Placemats

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Materials needed: Several large pieces of paper (divided into sections) and markers

Learning challenge addressed/predictable outcome: Students will be able to synthesize what they are learning as they work and discuss with peers in a small group.

Best used for: End of class activity; any class size

Learning objectives/skills fostered: Students will be able to summarize/reflect on what was learned during class.

What to do / how to do it: Toward the end of class, divide students into small groups of 4 or 5. Give each group a large piece of paper (either with the paper already divided into sections or the students can divide it themselves; see below).

Next, each student selects a space on the placemat that is closest to them and writes a response to the instructor’s question or statement. Once each student is done writing their response, the students share their thoughts in the small group. Then the students write a summary of the group’s ideas in the middle section. Finally, one member from each group presents their placement to the whole class.

Tips for implementing: This can also be used at the beginning of a class session by asking the students what they think about something that will be introduced in class that day.