FAVORITE TEXT TEACHING STRATEGIES

**ONE SENTENCE PROJECT**

Daniel Pink explaining the project

<http://www.danpink.com/2010/10/whats-your-sentence-the-movie/>

Examples

<http://vimeo.com/18347489>

Extend to education—one sentence about a book you read, a person you learned about, an event

what you want the students to understand

Illustrate your sentence

Do one sentence for key terms—like Teacher, Student or subject matter-Math, Science or *halachic* concept

**STORY JIGSAW**

Once students are familiar with the text of a story, divide into groups and have each group take on one of the major characters from the story. Each group decides what its character’s point of view is.

Then count off within each group and mix them up, so now each group is comprised of all of the characters. Now the group has to tell the story, combining all the character’s points of views. They may present their version however they wish—in writing, song, visually but with the perspective of each character represented.

Works as a great way to review plot, character, theme, perspective, bias, narrative.

This strategy also works well with any content. It allows students to go deep, take ownership, and demonstrate mastery.

**SEE-THINK-JUSTIFY-WONDER**

Students look at visual document

Respond to following questions

What do you See?

What do you think is going On?

Justify your answers—why do you think/say that? Show me in the text.

What does it make you Wonder?

Have students work in the following way

Divided in small groups, they first respond individually, the come together and discuss. Come to a consensus on each.

Present to larger group.

**PASS THE BATON**

To be used with primary source objects or texts or paintings or an idea.

Instruction to teachers:

Think about how this ‘entity’ might be used at the Elementary, Middle School and High School levels. What elements are appropriate for each? What expectations do you have about the understanding and knowledge of your students as they enter the next level of education? What can the next level’s teachers expect to inherit from you?

Suggest a ‘path’ for this object. In may be placed in any discipline or course, and used more than once but it must be incorporated in at least 3 points in the K-12 curriculum.

Illustrate the path of the object. Facilitator will provide examples for participants.

Alternative—3 different academic disciplines. Change to what expectations do all disciplines share? How do they differ from one another? What is Common in the Common Core?

**ZOOM-IN**

Each student gets part of a whole—could be a piece of writing, steps in an experiment, a set of instructions

Begin with Six Blind Men and the Elephant—

As well as the poem

<http://www.constitution.org/col/blind_men.htm>

what do they ‘know’ looking at one part

what do they know as they look at a second part (pair-square)

design a task by grade/discipline

Allows for exploration of concept—**what we know can change**

Alternative: Reveal each part of a picture slowly—

Here we will show 3 elements of a picture. All seem quite benign.

And then….

how does

1. understanding increase as they get fuller picture (literally)

2. what questions do they ask at each step—how do questions change as more is revealed

Connect to Strategy—I used to think; now I think—concrete version…

**Chalk Talk**

Chalk Talk is a silent conversation in writing that allows students to have an equal opportunity to participate. It is a versatile protocol that can be used for many purposes. Students and teachers love it!

Here’s the protocol, adapted from the website of the National School Reform Faculty.

**Process**

1. The facilitator explains VERY BRIEFLY that Chalk Talk is a silent activity. No one may talk at all and anyone may add to the Chalk Talk as they please.
2. The facilitator writes a relevant question in a circle on the board or chart paper.
3. The facilitator either hands a piece of chalk or marker to every student, or places many pieces of chalk or markers at the board. Students can comment on the initial question—and subsequent comments—by simply drawing a connecting line to the question or comment.
4. People write as they feel moved. They can read and respond to the comments of others. There are likely to be moments where not much seems to be happening—that is natural, so allow plenty of wait time before deciding it is over.
5. How the facilitator chooses to interact with the Chalk Talk influences its outcome. The facilitator can stand back and let it unfold or expand thinking by:
   1. circling other interesting ideas, thereby inviting comments
   2. writing questions about a participant’s comment
   3. adding his/her own reflections or ideas
   4. connecting two interesting ideas/comments together with a line and adding a question mark

Being an active participant encourages students to do the same kinds of expansions.

For more on this strategy, please see <http://teachersnetwork.org/ntny/nychelp/mentorship/chalktalk.htm>

**THINK-PUZZLE-EXPLORE**

Great to shape teaching; a form of pre and ongoing assessment

What do you think you know about this topic?

What questions or puzzles do you have about this topic?

How might we explore these questions?

