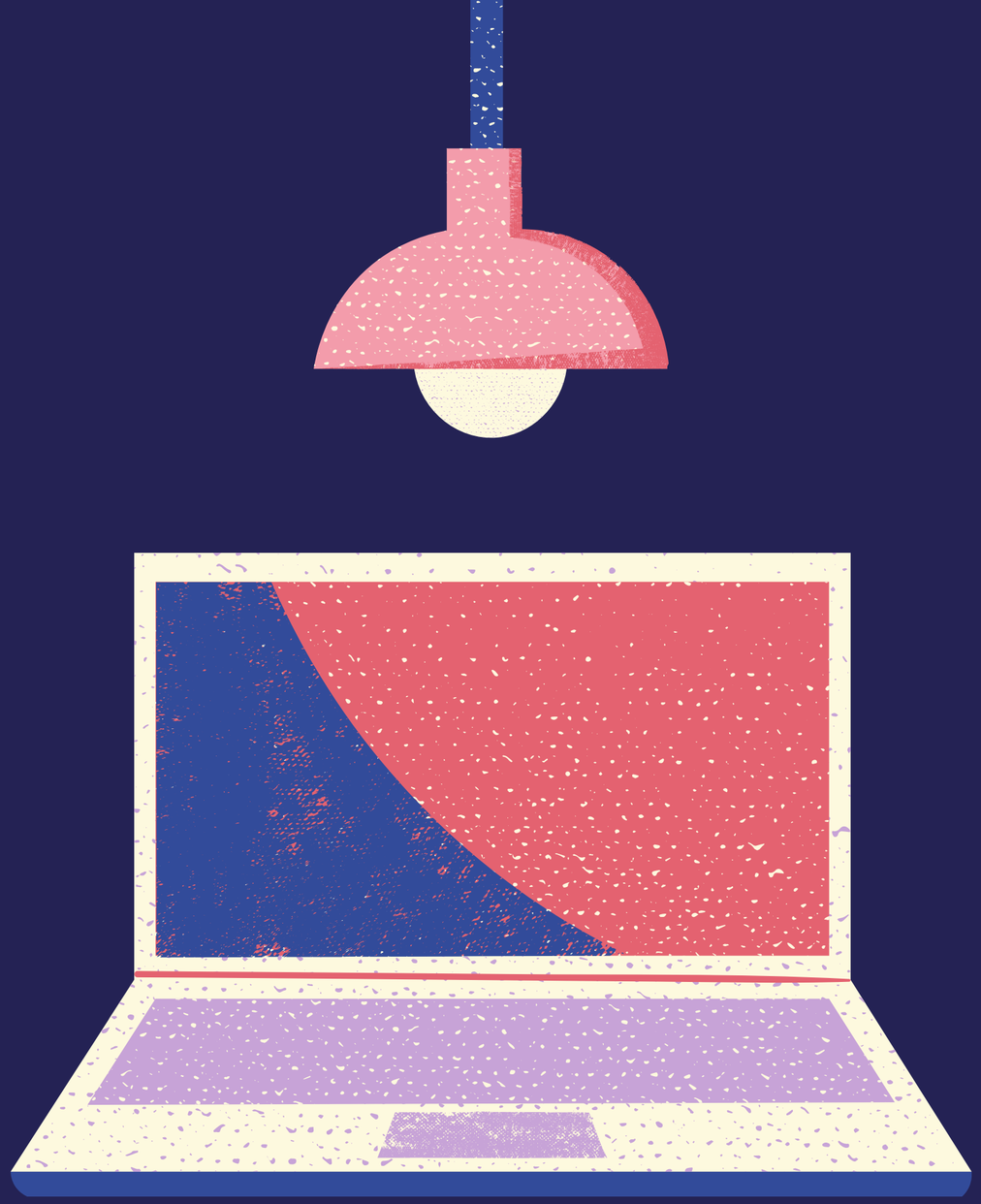
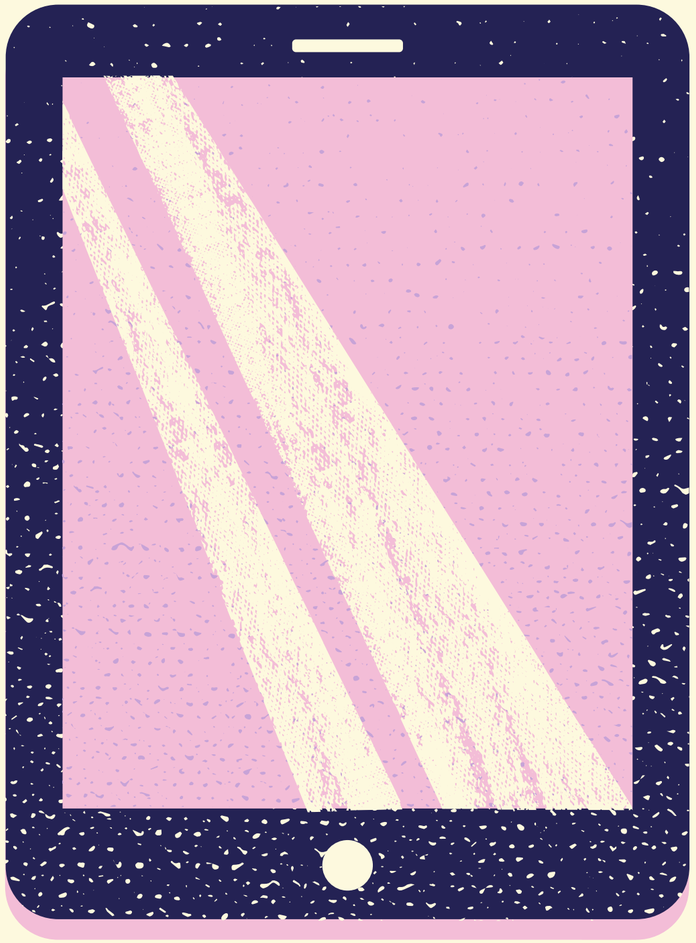


