



English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI)
Module 5: Task 2 – Read 3 Articles
Article 5.1: *Building Participation in EMI Courses*

Building participation in EMI courses takes planning, practice, and persistence. Following are some activities that you can try in your courses. They are intended as ways to help students work through any nervousness or hesitation in speaking English in class. You can try these activities for just a few questions, or for a longer period of time. Of course, you can modify these for your own teaching, since every instructor, group of students, and class is different. See Barkley and Major (2018) for more options for in-class activities.

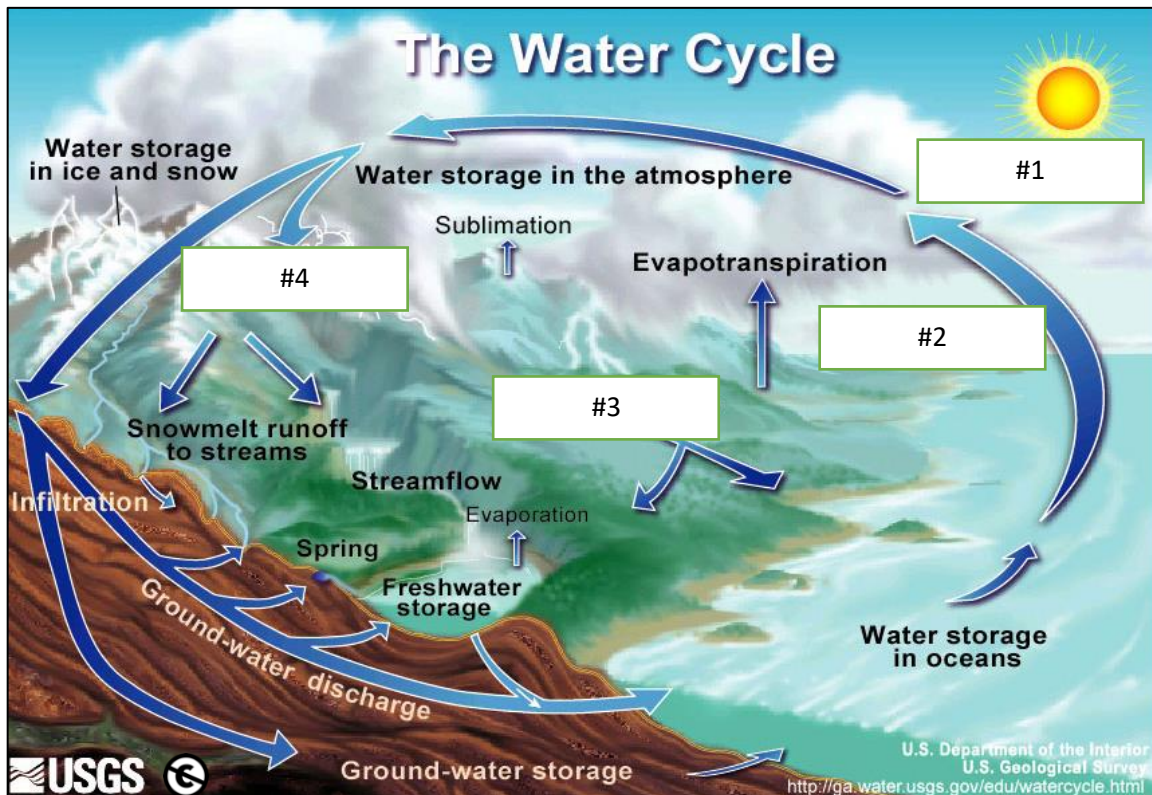
1. Prompts with Pictures. The purpose of this activity is to help students become more comfortable with speaking in class and use visual support to demonstrate understanding or to elicit student questions.

