teaching in-person, so you need to adjust both your lesson and your style of teaching accordingly. Going online isn't as simple as just doing the same thing as you would have done in the classroom.
  - See what you can cut out without impacting the learning.

## 4. Let Your Students Talk to Each Other

- Communication is an essential ingredient to learning, yet online teachers sometimes discourage students from talking with one another. Give students multiple opportunities to respond to both you and each other.
  - Leave the chat box open, and encourage students to ask questions of one another as a way to better understand things. Think of it as the online version of "Ask three before me".

## 5. Create a Daily Routine

- While it's true that distance learning is different than in-person learning in many ways, one thing that is consistent between the two formats is the importance that routine plays in creating a successful class. The more familiar students get with the daily routine, the less likely they are to get lost during class.
  - Discuss what class is going to be like at the beginning of each session and reinforce as many daily routines as possible (including where to find hw, where to input questions, and how to use the chat box).

## 6. Break The Learning Up Into Small Chunks

- While many of us already do this within our in-person classes, I challenge you to break it up into even smaller chunks when teaching online. The more you can keep things fresh, the less likely students will be to disengage from the learning.
  - The key is to "read the room" as you're teaching. As soon as things start to fade, it's time to move on to the next segment of the learning.

## 7. Balance Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning

- Similar to in-person classes, using a variety of teaching approaches also applies to online classes. Plus, letting students work independently or in small groups will give you a few minutes to plan out your next phase of the lesson.
  - Breakout rooms should be a regular part of your online teaching. Think of them as an online "turn-and-talk".

## 8. Try to follow up with missing students

- When students don't show up to our in-person classes, we reach out to find out why. The same should hold true with regard to students who miss their online classes.
  - Jump on this early! You don't want to go three or four days before reaching out.

## 9. Cut yourself some slack

- In case you haven't heard there is a pandemic going on right now. It's ok if your best right now isn't your best from other years.
  - I think most teachers are giving their students the benefit of the doubt. Don't forget to give yourself that same grace.