Use images. Show students a selection of images/cartoons and get them to explain which relates to last lesson’s learning and how might the others tie in later? E.g. an example of a technique currently being studied.

Guess who? Put students into pairs and hand out a wad of post-it notes to each pair. They write a word or statement relating to the lesson and put it on their partner’s head. Their partner then has to guess what or who they are!

Explain statements. Put students into groups of three and number them one to three. Put three numbered statements up on to the whiteboard and ask students to explain the corresponding statement to their group.

Catchphrase (sort of). Have an image displayed on the board (relating to the topic of study) but covered up. Every time a student answers a question then show a little bit more of the image. The first person to identify the image, wins!

Play bingo! Hand out a numbered grid and read out numbered questions/statements to students. As they identify them, they tick off their bingo cards. The first student to get a full house wins.

Analyse objects. Bring in a selection of objects relating to what you’re studying and ask the students to discuss what they think the objects represent. This works well if you’re studying a poem or prose text.

Question time. Ask students a series of questions. They have to answer without saying yes or no.

Play Blockbusters. Students complete a path of hexagons by answering questions related to the topic or area you’re studying. Either use the Teachit whizzy version (named Hexbusters) or the paper template resource which is ready to use off the peg.

Match the character to the quote. Give character names out to students along with quotes and get them to match them up correctly. Teachit’s Matching whizzy is great if you’d prefer an interactive version. This also works for other areas, e.g. match the idiom to the picture.

Write a dictionary. Ask students to create their own ‘dictionary’ of key words and ask them to complete definitions of words learnt from the previous lesson.
20 teaching ideas for starter activities

11 Chop up text. Either chop up bits of text manually and get students to put it back together or use the Teachit whizzy, Choptalk. It's a great tool if you're analysing newspaper headlines or specific parts of a text.

12 Play a human sequencing game! Give students a statement relating to the topic you're studying and ask them to line up in order of how strongly they agree/disagree with the statement.

13 Sit pupils back to back. One gives instructions or describes a picture or process and the other student draws what their partner has described and identifies it correctly.

14 Sequence statements. Cut up statements and put them into the correct order. Teachit's Sequencing whizzy is perfect if you'd rather take it down an interactive route. This works well for plot structure.

15 Word tennis. Divide the class into two groups and get them to take it in turns to say a word related to the current topic. No words can be repeated. The idea is that this is a game of word tennis and so should be scored as such.

16 Re-arrange poetry. If you’re studying poetry, give students the poem chopped up and ask them to put it in any order they like. Compare with the original poem and generate a class discussion. This is great for close analysis.

17 Pick a question, any question! Ask students to write down any questions they have on the topic/area you’re studying. Put these into a hat and pick some out. See if the students can answer them first, and then you answer if they can’t!

18 Play dominoes. Use the Teachit template to write down questions and answers relating to the subject being studied.

19 Crack the code. Give students a code, a=b, b=c and ask them to crack the code in order to work out the objective of the lesson and any key words that are relevant.

20 Dicey questions. Make a dice with questions or statements on each of the sides. Put students into groups and ask them to take turns to roll the dice and answer the questions/discuss the statement. Teachit has a cube template you may find handy for this!