

Think-Pair-Share

Description

Think-Pair-Share is designed to have students think about a topic, then pair with another student and share their thoughts. It allows students time to formulate their thoughts and involves all students, not just the few who volunteer or whom the teacher calls on. *Think-Pair-Share* works well in all classes and can be adapted for all levels. It can easily be implemented in large classes.

Purpose

Think-Pair-Share allows students to think about a response before sharing their ideas with another student or the class. Students are often more willing to share an idea with a partner than speaking up in class. This strategy allows them to try out their ideas in, one hopes, a supportive dialog with a partner. Thinking and talking about an idea also helps students to formulate sentences in their minds and sharpen their ideas as they listen to others. If students are asked to report out to the whole class, more confident students get a chance to volunteer the answer for their pair, while less confident students hear their ideas presented by a team member. Think-Pair-Share is an excellent way to build workplace communication skills, since even low skilled employees are often expected to work in teams.

What to Do

1. Think about how you want to pair up students, either informally, or by pre-assigning pairs within or across proficiency levels. You can also organize the class by numbering students 1 to 4 and asking 1s and 2s and 3s and 4s to work together as teams.
2. Introduce your prompt – a question, a picture, a situation, a problem, a reading, or a PowerPoint -- that you present orally and ask students to respond. Be sure to ask questions that require some thinking and where students are likely to diverge in their answers. You can also make statements and ask students to think about whether a statement is True or False and give a reason.
3. Ask students to work individually first for a minute or so. Encourage them to think about the answer. Students may write down their answer, but shouldn't always be required to do so.
4. Announce partners and ask students to pair up and share their ideas. If they have written lists, they should combine their lists (leaving out redundant ideas. If they are to give an opinion, they should compare and discuss their opinions. Remind students of the social language that makes interactions work more smoothly.
5. Finally, call on pairs to share their ideas with the entire class. To help ensure that students listen, ask other students to repeat what's been said and ask if they agree or disagree or would like to add some of their ideas.

6. There is no need to have every group talk (in fact, that slows down the class). But come back to hear other people's ideas as you review the lesson.