Learning ongoing; students plan inquiry

**3-2-1**

this strategy is done at several points—begins as pre-assessment, then ongoing assessment, as well as instructional direction provider

Before you introduce a topic/idea

3 words

2 questions

1 metaphor/simile/analogy—for pre-readers—great way to teach symbols—what picture can you draw that makes you think of this? Can go from concrete to abstract, e.g. Will use with What is a Map –to Ideas about Bias

As you continue on, what 3 new words, 2 questions, 1 metaphor/simile/analogy

**THE EXPLANATION GAME**

Name it—what do you see—hone in on a feature, small item

Explain it—what could it be—what role or function might it have; why might it be there

Give reasons-why do you say that or why do you think it happened that way

Generate alternatives—what else could it be?

Great example on DVD—with K students looking at a painting—show clip

And ask teachers to model strategy:

What do you see/What could it be/Why do you say that

What did students notice?

What questions did teacher ask?

How did the teacher use the routine?

Formative Assessment

Gives Teaching Direction

Can also be used to deconstruct abstract ideas—

Family, School Rules, Government

**HEADLINES**-write a headline for this topic, issue, piece of text, visual document that summarizes and captures a key aspect that you feel is significant and important

Allows students to stop and reflect

Take a gallery walk to observe

Do they see what I see?

What am I Missing? Can be connected to Zoom-In

Perspective Building

Alternative: Captions, Tweets

**COLOR-SYMBOL-IMAGE**

Good for pre-reading or nonverbal learners—also distill down to essence of an idea

Way to explore topic, idea, person, event, whatever

Choose a color that you think best represents the essence of that idea person, event, whatever

Create a symbol that you think best represents the essence of that idea, person, event, whatever

Sketch an image that you think best captures the essence of that idea person, event, whatever

Students also have to explain their choices—think-pair-share

**FROM WHENCE OPINIONS**

Identify your bias

People have strong opinions but John Locke was correct—they are born *tabula rasa*—as blank slates. They come to these biases through their experience with the world. There are several steps here

Identifying what one’s biases are—bias is not good or bad. The word means slant. Just see which way you lean

The second step is connecting bias or opinion to facts which means distinguishing between them. This tends to be awfully abstract for kids.

Facts are things that can be measured; favorite example—it is 46 degrees out. That is a measurable fact. If you think that is cold—that is an opinion.

Sue is 4 feet 2 inches. Is she tall or short? Need more facts. If she is 6 years old, she is tall. If she is 26 years old, she is short.

[also a nice way to review nouns and adjectives]

Generate a list of facts about a topic about which the students have an opinion—a sports team, a favorite movie, a special relative—keep it light.

Now connect the list of facts and let them see how that led them to the opinion.

What happens if they get information that contradicts the opinion?

That’s OK because they need to understand that you can like something but not everything will be positive or support their case. You are also helping them to learn how to make an argument, both orally and in writing, which we will tackle later. Not about agreement, but about PROCESS

And people can have negative opinions about things too but the important point is that opinions STEM FROM FACTS

**COMPASS POINTS**

Ideal for project based learning

Set up in for parts of the room

**Excitement, Worries, Needs, Suggestions**—

Have kids brainstorm, post stickies, do gallery walk

Perhaps before a new unit, major project; help adjust the rubric

Example with teachers—shift to the Common Core; teacher evaluation

Something parents may also experience—use on back to school night

**CONNECT/EXTEND/QUESTION**

How are ideas and information CONNECTED to what you already know?

What new ideas and information did you get that EXTENDED your thinking in new directions?

What new QUESTIONS do you now have from what you have learned?

Or put another way—what do want to learn more about

This is a good precursor to research

**GALLERY WALK**

Gallery Walk is a teaching strategy that involves the movement of students around the room to a collection of displays that are connected to the day’s activities. A gallery walk can have several different purposes and is a good way to evaluate what students know about a topic before OR after it is taught.

The aspects of a Gallery walk can be anything from open-ended questions about the subject for the day, artwork related to central themes, photographs depicting aspects of curriculum, illustrations, or even demonstrations showing step by step procedures.

Gallery Walks are often completed with students participating in partners or small groups. In a given amount of time, each group will visit each display. As students read, observe, and interact with the display, they take notes on what they discover. Students can be provided guided notes or just require them to write notes as they go. When time is up, students take time reflecting on what they discovered. It is important that the teacher walk around and monitor students’ engagement with this activity.

Gallery walks can promote even more meaningful assessment when students post their notes around the displays encouraging students to think deeper and further than the notes posted previously. Then as students go around, responses can be to the original prompt and to the other students’ notes.

Implementation Ideas

- English can take parts of a poem, short story, or text and encourage students to discuss symbolism, identify parts of speech, and discuss meanings.

