Say you have a class of 12 students.

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You break your lesson into three chunks. You then form three home groups of students. Each home group becomes responsible for learning one of the three chunks of your lesson, with the knowledge they'll also be responsible for teaching it to their classmates.


After a set amount of time, the students form new learning groups. Each member of the learning group is from a different home group.


When the students are done, reconvene the entire class to review or further discuss the content.


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Develop three essential questions for your lesson. Divide your students into three equal groups.


Arrange the classroom chairs/desks into two concentric circles. Ask Group 1 to sit in the inner circle, and Groups 2 and 3 to sit in the outer circle.


Pose your first question to Group 1, and allow ten minutes for discussion. At the end, pause to allow input from other groups. Then rotate groups so that Group 2 is now in the "fishbowl." Pose your next question. Follow this pattern again for Group 3.


When the students are done, reconvene the entire class to review or further discuss the content.

Pose a question to your class that requires a Higher Order Thinking Skill like Application, Analysis, or Evaluation to create an effective response. Give your students time to independently write a response.


After a moment or two, students turn to a partner to share their responses. This step is more effective if you provide a "next step" in the question.


Finally, invite students to share responses with a larger group. This could be another pair (so the students "Think-Pair-Square-Share")...

...or the entire class.

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Divide your students into groups. Give each group a folder or envelope with a problem clipped to the outside. Each group then generates as many solutions to the problem as they can within a limited amount of time. These solutions are written down. When time is up, the students place their solutions in the envelope and pass them to another group.




Each group now repeats this process without looking at the previous group's responses. When time is up, they place their solutions in the envelope and pass them to another group. There are now two sets of solutions in each envelope.


Each folder is now with a third group. This group opens the envelope, reviews the solutions, consolidates them if necessary, and adds new ones as needed. When the students are done, reconvene the entire class to review or further discuss the content.


Develop several essential questions for your lesson. Write these questions on newsprint and hang them around the room.

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The students will take several minutes to rotate around the room (like a carousel), reflecting on each question and then writing a response on the newsprint.


When everyone is done, split the students into groups so there is one group for each question. Give one question to each group. The students now review and evaluate the responses for their group's question, consolidating them if necessary.


When the students are done, reconvene the entire class to review or further discuss the content.


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Provide the students with a prompt. This could be a question, a controversial statement, a reflection, or a sentence stem. Give the students 2-3 minutes to respond to your prompt.

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When everyone is done, begin a larger discussion using one of the other strategies in this collection.


Given its short duration, a Minute Paper works better as a supporting tool to begin other teaching strategies. Minute Papers are also an excellent tool for involving introverted students in your classroom. Introverts often need processing time before they contribute, which is why they're so frequently drowned out by their impulsive, extroverted classmates. A Minute Paper gives them the opportunity to gather their thoughts before sharing.


