Think · Pair · Share

Think · Pair · Share is a structure first developed by Professor Frank Lyman in 1981. It introduces into the peer interaction element of active learning the idea of ‘wait or think’ time, which has been demonstrated to be a powerful factor in improving student responses to questions. This is an essential structure to introduce early in the process of establishing a collaborative classroom. It ensures a high level of engagement (it is hard to be left out of a pair!) and is more secure than a large group.

STEPS

- Teacher poses a problem or asks an open-ended question to which there may be a variety of answers.
- Teacher gives the students ‘think time’ and directs them to think about the question.
- Following the ‘think time’ students turn to face their Learning Partner and work together, sharing ideas, discussing, clarifying and challenging.
- The pair then shares their ideas with another pair, or with the whole class. It is important that students need to be able to share their partner’s ideas as well as their own.

APPLICATIONS

- Before a lesson or topic to orient the class (previous knowledge etc).
- Any time, to check understanding of material.
- At the end of a teacher explanation, demonstration etc, to enable students to cognitively process the material.
- To break up a long period of sustained activity.
- Whenever it is helpful to share ideas.
- For clarification of instructions, rules of a game, homework etc.

ADVANTAGES

- The ‘Think Time’ incorporates the important concept of ‘wait time’.
- It allows all students to develop answers.
- Longer and more elaborate answers can be given.
- Answers will have reasons and justifications because they have been thought about and discussed.
- Students are more willing to take risks and suggest ideas because they have already ‘tested’ them with their partner.

VARIATIONS

- PAIRS COMPARE: Think · Pair and then share with another Pair.
- THINK · WRITE · PAIR · SHARE · WRITE
- (READ, SOLVE, OBSERVE, LISTEN) · PAIR · SHARE