

Active Learning Strategies Packet

Packet Contents

This packet contains 15 active learning strategies to promote student engagement that have been sorted by the environment that they would work best in (i.e. F2F or online with remote learning). Each strategy has a stamp indicating which environments they would work in. All strategies in this packet are compliant with UDL standards and can be used at the discretion of the instructor for any class size that they see fit.

**Please note that some F2F strategies may not be a good fit during COVID-19 (as they may involve sharing materials, students interacting closely in proximity, etc) and should be saved for integration at a safer time for F2F instruction.*

Active Learning Strategies

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1.) "3-2-1" Exit Slips

DESCRIPTION

A writing activity that prompts students to reflect on a lesson.



HOW IT WORKS

1. Provide index cards or a worksheet to students prompting them to fill in three things they learned, two things they still have questions about, and one thing that they found interesting during the lesson.
2. Pass out an index card or worksheet and allow students to use the remaining 3-5 minutes of class to complete them.
3. Students will hand in their index card or worksheet to the instructor on the way out of class.

3	Things I learned today	
2	Questions I still have	
1	Thing that interested me	

WHY YOU SHOULD USE IT

- Asking for individual written responses helps to increase student participation
- Informal assessments enable instructors to quickly assess students' understanding of the material
- Allow students to express what or how they are thinking about new information
- Teaches students to think critically.

COVID CAVEAT

Consider using exit slips electronically for as long as we are involved in this pandemic to ensure instructor safety from collecting papers



MAKE IT WORK REMOTELY

- Upload your exit slip as a fillable PDF for students to complete and submit in ulearn

PRO TIP

- Provide the exit slip premade in a template where students need to fill in the boxes instead of writing & organizing the answers to the prompts on their own piece of paper (*Compliance to UDL Checkpoints 1.1: Customizing display of information and 6.3: Facilitate managing information and resources*)

UDL COMPLIANCE

- Checkpoint 6.4: Enhance Capacity to Monitor Progress
- Checkpoint 9.3: Develop Self-Assessment and Reflection

2.) Four Corners

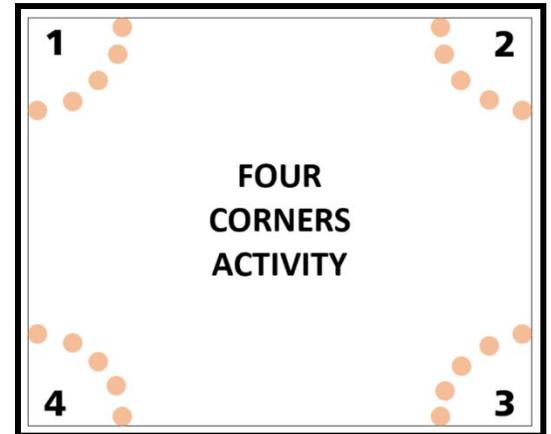
DESCRIPTION

A cooperative learning strategy that encourages students to make a decision about a problem or question. Students go to stand in the corner that corresponds with their response.



HOW IT WORKS

1. Pose a question and provide students time to think of their answer (“think time”).
2. Post a different “answer” to each corner of the room hanging on the wall.
3. Students move to the corner that best aligns with their thinking.
4. Students can discuss their choice/topic.



MAKE IT HARDER

- Have each corner develop a stance to use during a debate
- Create a task for students to complete associated with the answer aligned to their corner

WHY YOU SHOULD USE IT

- Students stay on task as they are accountable for sharing with the rest of the class.
- More critical thinking is retained after a lesson in which students have had an opportunity to discuss and reflect on the topic.

PRO TIP

- Before selecting a corner, have students write down their response in order to be prepared to share their reasoning with others. At the end of the activity, have students reflect on their position and indicate if their position remained the same or changed, and explain their reasoning.

UDL COMPLIANCE

- Checkpoint 7.2: Optimize relevance, value, and authenticity
- Checkpoint 8.3: Foster collaboration and community
- Checkpoint 4.1: Vary methods for response and navigation

COVID CAVEAT

Per social distancing guidelines, this strategy may not be safe to execute during this time



3.) Minute Papers

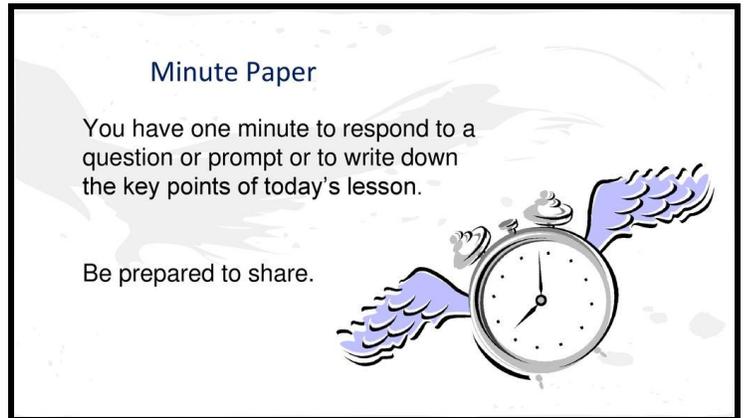
DESCRIPTION

A one-minute in-class writing activity in response to an instructor-posed question, which prompts students to reflect on the day's lesson.



HOW IT WORKS

1. Pose a question or prompt for students to reflect on and write about in class. Tell students how much time they will have (one minute).
2. Set the timer for one minute and have students begin writing their summaries for the entire time.
3. Once the time is up, the instructor can collect the papers for formative assessment data.



WHEN TO USE THEM

- At the end of class as a wrap-up activity to collect formative assessment data

ADJUST THE LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

- Make it harder by turning it into “The Minute Paper Shuffle”. Ask students to write a relevant question about the material, using no more than a minute, and collect them all. Shuffle and re-distribute, asking each student to answer his new question. This can be continued a second or third round with the same questions.

COVID CAVEAT

Consider assigning minute papers electronically for as long as we are involved in this pandemic to ensure instructor safety from collecting papers



MAKE IT WORK REMOTELY

- While the “Minute Paper Shuffle” might not work online, the original “Minute Paper” strategy can! Simply have students submit their minute paper as a Journal or as an assignment in ulearn.

UDL COMPLIANCE

- Checkpoint 6.4: Enhance Capacity to Monitor Progress
- Checkpoint 9.3: Develop Self-Assessment and Reflection

4.) Gallery Walk

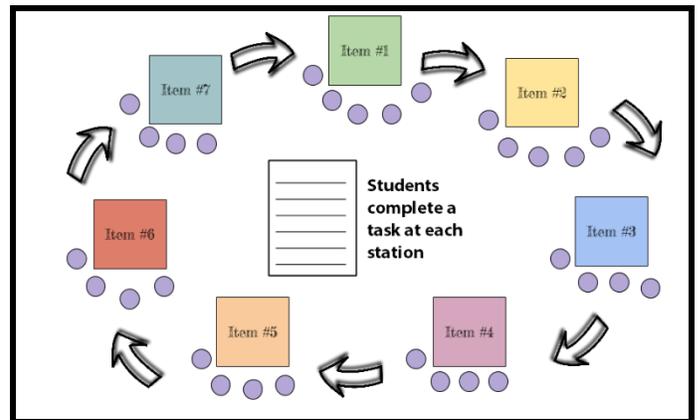
DESCRIPTION

A discussion technique that allows students to be actively engaged as they walk throughout the classroom viewing and commenting on each other's work.



HOW IT WORKS

1. Assign students different topics to research and have them create an infographic to bring into class.
2. Students will post their work on the walls throughout the classroom and will walk around looking at student work, provide feedback, and discuss the content.



WHEN TO USE IT

- After reading or lab or to examine historical documents/images

MAKE IT HARDER

- Post questions, ideas, concepts, or problems around the room. Provide blank chart paper for a graffiti wall at each station. Students record their thoughts on the given topic on the graffiti wall.

COVID CAVEAT

Per social distancing guidelines, this strategy may not be safe to execute F2F during this time. See below for digital execution tips



MAKE IT WORK REMOTELY

- Select a collaborative technology tool (i.e., Google Slides, Padlet.com, Micro.com) that allows students to post or link student artifacts as well as allows students to provide feedback. Then, provide the artifact instructions on how to post artifacts to the tool. Students post their name and a link to their artifact in the technology tool while the instructor reviews all of the links to ensure they work. Students provide feedback about the artifacts within the technology tool.

PRO TIPS

- Set a time limit for each stop along the Gallery Walk.
- Create a checklist of expectations for students during the Gallery Walk for clear behavior expectations (stay on task, actively participate, contribute ideas, etc.).

UDL COMPLIANCE

- Checkpoint 8.3: Foster collaboration & community
- Checkpoint 7.2: Optimize relevance, value, and authenticity

5.) Speed Dating for Writing Assignments

DESCRIPTION

A structured peer-review strategy that requires students to examine their own work and their peer's work to provide feedback



HOW IT WORKS

1. Set up a “speed dating” style circle or straight row so students can easily switch partners.
2. Pair students up and have them exchange drafts of a paper.
3. The partner reads the draft and outlines the strengths and weaknesses of the draft. Be sure to include a timed element to keep students on task (i.e., 5 minutes to read and 2 minutes for feedback).
4. Students switch partners for three rounds.

WHEN TO USE IT

- This strategy works best when used in the feedback, revision, or editing stage of a writing assignment for any subject area.

PRO TIP

- Prepare a checklist and give it to students to reference when evaluating each other's work. This not only helps them look for the right things, but it helps to keep the discussion and feedback structured.

UDL COMPLIANCE

- Checkpoint 8.3: Foster collaboration & community
- Checkpoint 7.2: Optimize relevance, value, and authenticity
- Checkpoint 8.4: Increase mastery-oriented feedback
- Checkpoint 6.4: Enhance capacity for monitoring progress
- Checkpoint 5.3: Build fluencies with graduated levels of support for practice and performance

COVID CAVEAT

Per social distancing guidelines, this strategy may not be safe to execute during this time



6.) Structured Academic Controversy

DESCRIPTION

A cooperative learning strategy where controversial issues are discussed from multiple perspectives by teams of students.

HOW IT WORKS

1. Organize students into four-person teams made up of two dyads. Each dyad reviews materials that represent different positions on a charged issue.
2. Dyads then come together as a four-person team and present their views to one other, one dyad acting as the presenters, the others as the listeners.
3. Rather than refuting the other position, the listening dyad repeats back to the presenters what they understood. Listeners do not become presenters until the original presenters are fully satisfied that they have been heard.
4. After the sides switch, the dyads abandon their original assignments and work toward reaching consensus. If consensus proves unattainable, the team clarifies where their differences lie.



STRUCTURED ACADEMIC CONTROVERSY	
TEAM A (FOR):	TEAM B (AGAINST):
THE ISSUE:	
Side A (FOR):	Side B (AGAINST):
Relevant Facts	
Main Arguments FOR:	Main Arguments AGAINST:
Notes and important points after hearing opposing view:	
Consensus statements (Common Ground):	

WHY YOU SHOULD USE IT

- Effectively addresses issues that strike sensitivities within the discipline.
- Provides students the opportunity to research a topic, prepare a position, and advocate for it.
- Provides a structured/respectful environment to analyze, evaluate and rebut information.

COVID CAVEAT

Per social distancing guidelines, this strategy may not be safe to execute F2F during this time. See below for digital execution tips.



MAKE IT WORK REMOTELY

- Assign four-person teams and content to dyads in advance. Have them come to the session prepared to meet with their four-person team. Select a collaborative technology tool (i.e. Bb Collaborate, Zoom) that allows students to meet in breakout groups. Serve as a “moderator” on the back-end to organize students coming in and out of each session as the activity progresses.

PRO TIP

- Introduce the strategy early in a course after developing classroom community with expectations stated (*Compliance to UDL Checkpoint 7.3: Minimize threats and distractions*)

UDL COMPLIANCE

- Checkpoint 8.3: Foster collaboration and community
- Checkpoint 7.1: Optimize individual choice and autonomy

7.) Jigsaw Groups

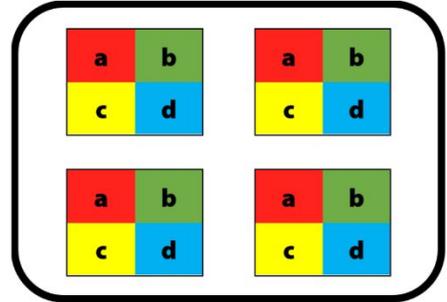
DESCRIPTION

A cooperative learning technique that incorporates full student participation and accountability in learning.



HOW IT WORKS

1. Students are divided into groups of four and are each assigned an article, a piece of an article, or certain pages to read
2. Each student reads their section of the text for a timed 5 minutes and takes notes while reading
3. After reading time ends, each student in the group must teach their assigned topic to their group as the “content expert” for that particular topic. Each student has a timed 2 minutes to teach and facilitate a discussion. While “content expert” students are teaching, the other students in the group are actively listening and taking notes.



WHY YOU SHOULD USE IT

- Students directly engage with the material, therefore fostering deep levels of understanding
- Students gain practice in self-teaching and peer teaching.
- Time spent using the jigsaw strategy can be comparable to lecturing about the topic.

COVID CAVEAT

Per social distancing guidelines, this strategy may not be safe to execute F2F during this time. See below for digital execution tips.



MAKE IT WORK REMOTELY

- Assign content to individuals and let them prepare it before the interactive session in addition to assigning student groups in advance. When the time comes, select a collaborative technology tool (i.e. Bb Collaborate, Zoom) that allows students to meet in breakout groups. Serve as a “moderator” on the back-end to organize students coming in and out of each session as the activity progresses.

PRO TIP

- Use timers so each student in a group gets equal time and so that students receive assistance in timing their presentation their material (*Compliance to UDL Checkpoint 7.3: Minimize threats and distractions*)

UDL COMPLIANCE

- Checkpoint 7.2: Optimize relevance, value, and authenticity

- Checkpoint 8.3: Foster collaboration & community
- Checkpoint 8.2: Vary demands and resources to optimize challenge

8.) Four Square Summary

DESCRIPTION

A “wrap up” activity to use at the end of a lesson for students to develop comprehension and condensed thinking, which improves summarization skills about a topic.



HOW IT WORKS

1. Each student gets an index card with four key terms from the lesson pre-written in each corner.
2. Using all four of the terms listed in the corners of the card, students must write only one sentence in the center of the card that summarizes what was learned in class today.
3. Display the following “rules” to students for this activity:

RULES

- All four terms must be used
- Students can use different forms of each term so that their sentence makes sense (i.e. if the term needing to be used is “think”, students may write “thinking” or “thought” instead)

Summary

The “Four Square Summary” is an excellent activity to use in the “wrap-up” section of a lesson plan because it pushes student to develop comprehension on the topic, and it encourages condensed thinking which improves summarization skills.

Comprehension

Lesson Planning

Activity

WHY YOU SHOULD USE IT

- Fosters full student participation in a low-risk setting

COVID CAVEAT

Consider giving this assignment electronically for as long as we are involved in this pandemic to ensure instructor safety from collecting papers



MAKE IT WORK REMOTELY

- Simply have students upload their four-square summary as an assignment in ulearn

PRO TIP

- Provide the four-square summary premade in a template where students need to fill in the boxes instead of writing & organizing the answers to the prompts on their own piece of paper (Compliance to UDL Checkpoints 1.1: Customizing the display of information and 6.3: Facilitate managing information & resources)

UDL COMPLIANCE

- Checkpoint 6.4: Enhance Capacity to Monitor Progress
- Checkpoint 9.3: Develop Self-Assessment and Reflection

9.) Padlet

DESCRIPTION

An online collaborative learning application that creates bulletin boards used to display information for any topic.

**Note: The free version of Padlet only allows you to save 3 “walls” at a time, therefore, it cannot serve as a repository for regular discussions throughout the entire course.*



HOW IT WORKS

1. Instructors: create an account on Padlet.com
2. Select a pre-made template or blank canvas to start a collaborative board
3. Add a title and description to the board and copy the sharing link.
4. Provide the Padlet sharing link to students so they can access the board
5. Students click anywhere on the board to post information (answers to questions, comments, thoughts, etc.)
6. Students can view other people’s posts and reply to comments.

WHY YOU SHOULD USE IT

- Using a Padlet before the start of a lesson helps to activate prior knowledge
- Using a Padlet during class as a discussion platform or as a wrap-up activity in class helps students reflect on what they’re absorbed and allows them to view what their classmates are thinking as well

IDEAS FOR USE

- Have the Padlet during the entire F2F class session as a “Parking Lot” for students to record questions/comments during the lecture without having to stop the professor so they can be gone over later

MAKE IT WORK F2F

- If you’re planning to use a Padlet in F2F instruction, simply project it onto the board so students can view and reference it. Also, be sure that students have access to technology (cell phone, laptop, etc) in the F2F classroom so that they can participate.

PRO TIPS

- Teach students how to use the “comment” or “like” features within Padlet when interacting with each other’s responses to build even stronger collaboration
- Allow students to respond to controversial or high-stakes questions using the “anonymous” feature on Padlet to ensure minimized feelings of personal risk (*Compliance to UDL Checkpoint 7.3: Minimize threats and distractions*)

UDL COMPLIANCE

- Checkpoint 6.4: Enhance Capacity to Monitor Progress
- Checkpoint 9.3: Develop Self-Assessment and Reflection

10.) Think-Pair-Share

DESCRIPTION

A strategy that provides students scaffolded interactions to formulate ideas and share their thinking with another student.



HOW IT WORKS

1. Pose a question that requires some thought.
2. Have the class members think about it individually for one minute.
3. Then ask them to discuss it with the person next to them for a minute. Call the group back together and discuss it as a class.

*See a more structured version of Think-Pair-Share in Spotlight Conversations (page 13)

ADJUST THE LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

- Make it easier by asking the students basic questions to answer
- Make it harder by asking an open-ended question or just by stating a discussion prompt and letting the students take it in whatever direction they want.

IDEAS FOR USE

- As a warm-up activity to discuss previous lesson or homework assignment
- During class discussions as a way for students to discuss ideas before sharing them with the class
- As a clarification tool for a complex problem or new guiding question posed by the teacher

PRO TIP

- Have the timer projected onto the board so students can track how much time is remaining and manage time appropriately

UDL COMPLIANCE

- Checkpoint 7.2: Optimize relevance, value, and authenticity
- Checkpoint 8.3: Foster collaboration and community

COVID CAVEAT

Per social distancing guidelines, this strategy may not be safe to execute during this time.



11.) Flip Grid Assignments

DESCRIPTION

A website that allows instructors to create "grids" to facilitate video discussions. Each grid is like a message board where teachers can pose questions, called "topics," and their students can post video responses that appear in a tiled grid display.

HOW IT WORKS

1. Instructors set up an account and create grids, which act as communities for students to work in.
2. Within each grid, the instructor creates prompts called "topics", and students post video responses to the prompts and replies to each other's videos. Most of the videos are quite short, just a minute or two long



WHY YOU SHOULD USE IT

- It increases accessibility for all students including closed captioning when viewing videos and generating a full transcript for each video. Microsoft's Immersive Reader can also be used within both the closed captioning and any text within a topic to read the texts aloud

IDEAS FOR USE

- Sharing text reviews
- Building student portfolios
- Adding annotations
- Sharing work between students to the entire class asynchronously

UDL COMPLIANCE

- Checkpoint 7.2: Optimize relevance, value, and authenticity
- Checkpoint 8.3: Foster collaboration and community
- Checkpoint 4.1: Vary methods for response and navigation
- Checkpoint 2.5: Illustrate through multiple media
- Checkpoint 7.1: Optimize individual choice & autonomy
- Checkpoint 4.2: Optimize access to tools and assistive technologies

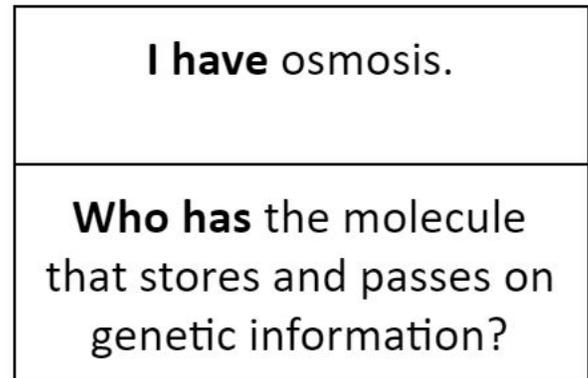
12.) I Have, Who Has

DESCRIPTION

A collaborative learning activity used to review

HOW IT WORKS

1. Before class, create cards – one side should be labeled “I have” and the second side should be labeled “Who has”. The cards should have answers and responses pre written on them. There should be one card made for every student in the class.
2. Cards get distributed to each student. The student with the card that says “I have the first card” goes first.
3. An example of how this works is: Student A says “I have 3. Who has 2+2?”. Then the student in the class with the card that says “I have 4”, reads that one side aloud, and then reads the other side which asks another question. This pattern continues until all students have answered and asked questions.



WHY YOU SHOULD USE IT

- Fosters 100% student participation in a low-risk setting and promotes active listening as students are constantly paying attention, waiting for their card to be called

PRO TIPS

- Prepare students prior to the day that this activity takes place so that behavioral and structural expectations are clearly understood.
- Laminate cards for reuse term after term
- Make a card that says “I have the first card. Who has _____” to kick off the activity, and make a card that says I have _____. This is the end of the activity” to close it.

COVID CAVEAT

To avoid students touching cards distributed by the professor, this strategy may only be safe to execute in the F2F environment if students can be sent their individual cards electronically.



MAKE IT WORK REMOTELY

- Email cards individually to each student so that other students can't see who has which cards. Proceed to hold the activity using a synchronous platform like Bb Collaborate or Zoom.

UDL COMPLIANCE

- Checkpoint 8.3: Foster collaboration & community

13.) Spotlight Conversations

DESCRIPTION

A strategy that provides students scaffolded interactions to formulate ideas and share their thinking with another student.



HOW IT WORKS

1. Pose a question or prompt for students to discuss and tell them how much time they will have. A one-to-two minute discussion is most productive.
2. Have students turn to the person sitting next to them.
3. Set the timer for one minute and have one student begin discussing the assigned question or prompt (with the requirement that they must talk for the full minute).
4. When time is up, switch speakers and repeat.



WHY YOU SHOULD USE IT

- Encourages full student participation in a low risk setting and prevents one person from dominating the conversation through use of a timer

IDEAS FOR USE

- As a warm-up activity to discuss previous lesson or homework assignment
- During class discussions as a way for students to discuss ideas before sharing them with the class
- As a clarification tool for a complex problem or new guiding question posed by the teacher

PRO TIP

- Have the timer projected onto the board so students can track how much time is remaining and manage time appropriately

UDL COMPLIANCE

- Checkpoint 7.2: Optimize relevance, value, and authenticity
- Checkpoint 8.3: Foster collaboration and community

COVID CAVEAT

Per social distancing guidelines, this strategy may not be safe to execute during this time



14.) Interactive Video Quizzes

DESCRIPTION

A strategy where instructors create interactive online videos by embedding questions using tools like EdPuzzle or Kaltura.



HOW IT WORKS

1. Go to Kaltura or edpuzzle.com and create a free account (*Note: EdPuzzle has a limit of 20 videos that can be used on a free account*)
2. Within the tool, select a video from online to be used
3. Follow the tutorial to embed questions throughout to check for student understanding
4. Gather student performance data at the end of each video lesson to inform instruction

WHY YOU SHOULD USE IT

- Promotes student engagement

IDEAS FOR USE

- When presenting new content through videos, consider turning it into a video quiz to help ensure student interaction and active listening throughout the presentation

PRO TIPS

- Integrate a variety of questions types to get students thinking on different levels
- Use the “voice over” feature to stop the video and provide further clarification of certain topics presented

UDL COMPLIANCE

- Checkpoint 6.4: Enhance Capacity to Monitor Progress
- Checkpoint 5.3: Build fluencies with graduated levels of support for practice and performance
- Checkpoint 5.1: Use multiple media for communication

15.) Socratic Seminar

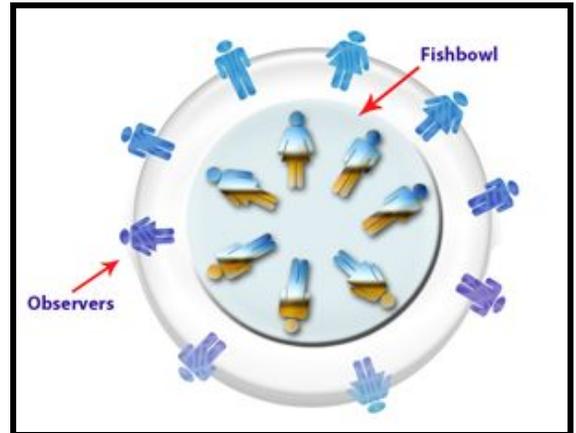
DESCRIPTION

A cooperative argumentative dialogue, based on asking and answering questions to stimulate critical thinking



HOW IT WORKS

1. Instructor selects a topic and a group of students arrange themselves in a circle in the center of a room. This group will conduct a discussion together. Discussion can be structured or unstructured.
2. The rest of the students watch from the outside of the circle and take notes.
3. After the fishbowl concludes their discussion, the outer group pose questions and give comments about what they observed.



WHY USE IT

- Give students an opportunity to demonstrate knowledge of a specific topic & provide an argument as well as evaluate arguments presented

COVID CAVEAT

Per social distancing guidelines, this strategy may not be safe to execute F2F during this time. See below for digital execution tips.



MAKE IT WORK REMOTELY

- Preassign students to two teams and give them some time to prepare an argument after creating a discussion forum for the class in ulearn. Provide the rules/expectations for both groups. The "in the bowl" students lead the online discussion forum while the "out of the bowl" students read the posts and evaluate the discussion. Once the discussion period is over, the other students will post their thoughts on the discussion content. The groups can switch or the instructor can debrief the class on a synchronous platform like Bb Collaborate or Zoom.

PRO TIPS

- Provide "ground rules" for the students to keep dialogue constructive.
- To encourage active listening, students who are not participating in the fishbowl should have a task to complete while the others are talking.
- Have students track participation using tokens. Students can no longer speak once they run out.

UDL COMPLIANCE

- Checkpoint 7.2: Optimize relevance, value, and authenticity
- Checkpoint 8.3: Foster collaboration & community
- Checkpoint 8.2: Vary demands and resources to optimize challenge