- a) Show students an image, but do not explain it. Choose an image that has complexity or is potentially confusing to students. Ensure it is relevant and that they can see it.
- b) Ask the class to identify/explain the image, or to name the processes and concepts shown, and to justify their answers. They can answer as individuals or in groups. Encourage them to use key terms from class. Consider putting prominent key terms on the board or screen.
- c) Alternatively, or in addition, you can ask students to write about the image.
- d) Do not give the answer or explanation until students have explored all options first. Lead discussions that allow you to ensure that students gain the information or understanding that they need.

See Figure 1 for an example. Show this image of the water cycle on the screen—notice that key steps in the cycle have been removed and numbers have been put in their place. Ask students to individually or in groups identify the steps that are missing. For an extension, ask them to also explain how the missing steps relate to the overall water cycle itself. For additional support, the missing terms (condensation, evaporation, runoff, and precipitation) can be listed on the board. Be sure to show students the correct answers before moving on to the next activity. Sample prompts include, “Please identify the steps that are missing in this figure” or “Explain how the missing step #2 in this figure relates to the overall water cycle—what is its importance?”



Figure 1. Example of a Prompts with Pictures Image for Discussion



"Water Cycle" by the [United States Geological Survey](http://www.usgs.gov/) is licensed under [Public Domain](http://www.usgs.gov/).

2. Pass the Ball. The purpose of this activity is for many or even all students to have an opportunity to answer your questions. Students can choose who will provide the next answer, making it more interesting for them.

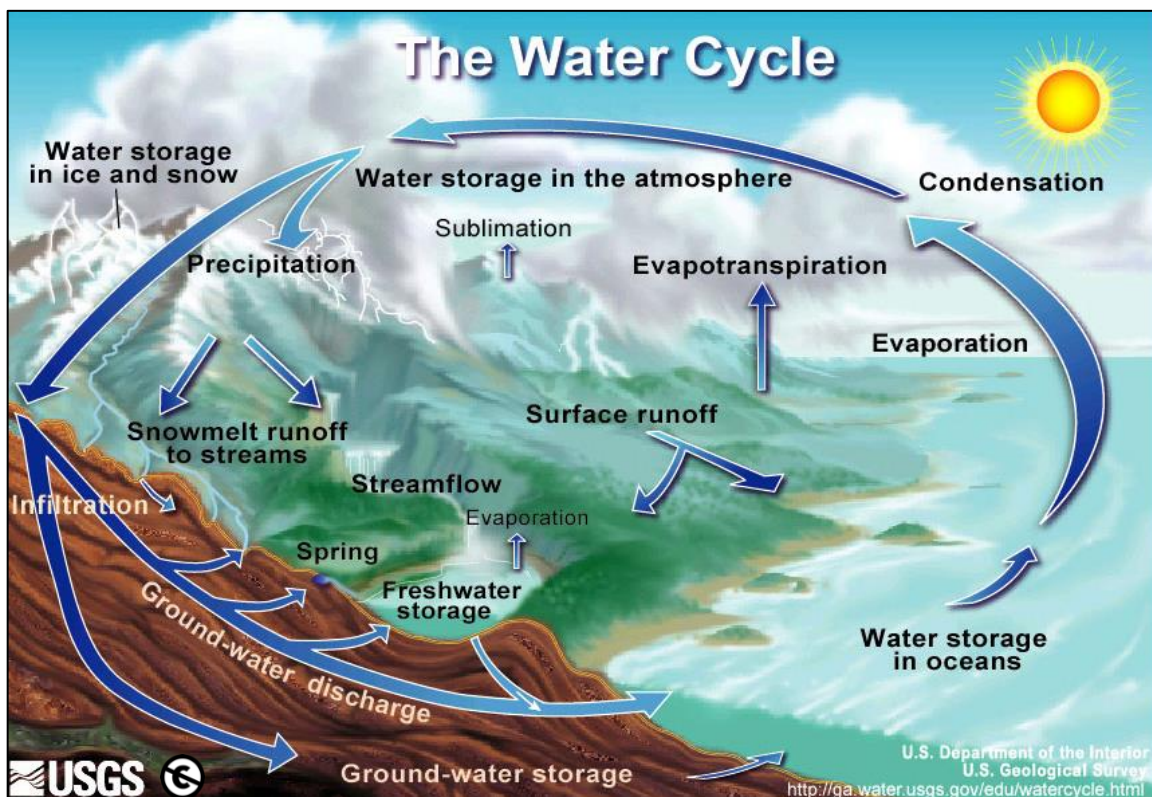
- Give a small, soft ball (or a different item) to a student; that student will be the one who will answer your first question.
- Ask the first question. After the student with the ball answers, discuss or clarify as needed.
- The student with the ball then passes or gently tosses it to a student of their choice.
- Ask this student your second question.
- Keep passing and answering questions as desired.

