



- **10 Strategies for Engaging Learners with Open Educational Resources**

## Overview

This document outlines 10 strategies for engaging learners with Open Educational Resources (OER). This is not a how-to document; we simply describe some of the types of activities and strategies that may be useful in your course.

## What are Open Educational Resources?

Open educational resources (OER) are materials that exist either in the public domain or under a Creative Commons copyright. These materials are available for use, and in some cases adaptation, by educators and students as low to no cost replacements for traditional textbooks. OER can be used in both face-to-face courses and, of course, in fully online classes.

IT Solutions offers several [OER tools](#) to help you develop the following strategies in your own classes:

### Enterprise Tools:

- Office 365 / One Drive
- Media Space
- D2L Brightspace
- [Browse even more OER tools and resources](#)

## 10 Strategies for Engaging Learners with Open Educational Resources

### Strategy #1: Search for quality OERs that will complement the content you're are teaching

*The basics:* Use OER search engines to find materials that fit into your course. OER Commons has an advanced search tool that allows you to narrow down your search which will allow you to find the best fitting resource without having to search through numerous OERs.

### Strategy #2: Incorporate OERs in your lecture.

*The basics:* OERs can be easily incorporated into PowerPoint lectures. Use Creative Commons images to add an eye-catching feature that can help maintain students' attention. In addition, you can feature videos into your class material, like TedTalks on your lecture topic. Hearing and seeing the information in a variety of ways, and potentially from multiple people, will increase the likelihood that a student will commit what they are learning to their memory.

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**Strategy #3: Assign OERs that have interactive content (e.g. videos, audio, activities, practice quizzes)**

*The basics:* Many OERs online feature interactive content. For example, [Carnegie Mellon University's Open Learning Initiative](#) has high quality interactive OERs for various subjects. You can find full open courses and textbooks online that feature engaging materials throughout the readings. You can also supplement a traditional textbook with OERs to promote engagement in and outside of the classroom.

**Strategy #4: Remix OERs**

*The basics:* Remixing OERs involves adapting already available OERs to better suit the needs of your course. OER Commons allows educators to easily remix resources, allowing you to rearrange text, add or delete information, and insert media to an existing OER.

**Strategy #5: Find OERs that have been highly rated by other educators and include reviews of the resource.**

*The basics:* Most websites allow educators to rate and review a resource, similar to leaving a review on Amazon. Looking for resources that have been highly rated and have good reviews will reduce your search time while looking for quality resources.

**Strategy #6: Use a variety of OERs to engage people in different ways.**

*The basics:* Using an OER text is great, but you can further promote learning by incorporating OER videos, diagrams, charts, and activities. Some people have an easier time grasping a concept when presented in another form, rather than just lecture and text. Search OER libraries to find your lesson content for different styles of learners.

**Strategy #7: Assign students to create collaborative OER material**

*The basics:* Using collaborative technology, such as OneDrive, students can co-create course materials to demonstrate their understanding of the subject matter. Study guides, assignment rubrics, textbooks, and even tests and quizzes can be created by students for students and then published on an OER site like OER Commons or Cornerstone.

**Strategy #8: Peer-review an OER textbook**

*The basics:* The [Open Textbook Library](#) continually asks for faculty to peer review the material they archive. Consider peer-reviewing a textbook or use it as a class assignment for your students.

**Strategy #9: Involve your students**

*The basics:* The use of OER materials directly impacts your students' wallets. Ask them what they think about using an OER textbook or other materials? Find out what matters to them. Would they happily read a journal article to substitute for something missing from a free textbook? What class materials do they use in your class?

**Strategy #10: Develop and share your own OER**

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*The basics:* Make the perfect OER for your course. Several websites allow educators to develop and share OERs for free. [Xerte Online Toolkits](#) make creating an OER simple. You only need to use your web browser to create an OER that will be an ideal learning material for your class.

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