- Social Studies can use the activity to address various political cartoons or examine images from historical periods and gather students’ thoughts.

- Government students can use this to decide whether something is constitutional or unconstitutional and have students explain why.

- Mathematics teachers can provide images of Geometric figures and discuss the various concepts that are covered. Students could solve a problem and then write a problem for the next group to solve.

- Science teachers could use the activity related to outcomes of experiments

- PE and Health teachers could use the activity as a way for students to share a game they create and other students could comment and add to them

- Arts and Humanities teachers could use this strategy to examine art or even share student created projects

**PAIR SHARE (or TURN AND TALK)**

The Think-Pair-Share strategy is designed to differentiate instruction by providing students time and structure for thinking on a given topic, enabling them to formulate individual ideas and share these ideas with a peer. This learning strategy promotes classroom participation by encouraging a high degree of pupil response, rather than using a basic recitation method in which a teacher poses a question and one student offers a response. Additionally, this strategy provides an opportunity for all students to share their thinking with at least one other student which, in turn, increases their sense of involvement in classroom learning.

Think-Pair-Share can also be used as in information assessment tool; as students discuss their ideas, the teacher can circulate and listen to the conversations taking place and respond accordingly.

In this strategy, a problem is posed, students have time to *think* about it individually, and then they work in *pairs* to solve the problem and *share* their ideas with the class.

Think-Pair-Share is easy to use within a planned lesson, but is also an easy strategy to use for spur-of-the-moment discussions.  This strategy can be used for a wide variety of daily classroom activities such as concept reviews, discussion questions, partner reading, brainstorming, quiz reviews, topic development, etc.  Think-Pair-Share helps students develop conceptual understanding of a topic, develop the ability to filter information and draw conclusions, and develop the ability to consider other points of view.

**RAFT**

<http://www.readwritethink.org/professional-development/strategy-guides/using-raft-writing-strategy-30625.html>

The more often students write, the more proficient they become as writers.  RAFT is a writing strategy that helps students understand their role as a writer and how to effectively communicate their ideas and mission clearly so that the reader can easily understand everything written.  Additionally, RAFT helps students focus on the audience they will address, the varied formats for writing, and the topic they'll be writing about. By using this strategy, teachers encourage students to write creatively, to consider a topic from multiple perspectives, and to gain the ability to write for different audiences. In the book, *Strategic Writing*, Deborah Dean explains that writing for differing purposes and audiences may require using different genres, different information, and different strategies. Developing a sense of audience and purpose in writing, in all communication, is an important part of growth as a writer.

RAFT assignments encourage students to uncover their own voices and formats for presenting their ideas about content information they are studying.  Students learn to respond to writing prompts that require them to think about various perspectives:

·       **R**ole of the Writer: Who are you as the writer? A movie star? The President? A plant?

·       **A**udience: To whom are you writing? A senator?  Yourself? A company?

·       **F**ormat: In what format are you writing? A diary entry? A newspaper?  A love letter?

·       **T**opic: What are you writing about?

**NUMBERED HEADS TOGETHER**

Numbered Heads Together is a [cooperative learning](https://www.teachervision.com/pro-dev/cooperative-learning/48531.html) strategy that holds each student accountable for learning the material. Students are placed in groups and each person is given a number (from one to the maximum number in each group). The teacher poses a question and students "put their heads together" to figure out the answer. Alternatively, the students may write the questions as well. The teacher calls a specific number to respond as spokesperson for the group. By having students work together in a group, this strategy ensures that each member knows the answer to problems or questions asked by the teacher. Because no one knows which number will be called, all team members must be prepared.

Read more here: <https://www.teachervision.com/group-work/cooperative-learning/48538.html>

This youtube video provides a nice overview:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BLHDHlVhcug>

**THE FINAL WORD**

Use the Final Word process with a short article, or a section from a long article.

1. Assign reading. Ask students to highlight two to three items in their reading that were most interesting or thought-provoking. This can be assigned as work outside of class.
2. Formulate groups. All people within each group should have read the same article or section.
3. In turn, each individual shares one of the items they highlighted, but does not comment on it. When sharing their item, it is helpful to give page, column, and paragraph info so the item can be quickly found by everyone in the group. To share the item once people have found it, simply read it.
4. Starting to the left of the person who shares the item, group members comment, one at a time, in round-robin order about the item. It is important that there is no cross talk.
5. The person who initially shared the item then shares his/her thinking about the item last, getting the final word.
6. Repeat the pattern so that each group member gets an opportunity to initiate an item from their highlighted list.

