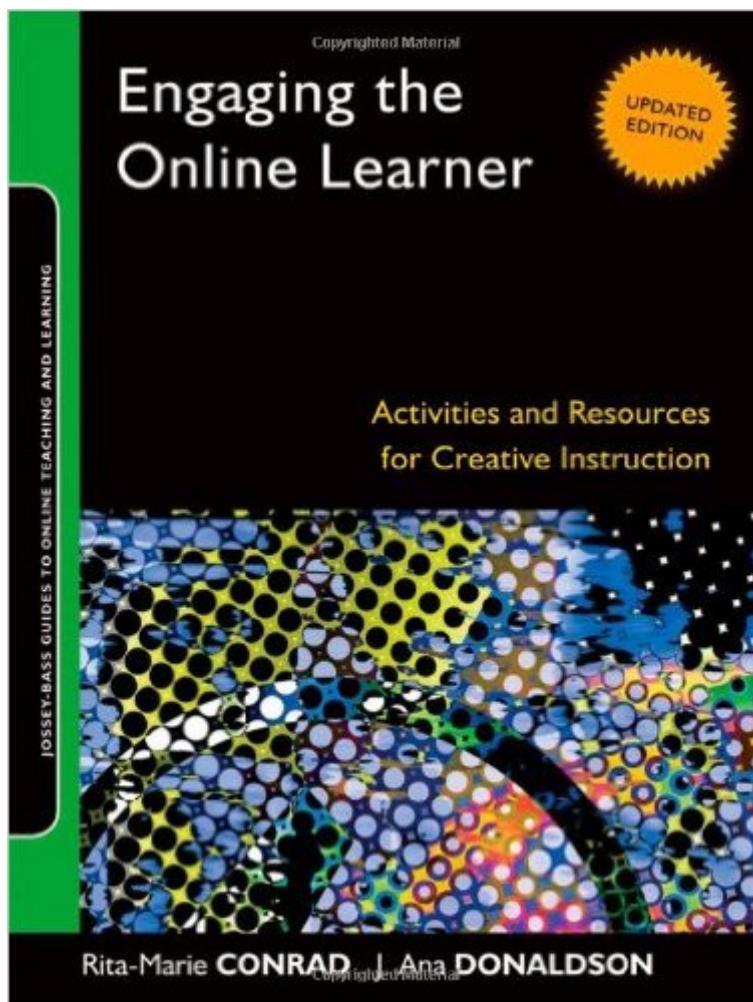


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# Engaging The Online Learner: Activities And Resources For Creative Instruction



## **Synopsis**

Engaging the Online Learner This updated edition includes an innovative framework—the Phases of Engagement—that helps learners become more involved as knowledge generators and cofacilitators of a course. The book also provides specific ideas for tested activities (collected from experienced online instructors across the nation) that can go a long way to improving online learning. Engaging the Online Learner offers the tools and information needed to: Convert classroom activities to an online environment Assess the learning that occurs as a result of collaborative activities Phase in activities that promote engagement among online learners Build peer interaction through peer partnerships and team activities Create authentic activities and implement games and simulations Praise for Engaging the Online Learner "The Phases of Engagement framework provides a road map for creating community at each phase of an online course. This book is an invaluable guide to innovative practices for online learning."—Judith V. Boettcher, coauthor of The Online Teaching Survival Guide "Engagement is the heart of online learning. The authors have developed an encyclopedia of tried-and-true learner engagement activities that are authentic and ready to use."—Donald P. Ely, professor emeritus, instructional design, development and evaluation in the School of Education, Syracuse University

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This book is ideal for the professor or instructor who is providing instruction through distance learning. For online instruction to be successful, students cannot just sit and absorb content

passively. The online professor/instructor must encourage an engaged learning environment, which is described by the authors as an environment based on constructivist principles and problems-based learning. One early challenge is to get the students to feel comfortable participating in discussions. The students' level of engagement can be measured partly by looking at the frequency and the quality of the students' interactions. Another challenge is to get students to feel comfortable with the online tools. The book provides at least a dozen 'ice breaker' activities to help students feel confident with discussions and tools. It also recommends that nongraded assignments be used during this initial orientation period. Different categories of activities are described, including team and peer, reflective, authentic, and learner-led activities. Over a dozen examples of activities are provided for each category. (The authors define reflective activities as those that require the student to share a synthesis of the learning experience and they define authentic activities as those which stimulate an actual situation.) The section on learner-led activities explains how to help learners become successful in preparing and delivering instructional activities, especially with the tasks of defining objectives, defining the type of activity, and planning. Games and simulations are also addressed (but briefly). Overall, it's a useful book for getting started when you suddenly find yourself having to teach a distance learning course. My only gripe is that I would've liked to have seen a larger section on assessments.

I found the book to be very easy and fast to read with lots of concrete examples of activities for the online learner. Though I understand the importance of engaging the online learner, as an instructor in the allied health field I don't feel I have the time or interest in developing games and the types of alternative learning activities suggested in the book. In allied health/science courses we need to cover an extensive amount of material, perhaps if I were teaching a course in another discipline I would feel differently. I feel that another book "Discussion Based Online Teaching To Enhance Student Learning" by Tisha Bender is a much better book for my situation and offered more helpful ideas (but less examples) to improve my online course.

This book is appropriate to me. I am relatively new to the online learning environment and at last I found individual and collaborative activities focused on constructivism and problem-base learning. These activities are a wonderful guide to move learners gradually from traditional roles until they become more self directed. Many books on the topic of online instruction offer innovation and they only present lecture-based approach.

The first part of the book kept repeating itself with regards to what "should be the main goals of online learning"...it felt very repetitive without really offering any useful information. I discovered the source of every lame group project (or group building experiments) my husband has had to do since he began taking online classes at Keller. There were some interesting "get to know you" activities, but a lot of what I read smacked of those very tired and very lame role-playing business seminars I had to put up with when I worked in hotels, which I despised...but this did drive home the importance of creating a community feel among the students, of getting them working together and feeling part of a group. I would recommend it, but with the warning that the book is somewhat repetitive in the first few chapters. I am glad to have it as a reference, but it's certainly not a one stop resource...it should definately be part of a larger body of works to draw from on the subject.

I found the book to be a good read and had a lot of interesting things to say and good examples of activities for online participants. The book focuses solely on the online learner, which is good, but if you teach students in a classroom setting and are looking to extend their learning online in the evenings and between classes you need to 'read between the lines' to pull out the pieces that you need (which are many and included in this book).

As an online learner and instructor, I found this book informative, and, yes, ENGAGING. I am planning on using the insights and examples in a new project I've been given-- securing the services of teachers that have experience with strictly the conventional classroom models to instruct online. I'm hopeful that resources like this can de-mystify the distance learning models, and eventually help disseminate knowledge widely throughout my mostly-rural state.

Loved all the examples and the name of the university where they were originated. Faculty like to do activities that other instructors use. I think there needs to be a v2 of this book with even more great examples!!

Titles in this research and training area can be pretty touchy-feely, but these guys ring the bell in terms of the top thinking that backstops the deep logic and philosophical bases for understanding and then creating the conditions for effective online learning design and delivery.

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