

# TIPS FOR BRINGING PRESENCE INTO YOUR VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

## 1. Ask for frequent little responses, especially chats

In a virtual classroom, ask for student input via chats. With chats, you can:

- Pose short questions and ask for chat responses
- Use public chats to create classroom discussion, while private chats shed light on individual thinking and enable suspense
- Run polls and make use of any other interaction tools enabled by the online platform.

## 2. Take moments of silence

Although the main priority in an online classroom is to create interactive engagement, it is also important to create space for silent thought. Take intentional pauses. Wait time—appropriately suspenseful and appropriately long—is even more important online than it is in person.

## 3. Vary the tone of your voice

Even more than sight, sound creates the sense of being *in* a place. When you're teaching a class online, your voice is what's most present. Add a pinch more energy to your voice and modulate your volume, pitch, and/or pace for emphasis.

## 4. Look warmly into the camera

When you look into the camera, you're actually looking into the eyes of every one of your students—simultaneously. When you look into your camera, be warm and authentic. Your students are looking right back at you.