1 · 2 · 4 Technique

• Use to obtain information in situations when the group members:
  - are reluctant to speak or some tend to dominate the group
  - need to hear all the members' thoughts and ideas on the topic.
• An effective and efficient group decision-making process
• An easy and fair way to prioritize in a relatively short time.

1. State the topic and have each person individually list ideas on a card. You might want to give them a range you are looking for, like “Write a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 8 ideas.” Assign two-four minutes to generate a list.

2. Form the participants into pairs. (Random or the teacher can assign). The pairs discuss the ideas of each individual. From both lists they select ideas that they can support. For example, “Now make a list of 6 ideas from both of your lists.” This usually takes three to ten minutes depending on the complexity of the topic and the number of ideas they are to select.

3. Once each pair has selected their priorities, they should join another pair to form a group of four. Again, the goal is to discuss all their choices and again choose the best number of ideas that represents the group of four. You could say, “Give me the best 5 ideas from your group.” It is sometimes helpful to have a group rank in order of importance their ideas if other teams need more time to complete making their list. This usually takes five to ten minutes. And again this depends upon the topic, number of ideas to select, and time to rank/prioritize.

4. Ideas from the groups of four can be:
   - charted for everyone to see

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team A</th>
<th>Team B</th>
<th>Team C</th>
<th>Team D</th>
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   - discussed by the class when the ideas are listed in order of importance.

First, each team, when called upon, gives their top priority idea and rationale. If two teams identify the same idea as their top, a tally mark is put next to the idea. Ask for ideas that were dropped from either the pair of the group of four to see if they should be included in the class list.