

Strategy Slam

Shared by Connie Hamilton

ABC Talk. As you introduce student talk stems, start with three. A: I agree with your thinking. B: I want to build on what you said. C: I need to challenge your idea. Then as you add others ways to ABC, add them to the proper category. If a student says they respectfully disagree with a peer, that new sentence stem can be aligned with C: I need to challenge your idea. Free downloadable poster can be found [here](#).

Affinity Mapping. To help students organize a list of thoughts or ideas, use this categorization structure. Each idea is written on a separate sticky note. It is important not to put more than one on the note. After the group has collected all their thoughts, they should group the sticky notes that are similar together. Do not provide students names of the categories. They will determine the most appropriate label for the groups they developed. This helps students identify bigger ideas from smaller ones.

Ask-Ask-Trade. A question or fact is provided for each student. Students find a partner. The first partner asks the second partner to respond to the question or provide information about the fact. Next, the second partner does the same. After both partners have discussed asked their questions, they trade questions and find new partners. This is particularly helpful for vocabulary, math facts, or world language classes.

Back-to-Back and Face-to-Face. With a partner, students stand back-to-back so they cannot see their partner. A question is posed to the entire class and sufficient think time is provided. During the think time, students remain with their backs facing their partners. When the signal is given (a direction or a sound), students turn around to face their partners and discuss the prompt. After a given time (45-90 seconds is often a good start) students return back-to-back in silence. Then the next prompt is provided. You may modify this protocol by switching partners between each question.

Clock Partners. To save you time finding partners, set them up in advance. Using a clock face, students make “appointments” with different partners for different times on the clock. You can be intentional by assigning 3:00 partners for them and pair up students with similar interests or backgrounds. Maybe 6:00 partners are similar reading levels for easy differentiation. You don’t have to have 12 partners. You can use any number of the times. Then, when you want to launch a protocol using a different partner, just say, “Find your 9:00 partner...” Free template found [here](#).

Carousel. Students create artifacts or visual representations of their learning. When all groups have theirs complete, the other groups go from table to table to notice, comment, critique the other examples. Try modifying this by leaving one group member behind to explain more complex products.



Conga Line. Students form two lines facing one another. They engage in dialogue with the person in front of them. When time is up, one line moves to the left or right so everyone has a new partner. This can also be done with inner and outer circles.

Consensus Round Table. A group of students discuss a prompt or text. One at a time students share their thoughts or summary. After everyone has shared, the group crafts a summary that represents the comments and thinking of the individuals and the group.

Fan and Pick. Write questions related to your lesson on index cards. Organize students in groups of four. Student one fans the questions out for student two to choose one. The card selected by student two is read to student three who responds or solves the problem. Student four responds by paraphrasing student three's response or providing feedback. The roles are rotated, and the process is repeated. The questions on the cards can be supplied for students or written by students. [Template here.](#)

Fiction Detection. Create, or have students create statements that are factual with one false (AKA fiction). Show students all the statements and have them pick the one that is not a fact and either explain why or reword it, so it is true.

Final Word. Highlight key points in a lesson and allow for multiple perspectives with this protocol. Each group member chooses three quotes from the text. Individually, the students reflect on their chosen quotes and prioritize them 1-2-3. The criteria for prioritizing can vary. Key points, most resonating, biggest aha, etc. The first student shares his/her quote without any explanation. The other students discuss the given quote while the first student only listens. Set a timer for their dialogue. When the timer goes off, the first student gets the baton again. At this point, the student shares why the quote was chosen and responds to the comments made by the other group members during their discussion. Repeat the process until every student gets a final word.

Gallery Walk. Individually or more often in small groups, students create a visual to show their learning or explain an idea. Invite students to rotate around the room and visit the different learning exhibits. There are many ways to vary the gallery walk. Some considerations include allowing students to roam and visit the pieces they choose rather than a systematic rotation. Determine if you want the visuals to stand alone or if one person from the group will stay behind to give a short synopsis and answer questions for the visitors.

