

Ideas for Teaching Large Groups

1.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aE4W4ctH2u4>

Watch this video (up to 4.21) and see how Garr Reynolds engages his audience with some simple tricks. He asks them to share ideas with the people around them (giving them only 30 seconds per question) and wraps it up nicely in his PowerPoint.

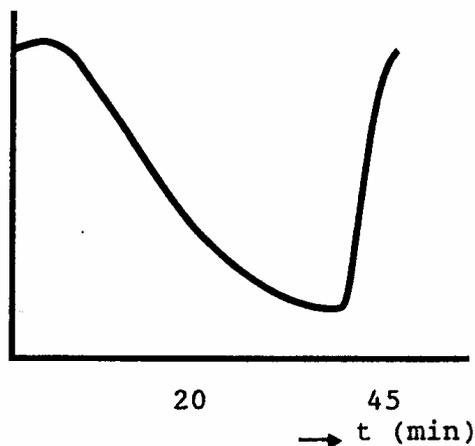
You could easily think of some questions or concepts you could ask your students/trainees to share and in this way a session becomes really interactive.

2.

The average attention span of any group during a lecture is about 10 minutes! So after 10 minutes of lecturing a large group you simply have to do something (however small) to help them focus again.

Attention

aandacht



Time

This graph shows the attention span during a lecture. You see that the attention is slowly but ever so clearly waning and it goes up again a few minutes before the end of the lecture (coffee break ahead!).

3.

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/pesl/browse/title/iflectur470>

'Play it to the gallery': tips from university lecturers to engage large groups (you will find the text right from the video). There's lots of interesting stuff on this website, not only about lecturing large groups!

4.

And here's a 'goodie' from my own practice.

I sometimes make a (multiple choice) quiz with the aid of Powerpoint to test f.i. journalistic principles. I get the whole 'arena' to stand and explain that for every question the answer A is both hands in the air, B is left hand in the air, C is right hand in the air and D is both hands down.

I then have some 10-15 questions. I project a question, give every student about 10 seconds to decide where their hands should be and provide the answer. Those who got it wrong sit down. When you get to the last questions only a few students are left and I always have a little prize for the winner (or winners), like a candy bar, a pen or a free coffee.

My students love this learning activity and I even do it with very large groups.