Quote of the Day: Increasing Student Engagement with Textbooks and Common Readers

Brandy Smith
University of Nevada, Las Vegas, brandy.smith@unlv.edu

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### Explanation of Need

Ensuring that students not only complete assigned readings, but also actively engage with the readings, is a common challenge faced by faculty. Research indicates that approximately only one-third to one-half of students complete assigned readings for any given day (Hatteberg & Steffy, 2013; Hoeft, 2012; Burchfield & Sappington, 2000).

### “Quote of the Day” Activity

- Introduction occurred on second class meeting of the semester when instructor wrote her favorite quote from the assigned readings on the board and described the semester activity.
- A random drawing of a student’s name was held at beginning of each class.
- Student selected would (1) write and cite a quote from the assigned readings and (2) be prepared to describe why that quote resonated with him/her.
- The instructor prompted the quote to be discussed at a random time during the class, when it most appropriately fit with the curriculum.
- Preparation and participation for this activity contributed to the “Professionalism” portion of the class grade.

### Student Feedback

An anonymous survey of students indicated that 91% agreed or highly agreed that the Quote of the Day activity increased their chances of reading the assigned readings.

### Instructor Observations

- A majority of students came to class having their books available, with some highlighting and/or tabbing of quotations, and prepared to discuss.
- The quote of the day was also an opportunity to address appropriate citations in multiple formats (APA, MLA, etc.) and practice speaking in front of a group.

### Readings & References


### Considerations for Adoption

Important distinctions may impact adoption of the Quote of the Day practice:

- **Level of the course** – Students in advanced classes are more likely to read than students in introductory courses, therefore a larger impact may be seen in introductory courses (Burchfield & Sappington, 2000).

- **Subject of the course** – Some courses may be more amenable to applications of the Quote of the Day than others. For example, first-year seminars, literature, and history may easily adopt this type of exercise, while the STEM fields may shy away from the practice.

- **Means of introduction** – A clear and thorough introduction of the activity to the class at the beginning of the semester is beneficial (Hatteberg & Steffy, 2013).

- **Class size** – Depending upon the number of students in the class, different numbers of students can be drawn for each class meeting.

- **Mid-semester** – Potential drop-off levels during the middle of the semester can be addressed by returning names to the drawing pool, maintaining incentive for preparation.