Hand-Up – Pair-Up. Mix students quickly for short partner talks that are flexible with time. Start with partners. When students finish their conversation with their first partner, they raise their hand to indicate they are ready for a new partner. Students should look for someone with their hand up, make eye contact, and walk toward their new partner for another conversation. This grouping strategy works well when coupled with other talk protocols like ask-ask-trade.

Huddle Up. This strategy can be either planned or used when needed. When the teacher wants to share information, an announcement, or more resources, one student from each group is chosen to gather with the teacher to receive the message or resource. That student returns to the group to communicate what was shared in the huddle.



Jigsaw. Segment nonsequential tasks into parts. Create expert groups to learn about each of the individual parts and provide them opportunities to thoroughly understand a section. Next group on student from each section into new teams. Provide time for students to share their learning, stressing that the objective is for everyone to understand all of the parts. After each part is shared, return students to their expert groups to process how their part fits into the complete picture of the entire picture.

Make an Analogy. Provide a sentence stem for students to compare your learning concept to something else and explain why they made the comparison. This not only sparks creativity and gives you insight as to the depth of their understanding, but can also be fun, and sometimes adds humor to the lesson. Example: (Provide the concept) is like _____ because...

Student Examples

- Lower Elementary: Reading is like brushing your teeth because you have to do it every day.
- Upper Elementary: Martin Luther King is like a bumble bee because he pollinates his message from person to person no matter what color they are.
- Middle School: Multiplying two negative numbers is like saying "I don't have no money." Because if you don't have none, you must have some.
- High School: Stalin is like the tin man because he was heartless.

Musical Shares. Students walk around the room as music plays. When the music stops, they find someone close to them and together they discuss a prompt or question posed by the teacher.

Numbered Heads Together. As students collaborate, often using another protocol, they are assigned numbers. One number is chosen to represent the group's thoughts or consensus response.

Numbered Word Summary. When chunking larger pieces of information or processing complex ideas, task students with summarizing it. Limit the number of words they may use in their summary. No more than six. When identifying a big idea, you can even ask students to limit it to a one-word summary. A supportive modification for students who need it is to allow them to write their complete summary first, then underline the number of words from their summary that are most important.

Pick It - Show It: Supply students with cards with words related to the lesson on them. When prompted, students pick the appropriate card and show it. To save time, have students make their own cards with vocabulary words. Another alternate is offer [generic cards](#) with ABCD, 1234, or True/False/Neither True or False/Not Enough Info, and reuse the cards for other lessons.



Reciprocal Teaching. A protocol used when reading that assigns students a specific cognitive task. Predictor, clarifier, questioner, and summarizer are roles students play to either highlight the assigned perspective or facilitate a dialogue related to that point of view. Sample questions found [here](#). Math examples found [here](#).

Rinse and Repeat. This intended to be short and sweet. Each student on a team takes a turn to quickly share comments about the learning. No cross talk is allowed. Each student should be succinct in their shared thoughts. Use this to check for understanding and summarize learning so-far, within a lesson or as a lesson closure.

Spend a Buck. To help students prioritize ideas or concepts, this strategy can be used. Students are asked to allocate amounts of money totaling a dollar among provided choices. For example, if there are four choices, students might spend 50 cents for option one, 15 cents for option two, 30 cents for option three, and 5 cents for option four. The more money, the more preferred the option is. Consider using this when multiple possible answers are shared (i.e. which response is worth the most cash?), or when students have choice in how they present their information (i.e. spend your buck on making a video, presenting a skit, or drawing a visual representation).

Stir the Class. Start students in groups of 3-5. Assign a number to each student within the group. Provide a discussion topic for the students related to your lesson. After students have had sufficient time to discuss the topic, announce a number within their group. The student assigned to that number rotates to a new group and summarizes group one's thinking to group two. This person is now a member of the second group. Pose another discussion item for groups to discuss and repeat the sequence, choosing a random student number to rotate. To keep it random, use a die or a spinner to choose the student number selected to move to a new group.

Stop and Jot. Have students stop and use a journal, whiteboard, or laptop to write down key points they are learning and document any questions they have. When students think and write about their learning, they are more likely to retain the information and use it to make connections later. This is a strategy that can be used when teacher centered learning exceeds 10 minutes. Allow students an opportunity to process their thoughts, connections, and understanding to reset working memory.

Think-Pair-Share. Students move into partner or small groups to brainstorm, summarize, process, or deepen their understanding of the content. Use of A/B partners tightens the protocol and allows each student time to speak. Determine if it's necessary for a whole class share or not.

Triad. Assign three partners as A, B, and C. Prepare three or six open ended questions that will cause students to reflect or give extended responses. Each question is one round. In the first round, partner A responds to the inquiry, partner B uses active listening skills of questioning and paraphrasing to keep the conversation going and partner C observes, listens, and takes notes. After a specified period of time (start with 2 minutes and work up/down from there), stop the conversation between partners A and B. Turn the floor to partner C to summarize what was heard. Give partner C half the time that partners A and C had to talk. In round two, a new inquiry is shared, and the roles are rotated. The final rotation happens in



round 3 which provides everyone an opportunity to serve each role. Do one or two complete rotations of three rounds depending on the number of questions you want them to discuss.

Turn and Ask. Instead of turn and talk to your partner, remind students to bring their dialogue with a question. When the first partner asks, you guarantee each person had an opportunity to say something, even if it was just posing the question.

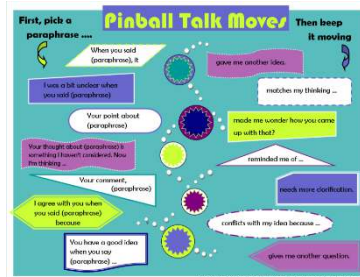
Two-Minute Jar: Give students an [image](#) of a jar with gumballs. Share a prompt and invite students to color in one gumball for every example they can think of that fits the prompt. Suggestions: Different ways to greet someone, Everything you know about ____, Traits you like about yourself, Things you are grateful for, What you can do if you get stuck on a problem, etc.

Whisper - Shout. During a choral response, invite students to use the volume of their voices to indicate how confident they are in their answer. Unsure responses will be closer to a whisper and more certain voices will be louder. This provides a safer atmosphere for everyone to respond and gives you an idea if students who are confident, actually have a misunderstanding.

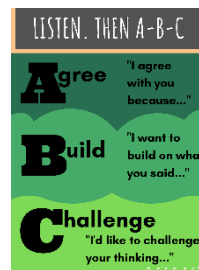
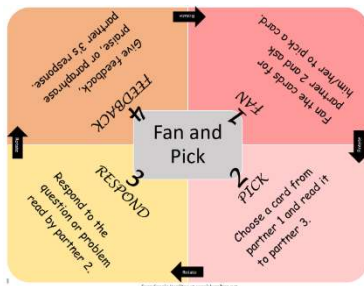
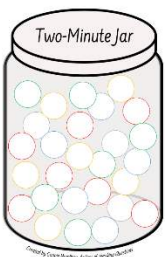
Word. Phrase. Sentence. Determine the size of the collaborative groups. This protocol works best with smaller groups of 2-4. Each student chooses a word, phrase, and sentence that resonates with them related to the learning. One at a time, each student shares their word followed by a group discussion about all the words shared. Next students share their selected phrase one at a time. Again, follow with a group discussion. Finally, the learners share their sentences with or without cross talk in between each share.

Free Resources at www.conniehamilton.org/freeresources

A	B	😊	READY
C	D	😐	THINKING
ALWAYS TRUE	ALWAYS FALSE	1	2
SOMETIMES TRUE/FALSE	NOT ENOUGH INFORMATION	3	4
		5	6



CLOCK PARTNERS	
1:00 Partner	_____
2:00 Partner	_____
3:00 Partner	_____
4:00 Partner	_____



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