



Active Learning Strategies in English Language Courses at Ulm University

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What is it?

How does it work?

Why use it?

Two examples in practice

Active Learning is:

“any instructional method
that engages students in the learning process...

... In short, active learning requires students to do meaningful learning
activities and think about what they are doing.”¹

clickers/polls

discussions

case studies

problem
solving

role plays

¹ Prince, Michael. (2004). “Does Active Learning Work? A Review of the Research,” Journal of Engineering Education, 93(3), 223--231.

1-Minute Papers/Reflections

Post-it Parade

Ticket out the Door

Give one-Get one

Think-Pair-Share

Note Taking Pairs

Say Something

Peer-Review

Respond, React, Reply

Jigsaw Reading

Social Annotation of Text

Line of Agreement

Spiderweb Graphic Organiser

Complete Turn Taking

Buzz Groups

The Final Word

Round Tables

Think Aloud

Case Studies

Dotmocracy

Four Corners

Pro-Con Grids

Snowball

Group Text Reading

Fishbowl

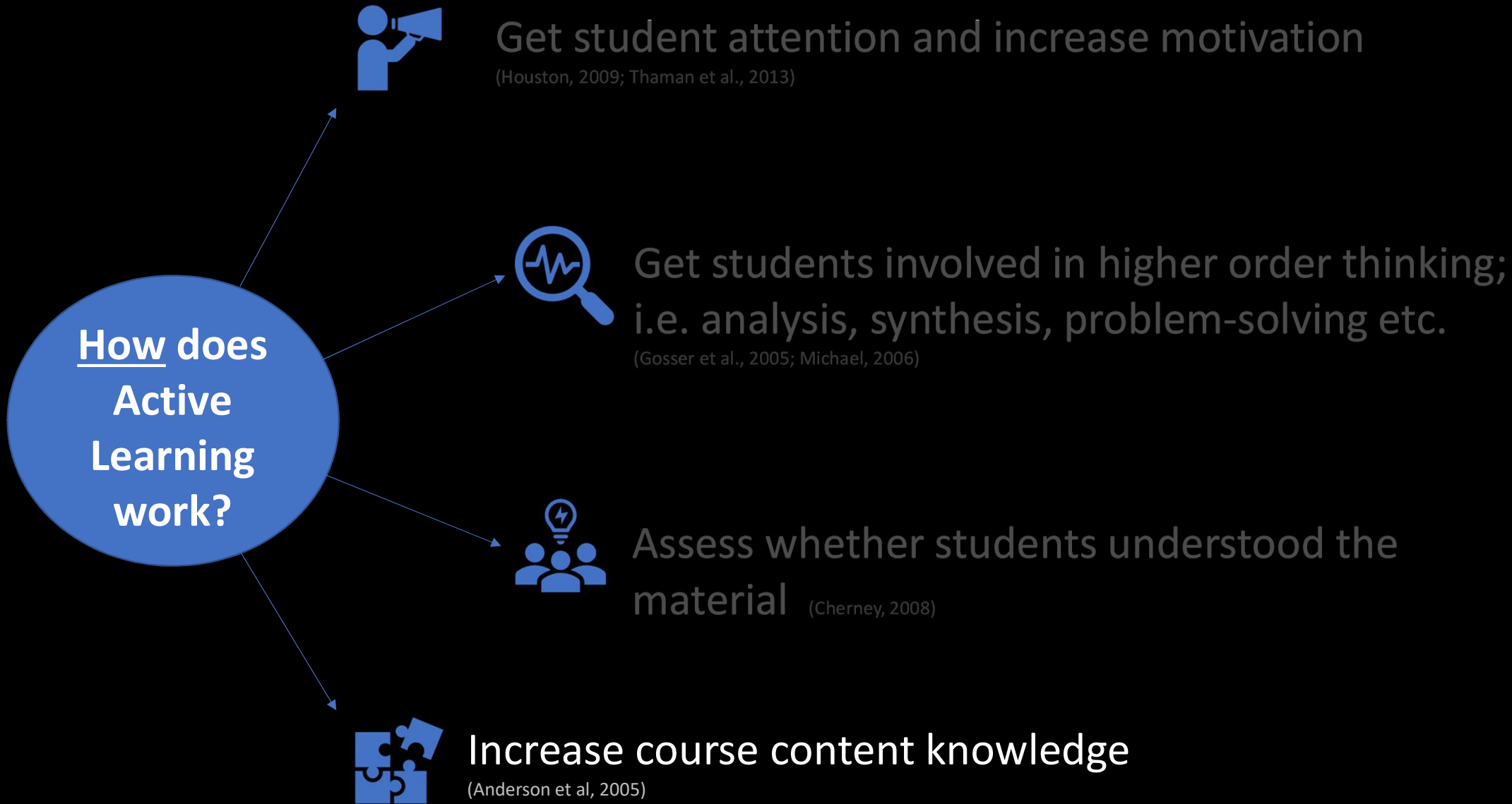
Quescussion

3-2-1

Debates

Index Card Pass

Line-up



First year Introductory Physiology course:

~~Can anyone name the sensory nerves of the leg?~~



“You're innocently walking down the street when aliens zap away the sensory neurons in your legs. What happens?”

- a) Your walking movements show no significant change.*
- b) You can no longer walk.*
- c) You can walk, but the pace changes.*
- d) You can walk, but clumsily.”* ✓

Source: Example used by Neuroscientist S. Leupen at University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC).

Waldrop, M.M. (2015) Why we are teaching science wrong, and how to make it right. *Nature*, 523, 272-274.



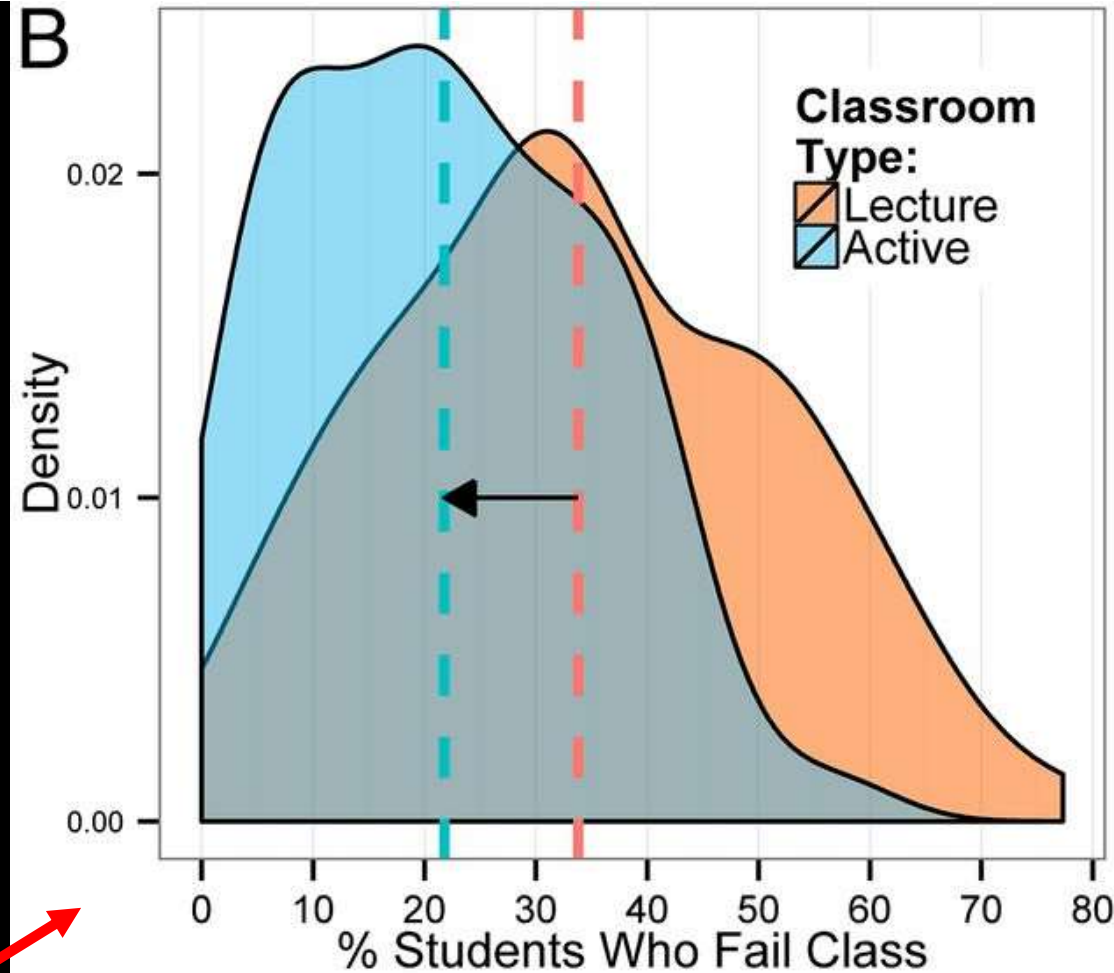
Why use Active Learning?

