# A picture containing fabric  Description automatically generatedMoving Forward: Use these Tools in Your Classroom for **Activating Curiosity**

## Activating curiosity: lock them in an escape room

## People love puzzles, mysteries, and solving them, especially when the stakes are real for them. They also like getting feedback about how they are confronting the unknown. Addressing these emotional processes is something we’ll call activating curiosity.

## Strategies for activating curiosity include making assignments personal (or self-relevant), pointing out the surprise in a concept or activity, making an activity into a puzzle or mystery, and giving lots of feedback that allows students to assess their solutions and celebrate their ‘escapes.’

## In order to activate student curiosity during an assignment in which students give negative information or a counter-argument

* **Make the stakes personal:** group students into pods who research reasons to say “no” that are common in their professions; have students practice or remember refusals of significance in their personal lives, like a breakup or denying a friend admission to a group. ​
* **Highlight surprises about refusals:** proposethat”no” is *not* the end of a business relationship or conversation, that it is *not* merely quoting policy or law; propose that people cry when you tell them “no,” even when they are millionaires; suggest that saying “no” is something to be proud of, researched, and defended, not sorry for.​
* **Make evaluating reasons to say “no” a puzzle**: prepare a Venn diagram with reader and writer circles – how many reasons can students fit into the overlap? Design a ‘game’ that asks students to collect species of reasons (legal, policy, moral, emotional) and write a refusal or rebuttal that includes one from each species.
* **Use a metaphor** like a business-relationship-as-engine, a Prince-in-distress, or a recipe and ask: what reasons to say “no” make the engine run, defeat the dragon, make the dish taste delicious and why?​
* **Use a mystery**like a case study or example in which a surprising reason for a refusal led to a good outcome. Give students the task of analyzing the situation and have them come up with the most creative/odd solutions in an attempt to guess “what really worked.” ​
* **Let students celebrate or evaluate their solutions or approaches:** use ZOOM polls, Kahoot, or student reactions on Discord to show immediate support for ideas in class; let students role play and focus group their solutions or approaches; determine which parts of evaluating reasons you want students to master and evaluate them with early feedback.