What is interesting about the Final Word process is that the person who initiates the item may have a completely different perspective about it once others have all commented on it.

This process is excellent for helping people see others’ perspective, developing listening skills (no cross-talk), and challenging assumptions.

**THINK ALOUD**

The think-aloud strategy asks students to say out loud what they are thinking about when reading, solving math problems, or simply responding to questions posed by teachers or other students. Effective teachers think out loud on a regular basis to model this process for students. In this way, they demonstrate practical ways of approaching difficult problems while bringing to the surface the complex thinking processes that underlie reading comprehension, mathematical problem solving, and other cognitively demanding tasks.

Thinking out loud is an excellent way to teach how to estimate the number of people in a crowd, revise a paper for a specific audience, predict the outcome of a scientific experiment, use a key to [decipher a map](https://www.teachervision.com/maps/resource/5104.html), [access prior knowledge](https://www.teachervision.com/skill-builder/reading-comprehension/48540.html) before reading a new passage, monitor comprehension while reading a difficult textbook, and so on.

Getting students into the habit of thinking out loud enriches classroom discourse and gives teachers an important assessment and diagnostic tool.

For more on this strategy, <https://www.teachervision.com/skill-builder/problem-solving/48546.html>

**SAY-MEAN-MATTER *(from www.geocities.com)***

**(a/k/a What? So What? Now What?)**

Say-Mean-Matter is the name for a strategy that helps students question the text, search for deeper meanings, and make connections between text and their lives. It’s effective for all student levels from language learners to honors and AP students. It can be used with academic texts, with fiction, and with non-verbal material as well.

The strategy uses a three-column chart.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| SAY | **MEAN** | **MATTER** |
| What does the text say?  What happened?  Cite text (quotation) or paraphrase. | What does the author mean?  How do I interpret this?  Read “between the lines.” | Why does it matter to me or others?  Why is this important?  What is the significance?  What are the implications? |

 1. To first teach the strategy, you might use a short text or cartoon (single frame or strip) to demonstrate how text provides information on several levels. First, elicit from the students what the text says, what words are actually used, or if a cartoon, what the drawing illustrates. Students may also paraphrase the language. The text should be “right there.”  When filling in the chart, it may be helpful to number the responses.

 2. For each item on the SAY list, ask the students what they believe the statement means.  As these are suggested, write them in the second column, discussing them along the way.  Ask questions, such as, “What makes you think that?” “How do you know that?”

 3.  The third column is the most abstract and may prove to be difficult at first, especially with less sophisticated students. Ask: “So what?” “What is the theme of the piece?” “How does this piece connect to your own life?” “What does it matter to you?”  Or, “What questions does this piece raise?”  “What implications does it hold for a given group of people, or for people in general?” In this column you find the meaning and depth of the piece.

 4.  Once students learn how the three columns are used to understand a cartoon or short piece of text, a next step might be to have the class generate a paragraph to explain or analyze the piece. Use the ideas recorded on the chart to create the paragraph. One way to do this is to start with a statement from the “MATTER” column as a topic or thesis statement, and then draw on the “SAY” and “MEAN” columns for supporting details. The first column provides “text proof,” (what the text *says*), while the second column provides student interpretation.

     (Teacher should model initial steps of the writing; then students can complete it on their own, or with a partner.)

    When “Say, Mean, Matter” is applied to a longer text (a chapter in a textbook, a story, or even a novel) the columns can be used to help structure an essay, using the same process as when writing a paragraph.

    Another writing approach is to chunk ideas according to a number of “mean” ideas and to support these with “say” items. The introduction and/or conclusion may come from a “matter” idea. The writer can start anywhere and build a coherent analysis of the text.

# VARIATIONS

* Use a piece of artwork to demonstrate the strategy.
* Use a “Quote of the Day” and have students quickly practice the strategy with you, then leading them to work in partners and eventually on their own.  This is especially effective when introducing the strategy.  Do 10 minutes for a daily warm-up for several days.
* For novels, students can keep a Say-Mean-Matter journal for each chapter. The teacher can also select sections of the novel to work with. When students complete their reading of the novel, they will have information to draw on for any final writing or project.
* The strategy also can be used orally once students are familiar with it. The teacher can stop in the middle of a class reading and quickly do an oral run through of the three columns, asking, “What is this saying?” “What does it mean?”  “And why does it matter?”  This encourages higher level thinking during reading, and is especially useful when text is complex.