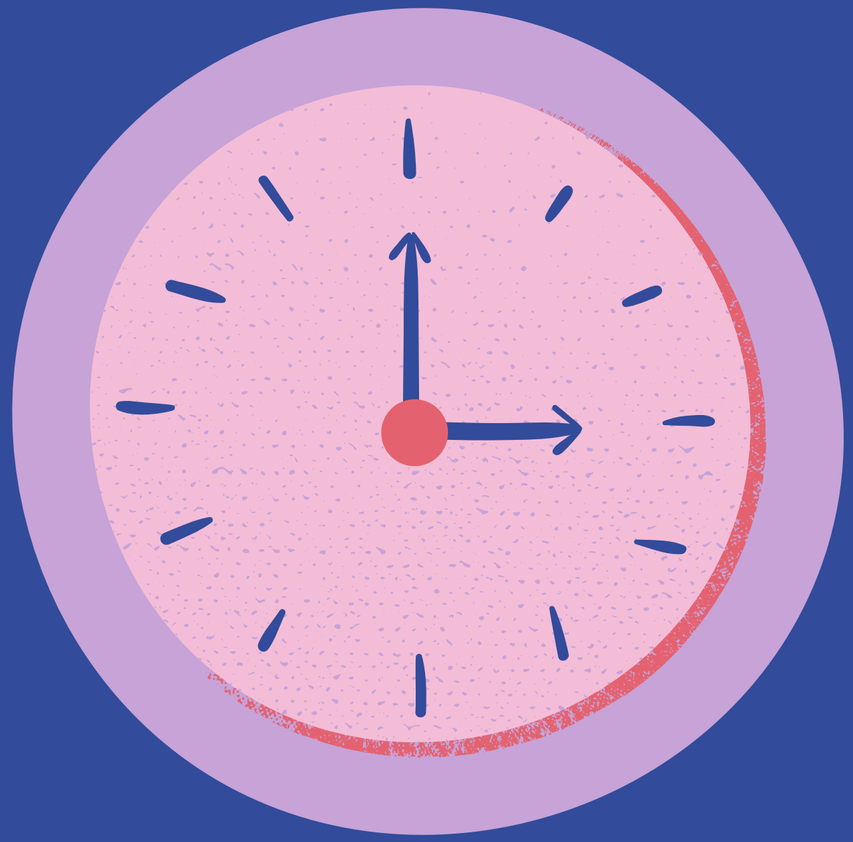
Best Practices in Online Learning

Tips for the best experience for your students



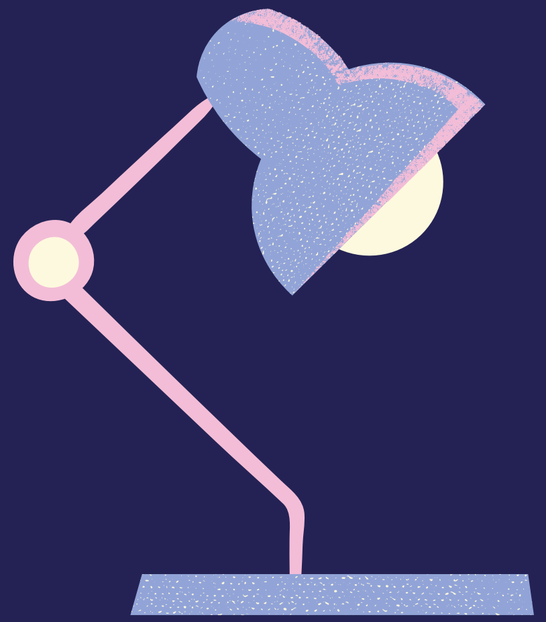
By the end of this training, participants will be able to...

