

Learning Logs

In a journal, students make regular entries in their learning logs. Before students begin working in their collaborative groups, they should complete questions such as the following about the subject they are studying:

1. What did I do in class today?
2. What did I learn?
3. What did I find interesting?
4. What questions do I have about what I learned?
5. What was the point of today's lesson?
6. What connections did I make to previous ideas or lessons?

Each student in the collaborative group should share his or her log responses. If students know they will be sharing with the group, they are more thoughtful in their responses. Learning logs are a good starting point for a collaborative session.

A Few Learning Log Topics

1. Writing About Mathematics

Have students write an explanation to another student of how to do a math problem. They should include the *why* of the solution as well as the *how*.

2. Writing About History

Have the students place himself or herself in an historical period or event and write about it from the point of view of someone who is there. Ask the students to focus in their responses on what, when, where, why, how and what if. Or ask students to write a dialogue between themselves and an historical personage, focusing on the same details.

(AVID Methodologies in a Nutshell Continued)

3. Focused Writing

Focused writing is an excellent way to begin a collaborative session. Direct students to write non-stop for five minutes on a specific topic they are studying. The purpose is for students to find out what they know about the topic, to explore new ideas, and to find out what they need to learn about the topic