

Think-(Write)-Pair-Share-(Revise)

Overview:

This discussion protocol can be done fairly quickly and easily while still serving to promote productive, equitable conversations among all students. Including the (write) and (revise) steps encourages deeper thinking and reflection on the part of each student.

Purpose:

The Think-Pair-Share discussion protocol allows learners to reflect on and process new learning as they speak and listen to each other. It also provides them the opportunity to receive and provide feedback to one another. This protocol promotes productive and equitable conversations, where all students are given the time and space to think, share, and consider the ideas of others. It ensures all students simultaneously engage with the topic, while promoting synthesis and the social construction of knowledge.

Application: When and where can I use it?

This Discussion Protocol can be used in all settings, K-12. Depending on the question posed, it can be used to elicit background knowledge at the start of a unit, as a check for understanding during instruction, or as part of a cumulative review.

Getting Started: What are some tips for starting and using this routine?

Move students into pairs and ask them to label themselves Partner 1 and Partner 2. (If you have an odd number of students, you may need to use triads.)

Pose the question and give students time to think independently and silently about their response.

Tell Partner 1 that they have a specified timeframe (e.g. 30 seconds, 1 minute, etc.) to tell their partner their response to the question. They are expected to use their entire time when it is their turn to speak, even if they have to repeat themselves to fill the time. They can also use some of their time to ask a question they would like their partner to answer when it is their turn. Tell Partner 2 that their job is to listen carefully and be able to paraphrase and/or provide feedback.

When the allocated time has passed, tell Partner 2 that it is now their time to begin to speak. They should start by paraphrasing what they understood their partner said. Partner 1 should give a thumbs up if Partner 2 gets it right. Partner 2 then uses the remaining time to share their response to the initial question while Partner 1 listens carefully.

After both partners have had a chance to share, move to whole-group sharing and discussion, inviting students to share what they heard their partner say.

Variations: Each of these variations requires additional, deeper, and more reflective thinking on the part of every student in the class, making the experience more cognitively engaging and rigorous.

Think-Write-Pair-Share: Students are asked to write their initial response to the question posed before sharing it with their partner. This ensures that all students are given adequate processing time and are accountable for doing their own initial thinking. Some students may need this additional step of writing out their thinking before they are expected to share their thinking aloud, even with just one peer. This variation can be further built upon by asking students to do another round of writing between the “pair” and the whole group “share” steps of the protocol. At this point their thinking should be further informed by the peer interaction.

Think-Write-Pair-Share-Revise: After the large group share-out, students are asked to go back to their original thoughts and revise, based on the discussions with their partner and the whole group. They should be challenged to think about how their thinking has changed.

Think-Pair-Share-Square: In this variation, two pairs come together to share their thinking before the whole group sharing. This variation can have the advantage of exposing students to additional thinking and perspectives to help inform their thoughts before the whole-class discussion.

See this Instructional Move in action:

[Classroom Protocols in Action: Think-Pair-Share - Bing video](#)

Read more about this Instructional Move:

[Using the Think-Pair-Share Technique | Read Write Think](#)

References: EL Education: Classroom Protocols

Walsh, J.A. Questioning for Formative Feedback. Alexandria: ASCD, 2022