- Describe common student needs for online learning environments
- Identify strategies to meet student needs for online learning
- Identify ways to implement meaningful learning theory to an online learning environment
- Create strategies for using structure to promote student engagement



Agenda

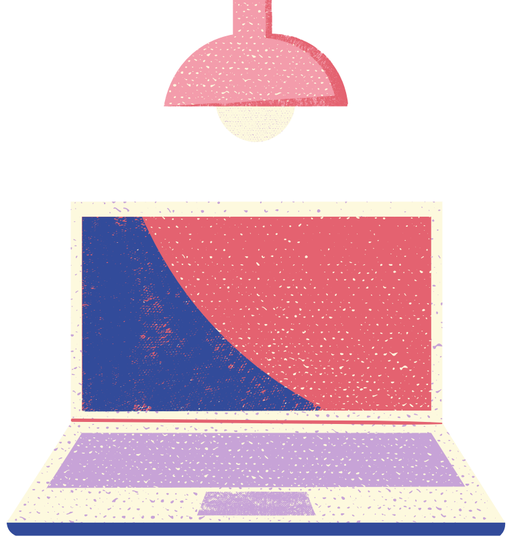
- What works well in your online classroom?
- What is meaningful learning theory?
- What do students need from an online course?
  - How can instructors provide these needs?
- How can structure influence student engagement?
- Case Study



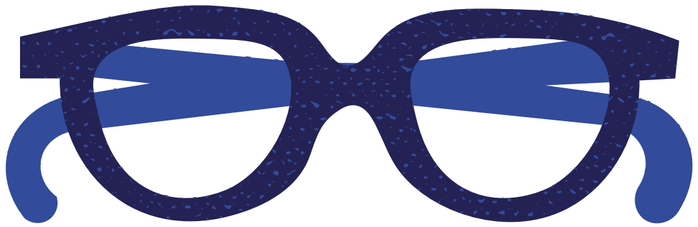
Meaningful Learning

Meaningful learning theory was established by constructivist psychologist David Ausubel in the 1960s. Meaningful learning allows students to associate acquired material with previous knowledge or experiences that serve as an anchor when obtaining new knowledge.

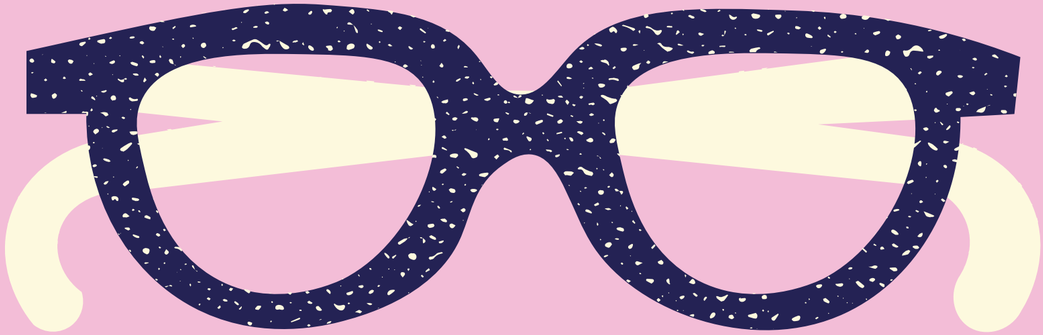
What Works Well in Your Online Classroom?



What Do Students Need From an Online Course?



What Do Students Need From an Online Course?



- The ability to navigate the technology
- Meaningful ways to interact with the learning environment
- Opportunities for self-regulated learning
- A sense of belonging and connection

How Can Instructors Provide These Needs?

