Discussion Leader Activity: Review Posters

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Activity Type: Small group poster creation, student presentations

Time Needed in Discussion: 50 minutes

Purpose

• To provide the students a way to go through the lecture notes, synthesize the material and present a subtopic to their classmates.

Abstract

Pre-class prep 30 min
Teacher explains what makes a “good” poster 5 min
Students prepare posters in groups 20 min
Students present posters 25 min

Supplies

• Markers
• Large Butcher block Paper
• Note cards numbered 1-5 for 30 students, to create 5 groups of 6 students (editor’s note – smaller groups will improve student interaction, but make a time crunch for presentations)
• Topic cards: give them a large topic and a subtopic and then the fill in the details. Examples:
  o Broad Topic: bacterial genetics: Subtopic: bacteriophage cycles
  o Broad Topic: cloning: Subtopic: how to clone a gene; Another subtopic: How to clone a sheep or mouse

Pre-class prep
1. Go through the lectures and find the important topics
2. Make topic note cards with a number on the front (1-5) and broad topic and subtopic printed on the back

In Class
1. In the first 5 minutes explanation of what makes a good poster
   • Plan a clear and concise review of the topic being covered
   • Use diagrams to illustrate the point
   • Make sure all the terms and new vocabulary are clearly defined
     Explain that they should be experts on this topic if they are not clear from the notes and book they can and should ask the teacher questions.

2. For the next 20 minutes, all group members should make part of the poster and present their part to the rest of the group. The TA should walk around and check that the
information is accurate, suggesting lecture slides that might have important information. Make sure they have highlighted the key points and the information on the poster is correct.

3. (20 min) Poster presentations. Students should stand and hold their poster so it is visible to the rest of the class. Have “audience” students get out lecture notes so they can make additions to their own materials. Plan on 4 min presentations with 1 minute for questions. Students should introduce themselves and take turns covering the topic. Ask the group of presenters a question about their topic that is not stressful for them to answer in front of everyone. Ask the class a question about the topic if the question is more difficult (this will keep the rest of the class awake).

**Things to Ask or Emphasize**

- Tie the review of this topic into older topics like how is a southern blot similar to PCR, ie probe hybridization is the same process as when a primer anneals.
- Explain what was good about their poster, i.e., good diagram, clarification of vocabulary.
- The level of the detail should be similar to that in lecture and to what they would expect to see on the exam.
- Add an additional fun fact to the poster that might help them remember the concept for the exam. Example: jumping genes were discovered by Dr. Barbara McClintock and she won the prestigious Nobel Prize in Medicine in 1983 for her life-long research on corn genetics.

**Comments**

The students should have more energy when they are physically drawing out large diagrams and coloring. Some students absolutely hate to present things to the class others are naturals and some are class clowns. If groups are large, assign jobs: designer, drawer, presenter.