3. Laser Pointer Pointing. The purpose of this activity is to engage students, get them talking in class in a structured way, and help all students focus on course content.

- Place an image on the screen. It can be a diagram, a table, a photograph, etc. It should be relevant to the topic and complex enough that it is potentially confusing to students or will spark their curiosity.
- Write key questions on the board about the image, such as for students to identify key features or explain steps in a process.
- Ask for volunteers to answer your questions. Volunteers should use the laser pointer and point to the image as they answer.
- Invite other students to help answer the question as needed.

See Figure 2 for an example. Put an image on the screen and ask students to use a laser pointer you bring to class to describe the image. Questions are usually more analytical or process-oriented for this activity than for the Prompts with Pictures, for example, since no information is left off the image. Questions related to Figure 2 could be “How does the water cycle function in your particular area?” or “What is the impact on the water cycle if one step (for example runoff) cannot function properly?”

Figure 2. Example of a Laser Pointer Pointing Image for Discussion



"Water Cycle" by the [United States Geological Survey](http://www.usgs.gov) is licensed under [Public Domain](http://www.usgs.gov).

4. Tournament. The purpose of this activity is to help students collaboratively study or review material.

- a) Take a study guide (created by the instructor or provided by a publisher) and divide it into 2 or 3 parts.
- b) Create a quiz for each part of the study guide.
- c) Divide the class into two (or more) groups and explain that this will be a practice test competition. The team that gets the most points wins.
- d) Give all students Part 1 of the study guide and let them study in their groups for a certain period of time (maybe 10 minutes).
- e) Give the Part 1 Quiz to all students. You can allow each team to answer together, or you can give the quiz to the individual students, but the points are for the team.
- f) Tally the points and announce the Part 1 winning team.
- g) If desired, repeat this sequence for Parts 2, 3, etc. After each round, let the teams study the next topic before quizzing again. For each round, the points keep adding up.
- h) The team with most points wins.

5. Pros and Cons. The purpose of this activity is to help students review content and to think more critically about topics, especially from different perspectives. Here, “Pros” refers to benefits or advantages and “Cons” refers to disadvantages or challenges.

- a) Put students in groups of 3 or 4 and assign half the groups to Pro and half to Con.
- b) Choose a topic that has some controversy or interesting perspectives. An example is if governments should regulate vehicle emissions in large cities in order to reduce the effects of pollution on climate change, given that regulation often leads to increased costs for the city dwellers.
- c) In each group, students list the pros and cons for the topic and compare their smaller-group lists together. The Pros group would list and be ready to explain the benefits to the regulation, and the Cons group would list and be ready to explain the disadvantages.
- d) Have students from each group switch and compare their lists—that is, Pros students talk with Cons students. They can make revisions or additions as needed based on their conversations.
- e) Write the Pros and Cons list on the board and lead a large group discussion, eliciting points you want students to understand and/or remember.

Whatever strategies and activities you choose in order to help students with participation, be sure to share your strategies and activities with an instructor or other EMI professional that you know! This will help you all learn more from each other.

Reference¹

Barkley, E. F., & Major, C. H. (2018). *Interactive lecturing: A handbook for college faculty*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

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