

Round Robin

In small groups of 3 to 5 students, pose a problem or question and have the students go around the circle quickly sharing their ideas or answers. This technique is a good one to use for brainstorming or to elicit quick responses from students.

Student Level: Any Level

Class Size: 3 – 100+

Ease of Use Rating: Easy

Activity Description:

Students should work in small groups (for more information on groups see, "Forming Groups"). This activity is great if you want to encourage brainstorming and allow all the students to participate. No single person can dominate the discussion. All of the students must say something, although it is appropriate to allow students one opportunity to pass on answering.

The instructor should "pose a problem or question and have the students go around the circle quickly sharing their ideas or answers"[1] in a 'round-robin' approach. There should be no criticism of the answers given – the circle is designed for idea sharing only. Allow the students to offer answers for a defined period of time or until students are told to stop by the instructor.

This technique promotes brainstorming. Students are encouraged to generate as many responses as possible during an established amount of time. At the end of the 'round robin' session, groups can share their answers and ideas with the class. The instructor can solicit volunteers or randomly call on individuals to share group responses. Other members of the group can clarify what was said during the 'round robin' session. [1]

To extend the strategy, additional time can be given to the groups to discuss, clarify and critique the ideas from the round-robin session.

A challenge is making sure that every student is involved in the sharing and that answers and ideas are not criticized while the technique is in process. It may be helpful for students to see the process demonstrated in a role-play and to have previous experience working in small groups.

Research and Applications:

[1] *Ten Techniques For Energizing Your Classroom Discussions*: From the Grand Rapids Community College Center for Teaching and Learning. [On-line]
http://web.grcc.cc.mi.us/ctl/ten_techniques_for_energizing.htm

The Core Competencies are:

1. Writing, speaking and/or other forms of self-expression
3. Synthesis and analysis in problem solving and critical thinking, including, where appropriate, the application of reasoning and interpretive methods, and quantitative thinking.
4. Collaborative learning and teamwork.
7. A significant alternative competency for active learning designed for and appropriate to a specific course.