“At this point it is unethical to teach any other way.”

Wallop, M.M. Why we are teaching science wrong, and how to make it right. *Nature*, 523, 272-274.

Passing grades:
55% traditional classes,
85% with active learning

Mello, D. & Less, C.A. (2013) Effectiveness of active learning in the arts and sciences, *Humanities Department Faculty Publications & Research*, 45.



Failure rates are 55% higher in non-active learning classrooms.

Source: Freeman, S., Eddy, S. L., McDonough, M., Smith, M. K., Okoroafor, N., Jordt, H., & Wenderoth, M. P. (2014). “Active learning increases student performance in science, engineering, and mathematics.” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 111(23), 8410-8415.

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Department Faculty Publications & Research, 45.

**What I hear, I forget;
What I see, I remember;
What I do, I understand.**

- Chinese Proverb, often attributed to Confucius

Barkley, E., Cross, P.K., & Major, C.H. (2005). *Collaborative learning techniques: A handbook for college faculty*. San Francisco, CA : Jossey-Bass.

Sousa, D. A. (2006) *How the Brain Learns* . Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

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The Marshmallow Challenge

Let's get down to business: English in a business context

The supplies:



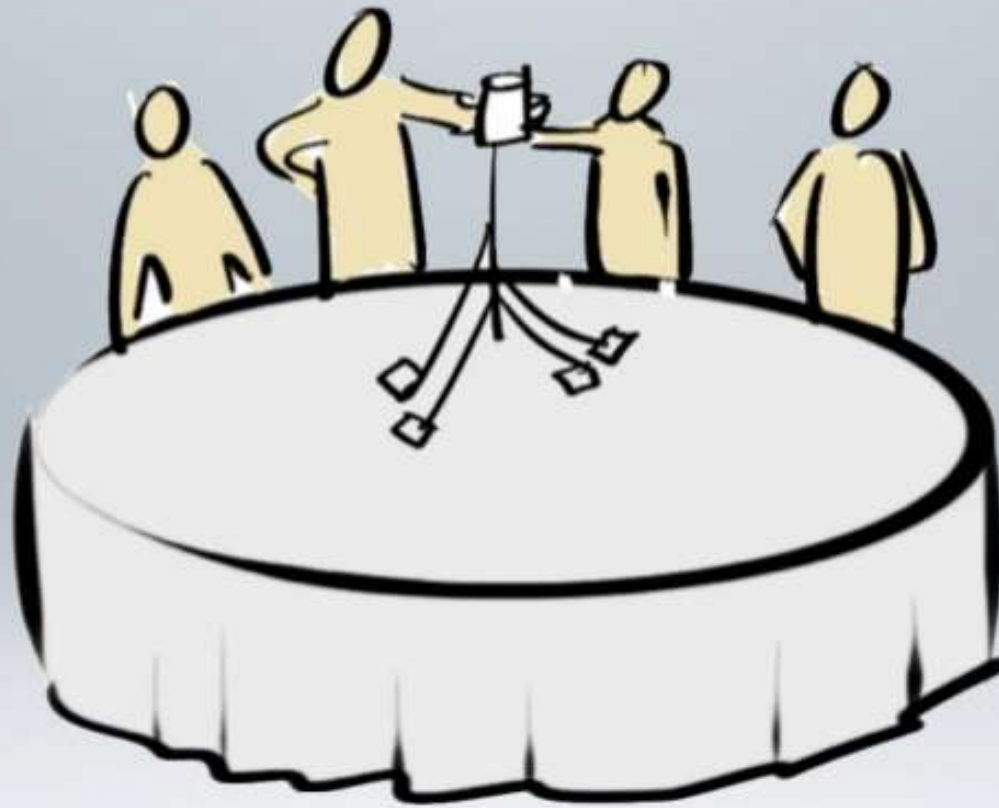
The challenge:



Team of four

18 minutes

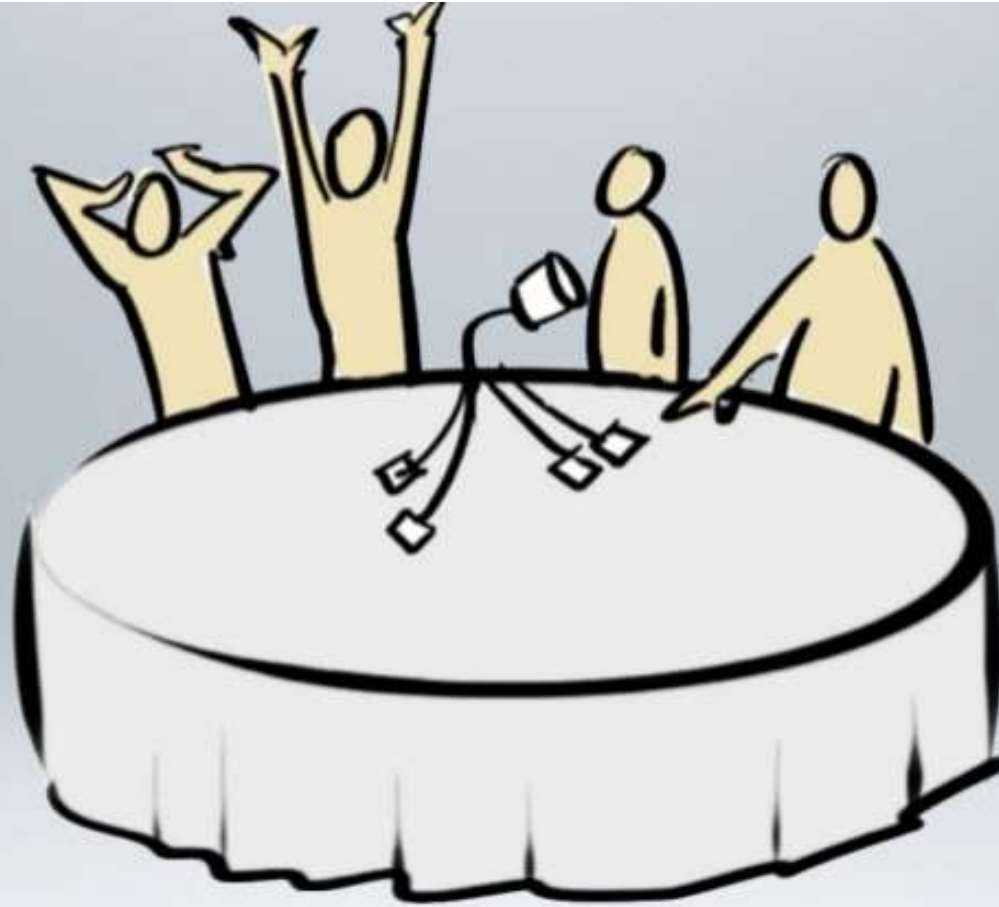
Build tallest freestanding structure



0



18
Minutes



0



18
Minutes







Business Students



Kindergarten Students



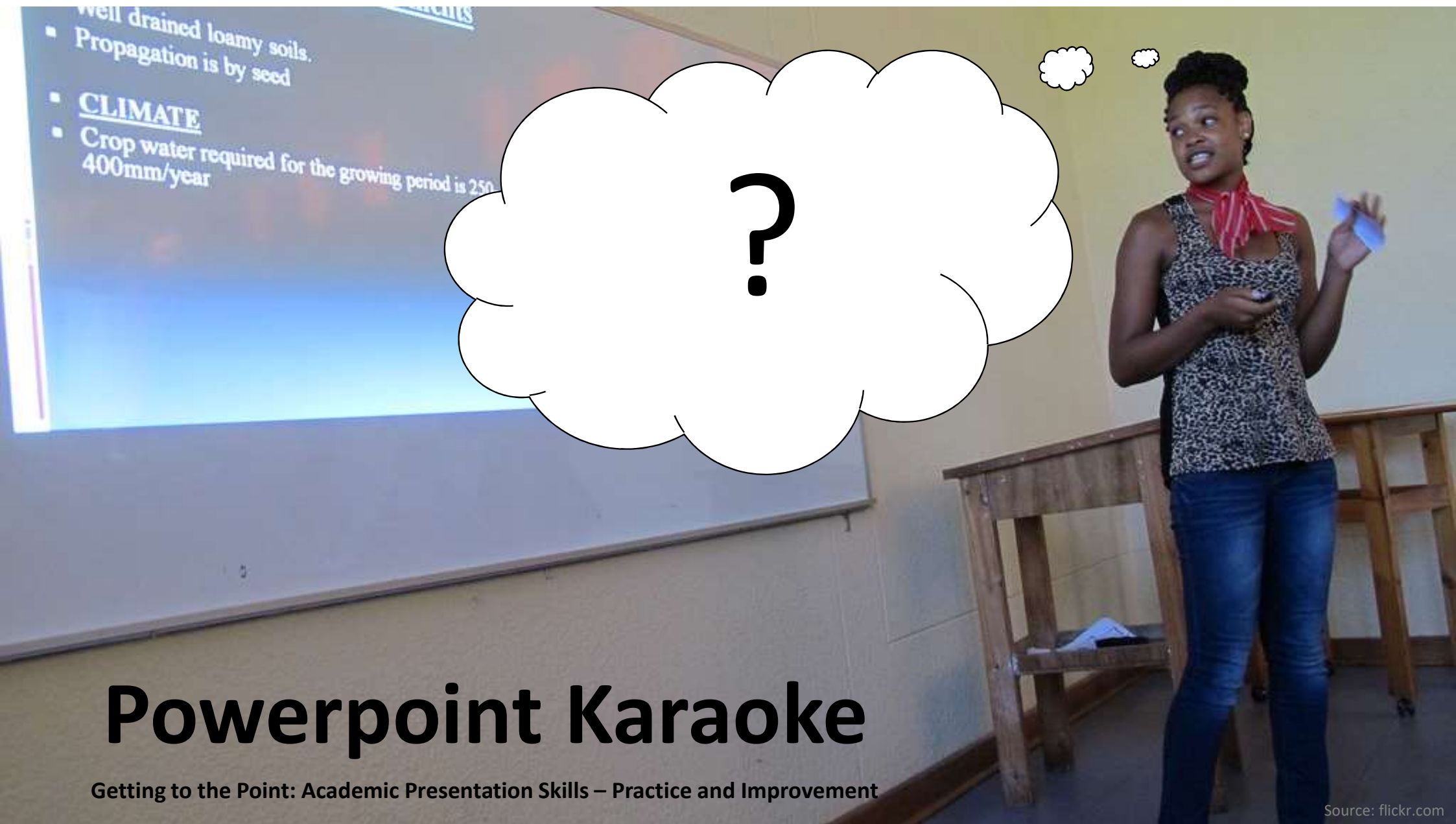
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18
Minutes



Lessons: 1) Prototyping matters 2) Hidden assumptions of a project



- well drained loamy soils.
- Propagation is by seed
- CLIMATE
- Crop water required for the growing period is 250 400mm/year

Powerpoint Karaoke

Getting to the Point: Academic Presentation Skills – Practice and Improvement



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- 1) Encourages spontaneity, flexibility and creativity
- 2) Takes focus away from content
- 3) Improves rhetorical skills
- 4) Breaks the ice!

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Powerpoint Karaoke

Getting to the Point: Academic Presentation Skills – Practice and Improvement

3 Things I've learned:

- Active Learning can involve any method that engages students in learning
- Students perform better when Active Learning is used
- Activities can be fun and playful

2 Things I found interesting:

1 Question I have: