

## Think-Pair-Share Variations

**Think-Pair-Talk:** The simplest variation on the original. Students think about the question/term/or task on their own, pair with a partner to discuss their ideas, and then *talk with a small group* for further discussion.

**Think-Pair-Walk:** Instead of wrapping up with a small group, one student from each pair walks up to the front of the class to *present their findings*. This is perfect for larger research topics or current events.

**Think-Pair-Chalk:** In this variation, students can *silently go up to the board* to add their research findings. When discussing controversial topics, this quieter method helps to maintain respect for all perspectives or points of view.

**Think-Pair-Post:** Using a *Facebook template*, students can report out their topic research and post them around the room to create a Facebook Feed on the unit content.

**Think-Pair-Toast:** With this twist on the original, students will *create toasts* to their assigned topic. This can be a fun wrap-up for concluding a unit and reviewing content topics or vocabulary.

**Think-Pair-Roast:** Just like the toast option, students will *have a little fun* while reviewing prior knowledge. Encourage funny stories, tall-tales, or the telling of jokes to share the main ideas.

**Think-Pair-Tweet:** For vocabulary or people review, have students *write simple tweets* on the key terms. Learning to summarize in 160 characters or less can be a huge challenge!

**Think-Pair-Meet:** Similar to the original, after pairs have discussed the topic or term, they draw out table numbers where they *go to meet up* and share their findings. (Similar to a Jigsaw)

**Think-Pair-Draw:** One of my favorites, students *draw to illustrate the meaning* or significance of a topic. Doing character collages can also help students bring significant people back to life for class discussion.

**Think-Pair-Find a Flaw:** When *looking at conflicting points of view* or arguing cases, this method is fun and engaging. As students post their findings, others search for opposing points of view to counter each statement. Build up the activity by allowing students to continue the activity over days or weeks through the unit.

<http://alessonplanforteachers.blogspot.com/2016/07/how-to-use-variations-on-think-pair.html>

**Think-Pair-Share-Listen:** This version follows the traditional format as described above. However, when students share out to the class what has been discussed in pairs, they must talk about what their partners said, not their own opinions. So it is necessary for students to carefully listen to their partners before sharing out with the whole group.

**Think-Write-Pair-Share/ Think-Draw-Pair-Share:** In this version, students are asked to think about a particular topic or question and write or draw their ideas. They then turn and talk with a partner about what was written. Finally, they share with the whole group.

**Survey-Think-Write-Pair-Share:** This version requires that students skim through a reading passage to get the main idea or in response to a question, think about the information, and then write a response before pairing up and sharing their answers.

**Think-Pair-Share-Square:** This technique starts out like the traditional version. Students think about their answers, pair up, and then share their responses. Then, after they have shared, the discussion pair turns to another pair to create a group of four. That group of four then shares what has already been discussed.

**Think-Pair-Pod-Share:** Students first share with a partner. Then they bring all thoughts together as a table (pod) prior to sharing out with whole group (wordpress.com, 2014)

**Mix-Pair-Share:** Students silently mix around the room without talking. When the teacher calls out the word “pair,” the students pair up with the person closest to them and shake hands. The teacher asks a question and gives the students think time. The students then share with their partner as per teacher instructions.

**Think-Text-Share/Think-Email-Share:** This version follows the same format of the traditional think-pair-share, except that the students will either write an email or text their partner, they then verbally report what was shared through writing.

**Formulate-Share-Listen-Create:** In this version, the teacher presents a question and the students formulate an answer individually. Then they share their answers with a partner. They listen carefully to their partner’s answer, note the similarities and differences, and they both create a new answer that incorporates the best of both ideas. They then present their combined answer to the rest of the class.

<http://www.cal.org/siop/pdfs/lesson-plans/using-the-siop-model-to-address-the-language-demands-of-the-ccss.pdf>

## Discussion Techniques

All learners need time to process new ideas and information. They especially need time to verbally make sense of and articulate their learning with a community of learners who are also engaged in the same experience and journey. In other words, kids need to talk!! Problem is, sometimes it’s hard to stay on subject without a little guidance. That’s why structured discussions really work best with children, regardless of their maturity level.

These five discussion techniques (and a little purposeful planning) go beyond the traditional Turn and Talk/Think-Pair-Share to give students an opportunity to deepen their understanding while practicing their verbal skills.

### **1. Double Think-Pair-Share:**

- This technique is great for collaborating and generating many ideas on a topic. Note: Make sure students have paper and pencil handy.
- Arrange students into pairs (teacher or student choice).
- Pose a question that has many possible answers. For example, what are some ways our school can become more “green”?
- Pause for “think time.”
- Partners do traditional think-pair-share, brainstorming as many ideas as they can in a set amount of time and writing their answers down on a piece of paper.
- After allotted time, each pair then finds another pair to share answers with. As first team reads their answers aloud, the second team adds new ideas to their list or puts a check mark next to items they also thought of. Second team then shares answers that were missing from first team’s list.

### **2. Mingle, Pair, Share:**

A great activity to get kids up and moving and encourage them to interact with all of their classmates.

- Students mix around the room silently as music plays in the background.
- When the music stops, each student finds a partner closest to them (no running across the room to find your best friend!) and puts their hand together with their partner’s in a high five.
- When all students have found a partner, teacher poses a question and allows for “think time” For example “Give three examples of an insect” or “Name five prime numbers.”
- One teacher’s go, one partner shares and the other listens.
- Partners switch roles.
- After both partners have had a chance to speak (teacher will have to monitor this, based on the depth of the question), music starts again, students mingle, when music stops they find a new partner, teacher poses new question, etc.
- Repeat for each question.

### **3. Sticky-Note Storm:**

This activity is great for brainstorming, review and thinking outside the box. It’s also a great way for students to teach and learn from one another. It works best when kids are seated in small table groups. Note: Have a supply of sticky notes available for each table.

- Teacher poses a question, sets a time limit and gives students a moment to think before writing. For example, “In two minutes, how many math problems can you write down that have the solution 23?” Or “In 45 seconds, write down as many adjectives as you can.”
- Each student writes down as many answers as they can think of—one idea per sticky note—and sticks it to the center of the table.
- The goal is to generate as many ideas as possible and cover the table with sticky notes! At the end of each round, students review one another’s ideas.

#### **4. Sage and Scribe:**

In this activity, one student plays the role of teacher and the other the attentive student. Explaining concepts clearly is a difficult skill that requires a lot of practice, and recording information helps students build note-taking skills.

- Students work in pairs. One student is the Sage (speaker) and one is the Scribe (silent writer).
- Pose a question and allow a few moments for Sages to think. For example: "Explain how the water cycle works."
- When teacher says "Go," the Sage explains the process clearly to the Scribe.
- Scribe records Sage's thinking on paper.
- When time is up, Sage and Scribe switch roles with a new question.

#### **5. Inside-Outside Circle or Parallel Lines:**

Also called Tea Party, Face to Face, Serpentine, Ladder

- Arrange students into pairs (teacher or student choice).
- Have one partner from each pair move and form a circle with students facing outward. This will be the inside circle.
- Remaining students find and face their partners, forming outside circle.
- Pose a question and indicate what role each partner will play. For instance, "What are three things a mammal needs to survive? Inside partner will talk, outside partner will listen."
- Have students pause for "think time," then cue them to share.
- Next, partners switch roles—outside partner talks, inside partner listens.
- After that, outside circle rotates clockwise and each student ends up with a new partner.
- Repeat process with new question.

#### **6. Detective:**

This activity is great for reviewing learned material, or trying new versions of familiar problems. It can be used for math concepts, science lab follow-up questions, grammar exercises, reading summaries, etc. It is also good as a team-building or "getting to know you" activity. Students will need a worksheet, a pencil, and a clipboard (if you have them- students can also write on desk surfaces)

- Provide each student with a prepared worksheet featuring several questions.
- At your go, students circulate and find a partner, just as in Mingle, Pair, Share. Just like a detective, they are off in search of answers!
- Partner 1 asks Partner 2 one question from their worksheet. Partner 2 provides an answer and Partner 1 writes it on their own worksheet.
- Partners then switch roles.
- After both students have asked and answered one question, they split up and each look for a new partner.
- Students continue circulating until all answers on their worksheet have been filled in. Then they return to their seats until everyone is finished.
- Once they are back in their desk groups, teams compare answers. If there are discrepancies among the answers and they cannot come to a consensus, they may raise their hands as a team and ask the teacher for clarification.

### **7. Quiz, Quiz, Trade:**

This activity is a great one for test review. It gets your students up and moving. They get to ask and answer not just one, but many, questions. They may even come across the same one more than once, reinforcing the concept. Kids love it because unlike kill-and-drill review sessions, this feels more like a game.

- Prepare review cards with questions and answers. (This sounds time consuming, but it can be as simple as cutting up one review sheet into individual cards or having students be involved in preparing the cards.)
- Pass out one review card per student.
- Students stand and circulate with one hand in the air, searching for a partner.
- Once they pair up, Partner 1 asks Partner 2 the question on their card. Partner 2 answers. If they get the answer correct, Partner 1 offers praise. If not, Partner 1 coaches Partner 2 until the correct answer is revealed.
- Partners switch roles and repeat the question/answer process.
- After both partners have asked and answered, they trade cards and set off to find a new partner. The process continues for whatever amount of time teacher determines is appropriate.

Note: The next 3 activities work best if students are seated in table groups of 4.

### **8. Flash:**

Another great review activity. Again, you (or you and your students) will need to prepare question and answer cards. Each student will also need a dry erase board and a marker or scrap paper and a pencil. Explain the concept of “think time” to your students before you begin so that slower processors don’t feel anxious. Assign one student to be the Captain of each desk group.

- Have question/answer cards stacked face down on the table.
- Captain draws top card and asks the other 3 team members the question on the card.
- Captain calls “think time” and counts to ten. Students may not pick up their pen or pencil until think time is over.
- Then, each individual writes down their answer, shielding their answer from their desk mates.
- The Captain says “Flash.” Each student turns their board (or paper) face out and “flashes” their answer for the others to see.
- The group discusses the answers shown. If they are all the same, they ask the captain to verify that the answer is correct. If there are different answers, the students discuss the discrepancy and try to come to agreement on one answer. The Captain (who has the answer) can coach, but not just tell the answer.
- For the next round, the role of Captain rotates to right and the process repeats. Continue until all cards have been asked and answered.

### **9. Write Around:**

This is a fun activity for creative writing or story summarizing, each student needs their own piece of paper and pencil.

- Teacher provides a sentence starter for the class both verbally and in writing (on a doc cam or white board.) For example: If you give a monkey a banana...or In the beginning of Because of Winn Dixie...
- Ask each student to copy the sentence starter and finish the sentence on their own piece of paper.
- After they have written their answer, each student passes their paper to the team member on their right.
- Next, the students read the paper they have received from their neighbor and add a new sentence to that page.
- Again, they pass the paper to their right.
- After a few go-rounds, four great stories or summaries emerge.
- Give students time to read their final versions add a conclusion and/or edit their favorite one to share with the class.

### **10. Team Huddle:**

This a great whole-class activity for team building and relationship strengthening. Each member of the group must cooperate and participate for the team to be successful. This activity is best used with questions that have definite right answers, not opinions. Each team needs a whiteboard and marker.

- Have students in each table group to number off in their teams from one to four.
- Announce a question and a time limit. For example, "How do you spell the word conservation? You have twenty seconds." or "What are three properties of a rectangle? You have forty seconds."
- Students at each table group put their heads together to come up with one answer. Tell the students to speak softly so that other groups won't overhear their answer.
- One student will record the group's answer on the whiteboard.
- When time is up, call a number (1-4) and ask the student from each team with that number to stand at their table group holding their group's answer sheet.
- When you say "Reveal", each designated student will turn over their answer sheet and the students can look around and survey the groups' different answers.
- Recognize correct responses and elaborate through rich discussion. If you want to make the activity a competition, you can keep track of team points for correct answer.

<https://www.weareteachers.com/5-fun-alternatives-to-think-pair-share/>