

Collaborative Learning

Source: Cornell University Center for Teaching Excellence
<http://www.cte.cornell.edu/teaching-ideas/engaging-students/collaborative-learning.html>

Collaborative learning is based on the view that social interaction facilitates learning. Students will learn from each other as much as from the instructor.

Sample Group Activities

Stump your partner

- Students take a minute to create a challenging question based on the content delivered up to that point.
- Students pose the question to the person sitting next to them.

Think-pair-share / Write-pair-share

- The facilitator poses a question or challenge that demands analysis and reflection.
- Students take a few minutes to think through an appropriate response.
- Students turn to a partner (or small groups) and share their responses. Take this a step further by asking students to find someone who arrived at an answer different from their own and convince their partner to change their mind.
- Student responses are shared within the full group during the follow-up discussion.

Fishbowl debate

- Ask students to sit in groups of three.
- Assign roles. For example, the person on left takes one position on a topic for debate, the person on right takes the opposite position, and the person in the middle takes notes and decides which side is the most convincing and provides an argument for his or her choice.
- Debrief by calling on a few groups to summarize their discussions.

Facilitation Tips

Establish and use group rules: Collaboratively developed rules or agreements will support a safe learning environment.

Use effective questions: Open-ended questions that probe and elicit expanded thinking and processing of information will involve students in deeper learning.