Sandra Krist, Literacy Coach, with thanks to Robin Winston and David Doty

History/Social Science Literary Common Core Standards for 9th-10th  and 11th-12th

* [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RH/9-10/1/) ***Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources***, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
* [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RH/11-12/1/) Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, ***connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.***

Science and Technical Common Core Literary Standards for 9th-10th & 11th-12th

* [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.9-10.1](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RST/9-10/1/) ***Cite specific textual evidence*** to support analysis of science and technical texts, ***attending to the precise details of explanations or descriptions.***
* [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.11-12.1](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RST/11-12/1/) ***Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts***, attending to important distinctions the author makes and to any gaps or inconsistencies in the account.

Writing (Non-Language Arts)

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.9-10.2b](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/WHST/9-10/2/b/) ***Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations,*** or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic.

**Close Reading**

Dr. Douglas Fisher:

“A close reading is a careful and purposeful reading. Well actually, it’s rereading. It’s a careful and purposeful **rereading** of a text. It’s an encounter with the text where students really focus on what the author had to say, what the author’s purpose was, what the words mean, and what the structure of the text tells us.

It really is getting to what Louise Rosenblatt talked about as a transaction between the reader and the text. Louise Rosenblatt, the originator of Reader-Response Theory, really talked about understanding what the author had to say and not impugning those authors words, but really getting what the author had to say and bringing some of your own ideas to bear on that text.

In a close reading, we have to have students reread the text. We give them questions; text dependent questions that require that they go back into the text and search for answers. These aren’t simply recall questions, just the facts of the text, but rather questions that allow students to think about the text, and the author’s purpose, the structure, and the flow of the text.

Close reading requires that students actually think and understand what they are reading.”

**Reciprocal Teaching**

Reciprocal Teaching is a strategy that asks students and teachers to share the role of teacher by allowing both to lead the discussion about a given reading. Reciprocal Teaching involves four strategies that guide the discussion: predicting, question generating, summarizing and clarifying.

Reciprocal Teaching is a great way to teach students how to determine important ideas from a reading while discussing vocabulary, developing ideas and questions, and summarizing information. It can be used across several content areas; it works particularly well with textbooks and non-fiction text.

Break the classroom into mixed-ability small groups. Designate one student as the "teacher" within each small group. This student will help keep their small group on task and ensure they move through each of the four steps as they read material that has already been divided it into smaller chunks by you. Next, you will read the first chunk to all the small groups, modeling the following four steps of reciprocal teaching.

1. Prediction
   1. Ask students to predict what they think the reading may be about. Get them to think about what is going to happen by asking questions like a detective might do.
2. Question as you go
   1. Remind students to generate questions as they listen and read. Remind them of the three levels of questions:
      1. Right-There questions (answer in the text)
      2. Between-the-lines questions (inference needed)
      3. Critical Thought questions (require their opinion)
3. Clarify
   1. As students listen and read remind them to ask themselves what words and phrases are unclear to them. These clarifications may take the form of the following questions.
      1. How do you pronounce that?
      2. What does the word mean?
      3. I think the author is saying…
      4. I'm guessing 'pie-in-the-sky' means…
4. Summarize
   1. Students summarize verbally, within pairs, and then share with their assigned small group or record their summary and read it aloud to their small group.
   2. Each small group could create a semantic map with major points of significance shared by each group member.

After you have modeled the previous steps, students may continue working in their small groups by silently or orally reading the next sections of the reading while conducting the four-step process.

**PARTNER READING**

Any of a number of strategies that partners two or more students to explore a text together.

The Paired Reading strategy encourages peer teaching and learning. Students are divided into pairs and read along together or take turns reading aloud to each other. Pairs can have the same reading ability or can include a more fluent reader with a less fluent reader. Each student reads and provides feedback about their own and their partner's reading behaviors.

Paired Reading can be used with many types of reading materials including student produced stories, and poetry. This strategy frees up the teacher to observe paired reading sessions and work with different students while other students continue reading together. Reading with someone encourages students to try reading materials that may be just above their normal reading level. Paired Reading can also be used to build oral skills so that reluctant readers can work toward reading in front of a large group.

**FISH BOWL**

[adapted from Facing History and Ourselves, <https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-strategies/fishbowl>]

The “fishbowl” is a teaching strategy that helps students practice being contributors and listeners in a discussion. Students ask questions, present opinions, and share information when they sit in the “fishbowl” circle, while students on the outside of the circle listen carefully to the ideas presented and pay attention to process.  Then the roles reverse. This strategy is especially useful when you want to make sure all students participate in the discussion, when you want to help students reflect on what a “good discussion” looks like, and when you need a structure for discussing controversial or difficult topics. Fishbowls make excellent pre-writing activities, often unearthing questions or ideas that students can explore more deeply in an independent assignment.

