

Think-Pair-Share

Students share and compare possible answers to a question with a partner before addressing the larger class. Helpful with shy or ESOL students.

Purpose:

- Focuses attention on a particular point
- Provides quick access to student understanding
- Allows shy students to gain confidence
- Encourages problem solving individually and in groups
- Provides forum for auditory and kinesthetic learning
- Increases the body of material for student response

Uses:

- When you want the students to share what they know
- When you want students to think through a problem by themselves, then share and develop the idea
- At any time during a class to break routine
- At times where students need to talk through a problem

Method:

1. Ask the students to think about an issue and write down their response or answer to it.
2. Ask them to turn to a partner and share ideas
3. Ask them to write down the ideas they both had.

Results:

- Discuss findings from partnerships in larger plenary session
- Written results should be tabulated and recorded to check against possible misunderstanding of the material

Next Steps:

- Determine appropriate teaching technique responses to results
 - Large percentage understood the material or the discussion thoroughly explored the relevant concepts: move to next idea
 - Small percentage understood the material, or some avenues of exploration remain open: consider homework assignments, rather than class time, to explore elements of investigation now yet mastered. Alternately, focus attention on material during class by re-teaching or presenting the material differently. Groupwork and peer tutoring can assist in determining if the material has been mastered.

Future Steps:

- Keep records of results for use with student, course, and program assessments (trends begin with one result!)
- Course or program review:
 - Large percentage with misconceptions = strengthening focus of these in previous courses
 - Large percentage having no misconceptions = lessening focus or eliminating from course
 - Large percentage demonstrating poor understanding = adding concepts or skills to pre- or post- courses for necessary redundancy
 - Compare results from classroom assessments of major concepts with certification test results, graduate, and employer surveys and/or accreditation review comments; positive correlation = you are on the right assessment track and the right improvement track