Badge #5 - Part 2: Anticipatory Sets

Evidence of Learning...

1. **Using what you have learned (and already know) about anticipatory sets, share (in 1-2 paragraphs) a very memorable lesson with a killer "hook" or anticipatory set.**
    1. **Consider the following prompts:**
    - **Provide details about the subject area, learning targets, etc.**
    - **What made it so effective?**
    - **What (if anything) would you change if you taught the same lesson again?**

One of my most memorable "killer hooks" happened during my ecology unit on biodiversity and adaptations. The learning target was: "Students will be able to explain how adaptations help organisms survive in specific environments." Before saying a word about the lesson, I placed several covered boxes on my lab tables around the room, each containing an unusual preserved specimen, molted exoskeleton, or mystery object (a turtle shell, a piece of coyote-chewed deer bone, an owl pellet, a snake's skin, etc.). I told students they were going to become "field biologists on an urgent research mission." Their task: in pairs, they had 60 seconds per box to observe, sketch, and record possible explanations for how each specimen might be an adaptation to its environment without touching anything (yet). This really piqued their curiosity. Students who usually hung back were hesitant to get involved were interested and were debating ideas before we'd even started formal instruction.

It was effective because it activated prior knowledge (students drew on what they knew from earlier life science topics), generated genuine interest, and immediately made the concept of adaptation tangible. The hands-on mystery made them want to learn the content so they could confirm or refine their guesses. If I did it again, I'd add a local field connection, perhaps including specimens from a specific local wetland area, forest, or shoreline. It would be very cool to invite a local university or DEC biologist to video chat in for a short debrief. That real-world tie-in would deepen the connection between the hook and our local ecosystems.