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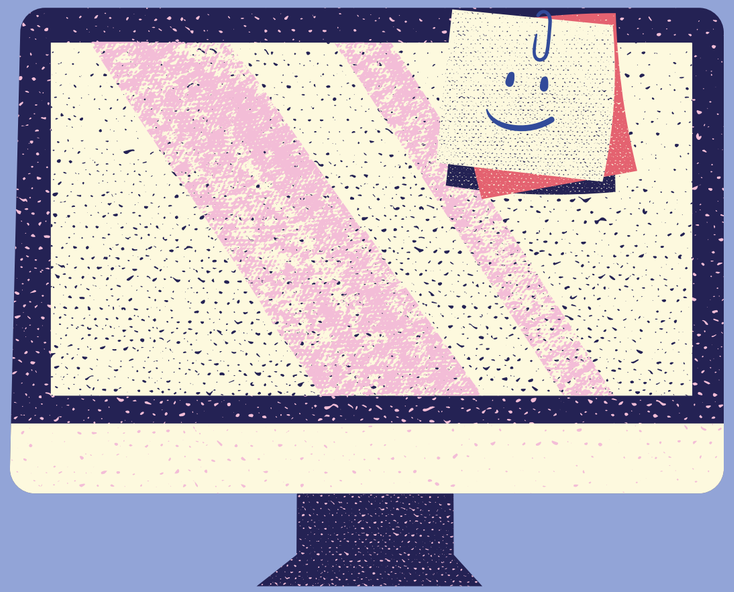
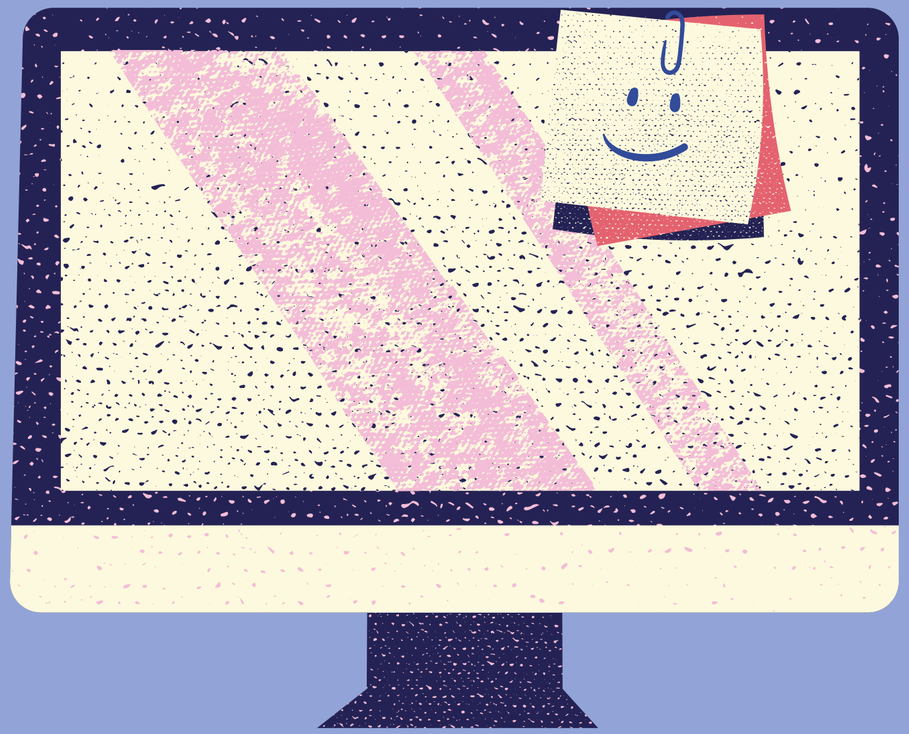


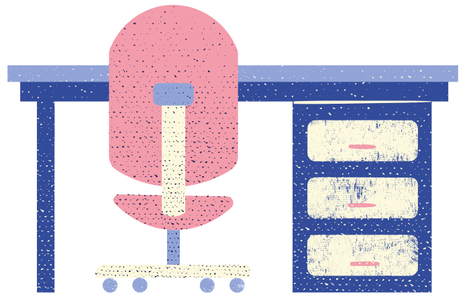
- Include learner-to-content, learner-to-instructor, and learner-to-learner (peer) interaction (Bolliger and Martindale, 2004)
- Refer students to MercerOnline student resources to assist them in navigating Blackboard
- Engage with learners consistently both inside and outside of the classroom to promote a sense of connection and belonging
- Structure online courses in ways that learners have many opportunities to interact with the content

How Can Instructors Provide These Needs Using Meaningful Learning Theory?



