



PUBLISHED
BY

**LAUSD
DIVISION OF
ADULT AND
CAREER
EDUCATION
CURRICULUM
AND
INSTRUC-
TION UNIT**

*SUPPORTING THE
DIVISION'S
OBJECTIVES OF
SYSTEMIZING
QUALITY
INSTRUCTION*

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**INSIDE THIS
ISSUE:**

Think-Pair-Share 1-2

Quiet Signal 2

Learning Together

An ongoing guide to grouping students and implementing cooperative learning strategies to maximize student engagement and achieve learning objectives in all program areas

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

OCT. 25, 2013

Cooperative Learning: Think-Pair-Share

Now that you have grouped your students, how do you move from “group work” to cooperative learning? Providing opportunities for multiple interactions with equal participation using student roles and a timer will make the difference. One quick, informal and handy strategy that works across ability levels and content areas is **Think-Pair-Share** or TPS.

What? Think-Pair-Share is not an agenda item; it’s a strategy for cooperative discussion for students to process learning and for informal assessment of an agenda item (content or a skill). It gets its name

from the three actions students perform.

How?

1. **Think:** Give students a few moments just to **THINK** about a question you have posed. Stop at important places in the lesson to allow students to think about what the content or skill strategy means to them.
2. **Pair:** Have students **PAIR** up with a designated partner, to talk about the answer. They compare mental or written notes and identify the answers

they think are best, most convincing, or unique.

3. **Share:** After a few moments (not minutes) call on pairs to **SHARE** their thinking with others, either to the whole class or in a round robin fashion in table teams.

Why?

Collaboration increases understanding.

TPS builds confidence and engages reluctant learners by moving students from low risk (unspoken personal thinking), to moderate risk (speaking to a partner) to high risk (speaking to the whole class or a group).

Structured Interaction

The most basic way to increase engagement when putting out a question for response or a task for completion is **“Ask your partner...” or “Tell your partner...”** rather than saying, **“Who knows...?” or “Who can tell me...?”**

Think-Pair-Share

Comments from Summer School Teachers:

"I have improved my teaching by creating lesson plans with more cooperative learning."

"The students gravitated toward the TPS strategy naturally."

"Think Pair Share was effective because it encouraged and fostered open communication between students. Grouping strategies were fun for students, as well."

"TPS worked best for me as a daily class warm up."

"I used TPS during PowerPoints to keep the students engaged and not dozing off while staring at a board."

Why? (continued)

Some of the shyest students offer thoughtful answers after they have an opportunity to think and pair.

TPS also acts as a quick, informal assessment across levels and content areas. It gives you the opportunity to walk around and listen to all students as they interact in pairs. You can get an idea if all the students understand the content or can perform skills, or if there are areas that need to be reviewed.

Keep in mind:

1. It takes longer to move through con-

tent with TPS, so you need to plan lessons to use time well, with this question in mind: "What are the key content pieces or skills for my students?" The pay off is that students learn because they have time to stop and process information.

2. Make TPS part of your routine, using it as often as possible.

For visual examples of TPS, go to [Youtube.com/education](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5O05rO6O0Q) (for unfiltered viewing and access):

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5O05rO6O0Q>
(1:20)



Algebra Summer Institute team members
Alice Chan, Anna Lopez, Monica Medina, & Alma Rubio Juarez

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ccsJxIr2EE&list=HL1381769604>
(5:18)

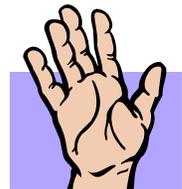
To view a demonstration of TPS, go to: <http://serc.carleton.edu/details/files/19471.html>
(12:15)

Quiet Signal: Putting students into groups and teams will no doubt increase the noise level. For this reason, an effective quiet signal is used to stop student interaction for whole class discussion or instructions. When the teacher's hand goes up, students also raise their hands and signal others to raise hands, too. Explain the signal and emphasize full, alert attention in under five seconds. If it takes more time, practice the quiet signal using



Quiet Signal Steps:

- 1—Hands Up, Stop Talking, Stop Doing
- 2—Full Attention on the teacher/presenter
- 3—Signal Others



In the next issue of Learning Together we will learn about using Think-Pair-Share with leveled questions for multi-level classes, discuss increasing equity with "Timed"-Pair-Share, and give you a tool to streamline partner changes.



DACE Objectives for Systemizing Quality Instruction

Long-Range Lesson Planning | Agenda and Objectives | Cooperative Learning Strategies