

How is this tool used in the classroom?

✓ To preview content, activate prior knowledge, and increase engagement before a lesson

Teachers from different grade levels and content areas use Hooks & Bridges to introduce lessons and units in a way that gets students engaged. In our experience, the hooks that work best in the classroom do one or more of the following things:

- Present a CHALLENGE
- Spark CURIOSITY (for example, by presenting a mysterious event or puzzling data)
- Stimulate DEBATE
- Appeal to STUDENTS' INTERESTS
- Invite SPECULATION (What if ___? What/why might ___? What do you predict will happen?)
- Involve PHYSICAL MOVEMENT
- Inspire CREATIVE THINKING
- Ask students to make personal or real-world CONNECTIONS
- Trigger an EMOTIONAL RESPONSE

Below are examples showing what some of these types of hooks look like (and how teachers bridge their hooks to the relevant content).

EXAMPLE 1: A hook that appeals to STUDENTS' INTERESTS

A teacher tried to capitalize on her students' enthusiasm for sports by using the hook-and-bridge combination below to open a lesson on angles.

HOOK: After showing students a video of basketball phenom LeBron James hitting an amazing three-point shot, the teacher replayed the video a second time, hit pause as LeBron was in the act of shooting, and asked students how many angles they could find in his body. Students then came up to the screen one by one to point out the angles they identified.

BRIDGE: This week, you'll learn some new vocabulary terms that will help you describe, name, and compare the different kinds of angles that you identified. You will also learn how to measure those angles using a protractor.

EXAMPLE 2: A hook that invites SPECULATION

The hook-and-bridge combination below, which was used to introduce a lecture on the fall of the Roman Empire, asks students to speculate about possible causes of a hypothetical event.

HOOK: Imagine that you jumped into a time machine, traveled one hundred years into the future, and found that the United States was no longer the great superpower that it is today. What might have happened? Develop some possible explanations.

BRIDGE: Believe it or not, you just identified many of the factors that were responsible for the decline and fall of the Roman Empire hundreds and hundreds of years ago. Today, we'll take a look at some of these factors in more detail.

EXAMPLE 3: A hook that inspires CREATIVE THINKING and involves PHYSICAL MOVEMENT

An English teacher used the hook-and-bridge combination on the next page to spark a discussion of blood- and water-related imagery in *Macbeth*.

HOOK: How is guilt like a stain? Generate two responses on your own. Then use the Give One, Get One technique (p. 76) to add four more ideas to your list.

BRIDGE: Let's keep this simile in mind as we continue our discussion of *Macbeth*. As you read the first scene of Act V, ask yourself whether Lady Macbeth's original assessment ("A little water clears us of this deed") was an accurate one. Can guilt be washed away so easily?

EXAMPLE 4: A hook that asks students to make personal CONNECTIONS

A primary-grade teacher opened a lesson on how and why leaves change color with the hook-and-bridge combination below.

HOOK: How do the changing seasons affect your life? Do they affect the way you dress? The activities you do? Anything else?

BRIDGE: Have you ever noticed that trees' lives are affected by the seasons as well? You have? That's great because today we are going to be talking about some of the different ways that trees respond to the changing seasons.

EXAMPLE 5: A hook that sparks CURIOSITY

Before beginning a lesson on communicable diseases and how students can minimize the risk of becoming sick, an elementary teacher strategically dusted common surfaces in the classroom with glitter. She then began the lesson with the hook-and-bridge combination below.

HOOK: I want everyone to look closely at their own hands. How many of you can find any specks of glitter on your hands? How about on your clothes or your hair? Look closely for any signs of glitter you can find. So now for the big question: Why do so many students have glitter on them?

BRIDGE: You've done great detective work to figure out that some of the surfaces in our classroom have glitter on them. And because the glitter was in common areas, lots of students came in contact with it and spread it around. This is a lot like the germs that can cause communicable diseases. And that's what we'll be learning about today.

Teacher Talk

- Here are some questions to help you design and implement high-quality hooks and bridges:
- What key idea, concept, or information do you want students to understand as a result of your hook?
 - Will students have relevant background knowledge or experience to draw on?
 - What will you need to do to set up the hook? Will students need a video, visual aid, story, reading, demonstration, or other source of information to make the hook work?
 - Is the hook engaging? Will it capture students' attention?
 - What do you expect to hear in students' responses? How will you guide their thinking to broaden their responses?
 - How will you summarize students' responses?
 - How will you connect students' responses to the learning to come? What particular angle or way in do you want to use for the bridge?