### Procedure

**Step one: Selecting a topic for the fishbowl**

Almost any topic is suitable for a fishbowl discussion. The most effective prompts (question or text) do not have one right answer, but rather allow for multiple perspectives and opinions.  The fishbowl is an excellent strategy to use when discussing dilemmas, for example.

**Step two: Setting up the room**

A fishbowl requires a circle of chairs (“the fishbowl”) and enough room around the circle for the remaining students to observe what is happening in the “fishbowl.”  Sometimes teachers place enough chairs for half of the students in the class to sit in the fishbowl, while other times teachers limit the chairs in the fishbowl. Typically six to twelve chairs allows for a range of perspectives while still allowing each student an opportunity to speak.  The observing students often stand around the fishbowl.

**Step three: Preparation**

Like many structured conversations, fishbowl discussions are most effective when students have had a few minutes to prepare ideas and questions in advance.

**Step four: Discussing norms and rules of the discussion**

There are many ways to structure a fishbowl discussion. Sometimes teachers have half the class sit in the fishbowl for 10-15 minutes and then say “switch,” at which point the listeners enter the fishbowl and the speakers become the audience. Another common fishbowl format is the “tap” system, where students on the outside of the fishbowl gently tap a student on the inside, indicating that they should switch roles. See the variations section for more ideas about how to structure this activity.

Regardless of the particular rules you establish, you want to make sure these are explained to students beforehand. You also want to provide instructions for the students in the audience. What should they be listening for? Should they be taking notes? Before beginning the fishbowl, you may wish to review guidelines for having a respectful conversation. Sometimes teachers ask audience members to pay attention to how these norms are followed by recording specific aspects of the discussion process such as the number of interruptions, respectful or disrespectful language used, or speaking times (Who is speaking the most? The least?)

**Step five: Debriefing the fishbowl discussion**

After the discussion, you can ask students to reflect on how they think the discussion went and what they learned from it.  Students can also evaluate their participation as listeners and as participants. They could also provide suggestions for how to improve the quality of discussion in the future.  These reflections can be in writing, or can be structured as a small or large group conversation.

### Variations

**1) A fishbowl for opposing positions**

This is a type of group discussion that can be utilized when there are two distinct positions or arguments. Each group has an opportunity to discuss the issue while the other group observes. The goal of this technique is for one group to gain insight about the other perspective by having this opportunity to listen and formulate questions. After both sides have shared and listened, students are often given the opportunity to discuss their questions and ideas with students representing the other side of the argument.

**2) A fishbowl for multiple perspectives**

This format allows students to look at a question or a text from various perspectives. First, assign perspectives to groups of students. These perspectives could represent the viewpoints of different historical figures, characters in a novel, social categories (e.g. young, old, male, female, working-class laborer, industrialist, peasant, noble, soldier, priest, etc.), or political/philosophical points of view.  Each group discusses the same question, event or text representing their assigned perspective.  The goal of this technique is for students to consider how perspective shapes meaning-making. After all groups have shared, students can be given the opportunity to discuss their ideas and questions with peers from other groups.

**Speed Dating**

This strategy works well when you have jigsawed content and students are responsible for knowing material.  It is a great formative assessment and is a wonderful way for students to know what they know and what they still need to study.

Set the room up in a circle with the desks in an inner and outer circle.

Only the inner circle will rotate.

It is up to you whether or not you place the students or they get to select their seats.

You may determine the length of each round and how many rounds you wish to have.

For the first round, have students prepare their information and be sure they are able to answer questions on their area of expertise.  Have them think about questions  they might want to ask as they go on their ‘dates’.

Before the first round, have them work with a partner on what are the ground rules for good conversations. Share that out with the full group and post on an Anchor Chart. Also let them know that the exit ticket will be a reflection on the quality of the conversations they had, responding to prompts such as:

* Describe your experiences as both a questioner and a responder.
* Were you able to extend your partner’s conversation?
* Describe the best conversation you had and what made it so good.

Each round should be the same length and each partner should ask and answer the same number of questions.

**STOPLIGHT ASSESSMENT**

RED LIGHT: Something that stopped me from learning today

YELLOW LIGHT: A question I had today

GREEN LIGHT: Something I learned today…

