
REAL Framework

A guide to designing experiential learning activities

Use this to convert one lecture-heavy topic into an activity where students learn by doing.

STEP	ASK YOURSELF	WHAT THIS MEANS
R – REAL PROBLEM	What question or challenge could students wrestle with <i>before</i> I explain the concept?	Pose a puzzle, dilemma, or task that makes the concept necessary—not just interesting.
E – ENCOUNTER THROUGH DOING	What could students <i>do</i> (not just read or watch) that would let them bump into the concept?	Design an activity where the idea emerges from their actions. They should feel it before you name it.
A – ANALYZE WHAT HAPPENED	What questions will surface their thinking? How do I get them to articulate why something worked or failed?	Students reflect: "What did you try? What surprised you? Why did that happen?"
L – LINK TO THEORY	Now that they've experienced it—what's the formal explanation?	Name the concept <i>after</i> the experience. Theory becomes the explanation for what they just lived through.

The test: If students could learn this just as well from a lecture, it's not experiential. REAL works when the experience is necessary for understanding.

MINER Framework

A guide to learning from your teaching experience

Use this once per semester to reflect systematically on your teaching.

STEP	ASK YOURSELF	WHAT TO WRITE DOWN
M – MINE THE EXPERIENCE	What's one teaching moment from this semester that stuck with me?	Describe a specific event in 2–3 sentences—not a pattern, but one concrete moment.
I – IDENTIFY THE PRINCIPLE	Why did this work or fail? What teaching principle was at play?	Write one clear sentence: "Students needed X before Y made sense" or "My assumption about Z was wrong because..."
N – NAME THE DOMAIN	Which part of teaching does this touch? Curriculum? Delivery? Assessment?	Pick the domain that fits best. Don't overthink it—just tag it so you can find patterns later.
E – EVIDENCE IT	What could I save to prove this insight?	Name one artifact: student work samples, a revised rubric, feedback quotes, assessment data.
R – REUSE IT	Where will I apply this next?	Write one sentence with a concrete plan: "Next semester in [course], I will [specific action]."

The test: If you can't name a next action, the reflection isn't done. MINER works when it produces something you can actually reuse.

Note: Reflection \neq paperwork. It's how you get better at teaching. **Twenty minutes** per semester using MINER beats twenty years of unreflective experience.

Dr. Aini Marina Ma'rof

Psychoeducational and Learning Assessment Lab (Psych.ED LAB)

Faculty of Educational Studies

Universiti Putra Malaysia

These frameworks were developed for the CADe workshop "Learning Through Experience: Unlocking Practical Insights" (September 2025). Feel free to adapt them for your own teaching context.
