Active Learning Technique Components/Steps

I use this activity in both face-to-face and online classes. Students submit a research presentation in video format and then follow-up on the material by discussing their topic with three of their peers in a roundtable discussion format. This active learning activity is in two parts:

1. Students are assigned a research topic (in my classes, this is a composer from an under-represented group who is not covered in the standard textbooks or a methodological approach).

2. Students follow guidelines on Blackboard for developing a thesis, creating an effective presentation, scripting and recording the presentation, and using UTSA-supported software (Panopto or Adobe Rush) to enhance the presentation with visual aids, tables, text, etc.

3. Students submit the presentation in the form of a 10-minute video.

4. After the videos are submitted, students are assigned to groups of four, and the videos are made available to students in each group in Blackboard as embedded Panopto Playlists.

5. Students follow guidelines on Blackboard to review the other three presentations in their group and schedule a meeting time for a roundtable discussion of the four research presentations.

6. The roundtable discussion is completed as a recorded Zoom meeting using the grid view so that all presenters are always visible (groups also have the option to meet in person and record the meeting). Each group explores the connections among the four topics. Members in each group work collaboratively to develop an overarching statement that defines the connections that were made among the four individual topics.

7. The roundtable discussion is submitted as a video assignment for grading.

Benefit to Student

1. Students develop digital communication skills as they create the initial presentation.

2. By reviewing the presentations of their peers, students encounter models of effective presentations and develop strategies to incorporate into their own presentations.

3. Students consider different points of view and learn strategies for working collaboratively with others in support of a shared purpose.

4. The follow-up activity offers students an opportunity to reconsider their topic to gain a much deeper understanding by exploring connections between their topic and the topics of their peers.

5. Students are given the responsibility of teaching the content to the and are thus more conscientious and accountable for their work. By approaching the material in this way, they gain a deeper understanding of the content and view their presentations as valued contributions to the class.

6. Since students are working with their peers rather than presenting to the entire class, there is less stress in this activity than in a traditional presentation.

7. By working collaboratively in small groups, students develop a sense of community even in an online environment.