

5 Inner-Outer Circle Discussion

This discussion group strategy provides students with practice in formulating and answering questions. Inner-Outer Circle works well when used to review material from a topic or unit.

Instructions:

1. Assign pairs of students to write questions about the topic or reading. Questions should include open ended and higher level questions (review Costa's Levels of Thinking).
2. Organize the students in two semi-circles or rows that are facing one another. In turn, each side asks and responds to the questions. Remind students not to interrupt one another, and that talking only occurs in the question answer format.
3. Once all questions and responses have been given, allow time for follow up questions to be asked and responded to in a regular back and forth discussion.
4. Debrief with the class both the content and process of the discussion.
5. Have the students write a paragraph on the most important ideas learned from the discussion.