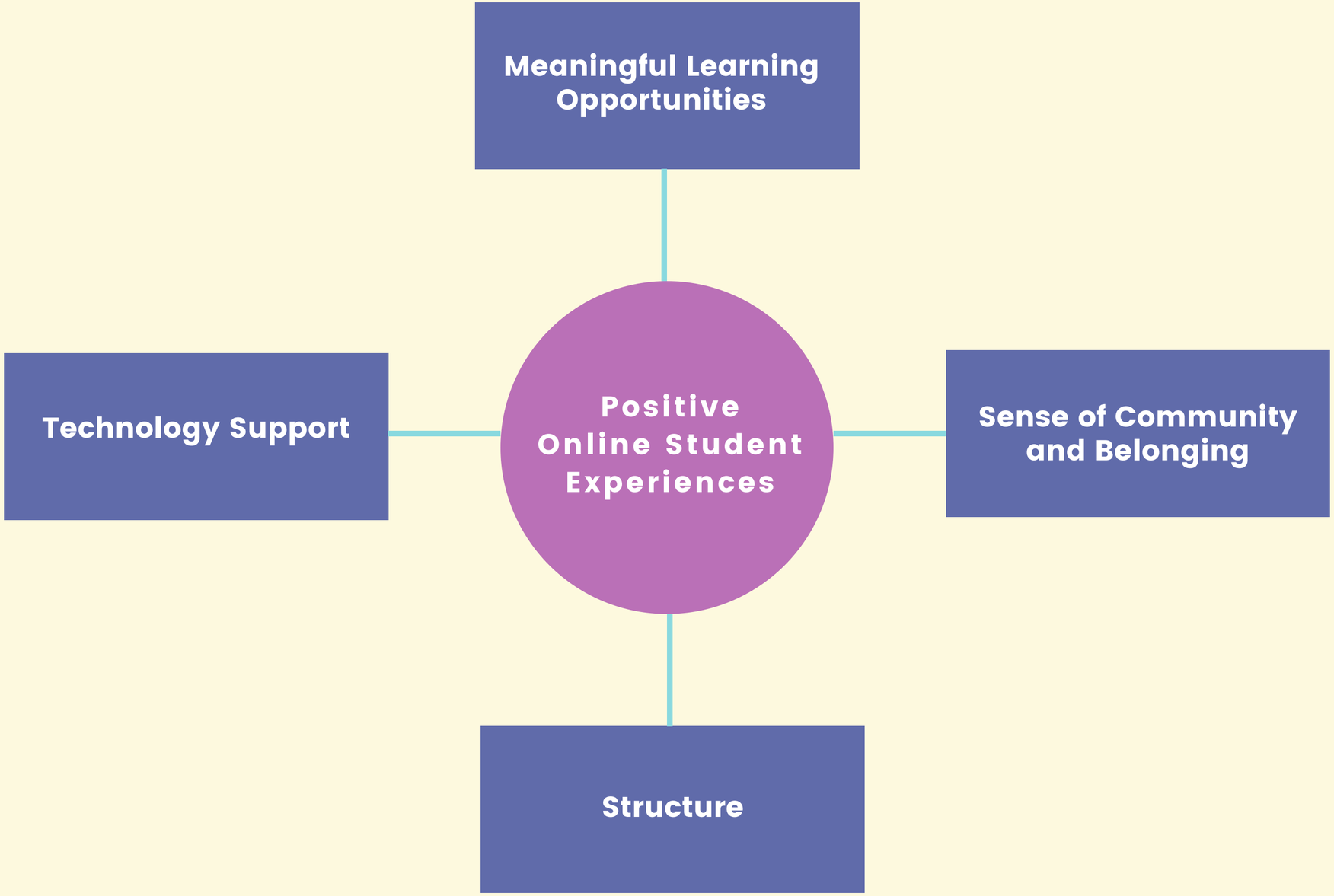
- Take into account the previous knowledge of the students
- Make use of activities that are of interest to students
- Create a motivational environment to learn
- Make use of debates, group work, games, analogies, illustrations, and previous organizers
- Use examples at all times
- Be a facilitator of the learning process, clarify doubts, and allow students to be an active entity during the process

How can structure influence student engagement?



How can structure influence student engagement?

Organize class time into manageable chunks that allow for student interaction, some lecture, and engaging learning activities.


Meaningful Learning Opportunities
Technology Support
Positive Online Student Experiences
Sense of Community and Belonging
Structure

Case Study

You are teaching a one-hour Biology class on zoom. Today is the first day of class.

These are the components of the class that must be covered:

- Course Overview
- Characteristics of Living Things
- The Nature of Science Compared to Non-Science
- The Scientific Method

Create a course outline for how you will structure the class. Make sure to include learning activities and engagement strategies you will use to to avoid lecturing for the entire class. Also include ways you will provide opportunities for meaningful learning.

Questions