

With spring break looming on the horizon, the next few teacher tips will look at student engagement.

So what does it look like to have students engaged, especially when the calendar has long breaks? [Student engagement](http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CCAQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.soundout.org%2Fstudent-engagement-AF.pdf&ei=Z7CIVMG6MIaWyASY1IDADw&usg=AFQjCNHkuwXSEG06LvjQtRBKG0J1hLm8VQ&sig2=dffobgn_ZZdaskLmNs6N9w&bvm=bv.81456516,d.aWw) is an indicator of successful classroom instruction. Students are engaged when they are attracted to their work, persist despite challenges and delight in accomplishments. It can also refer to a student’s willingness to participate in the learning process.

Let’s not just look at the definition, however; let’s [ask students](http://www.teachthought.com/learning/students-learn-best/) what it takes to engage them in class. When asked, most students want instruction to be hands-on or real-world. These wants are closely followed by wanting the teacher to allow discussion and to give feedback. The third thing students said helps engage them is having teachers who are passionate about what they are teaching while making it fun and interesting.

Keeping in mind what students want, let’s look at six basic rules for engaging students:

1. Make it meaningful.
2. Foster a sense of usefulness.
3. Provide self-sufficiency support.
4. Embrace collaborative learning.
5. Establish positive teacher-student relationships.
6. Promote mastery.

As CTE teachers, it is our job to make all the students’ work worthy of their time and effort. That can always be done by showing how the work will be used in real life. Yet the best way is to relate whatever you are teaching to the students’ lives today and to make it relative to the students. It goes back to the basics of getting to know your students.

For those who are still looking for ways to get to know your students don’t overlook using tools that ODCTE offers such as [Ok Career Guide](https://okcareerguide.kuder.com/landing-page).