

What's in the Bag?

Introduction: This strategy incorporates the power of suspense and novelty to garner student attention.

Materials: A paper bag, an object to fit in that bag

Directions:

- Prior to the lesson, select a tangible, physical object that relates to the topic being presented. Before students enter class, place the object in the bag.
- As the lesson begins, tell students that you have placed an object in the bag that directly relates to the objective of the lesson.
- Tell students the objective and provide think-time to consider what the object in the bag might be.
- Lead the class in a question and answer session where students take turns guessing what the object could be. Consider using the 20 questions strategy during this time. If student seem stumped, provide some clues or respond to guesses with “You’re cold or “you’re red hot” statements.
- Once a student has correctly guessed the object or the students seem stumped, show them the object and explain how the object relates to the lesson.



Tips and Variations

- As an option, ask student how they think the object relates to the lesson without telling them directly.
- Sometimes an odd association can be created between an object and the content being studied. For example, when studying whole to part fraction concepts, a teacher could bring in an orange to display how one whole object could be divided into parts.
- **Critical Thinking Connection**—Consider asking student to think of items that could have gone into the bag that relate to the objective. Ask students to provide a justification for an item and explain how it relates to the lesson being learned. Sometimes students will think of excellent examples that can be used in later lessons.