

Cooperative Learning Strategies: Think-Pair-Share & Jigsaw

Introduction

Cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups to promote students working together to maximize their own and each other's learning. Think-Pair-Share and Jigsaw are cooperative learning strategies that can improve understanding and concept mastery when used along with Penda activities. Think-Pair-Share strategy is a technique that encourages individual participation and is applicable across all grade levels and class sizes. Students think through questions or tasks using three distinct steps: think, pair, share. Jigsaw is a technique that gives students practice in the acquisition and presentation of new material, in review, and in shared discussions. According to David Perkins, professor at Harvard's Graduate School of Education, "cooperative learning challenges students, together with peers, to use information in new ways and to create new understanding. Cooperative learning allows students to take a measure of control in their learning (inquiry based learning vs. teacher-driven), constructing their knowledge in accordance with their prior experiences and knowledge."

Classroom/Instructional Practice

Looking to expand your instructional toolkit? Why not use cooperative learning strategies with Penda in your classroom? Think-Pair-Share or Jigsaw are cooperative learning strategies that teachers can use in conjunction with Penda's extensive activity library. Teachers can choose the purpose for implementation: introduction of a new topic, review of a past standard, or extension of a previous topic or lesson. Before implementing either strategy, teachers must explain the group's task, including the goals for student academic achievement and social interaction or protocol. Expectations for student positive interdependence as well individual accountability, and how they will assess each (checklist or rubric) are established prior to the start of the lesson. Group roles or prompts are provided to help students articulate effective ways for interaction. Navigating the first 3 screens of a preselected Penda activity, teachers demonstrate how to complete the group task, while thinking aloud and modeling behavior and task expectations dependent on the learning technique used. Students would then work independently to complete the task by working through the rest of the activity screens. Once complete, students would transition to the next phase, whether it be pairing up with a partner for Think-Pair-Share or with a small group for Jigsaw, and follow the prompts for successful peer interaction. In closing, students share their responses with their partner, group or whole-class. Teachers then assess and have students self-reflect. Finally, teachers are able to give feedback on group and individual performance or provide a structure for self-monitoring where groups reflect on what worked well and what could be improved (checklist of questions such as "Planning Ahead: What can I do better next time?").

Impact on Student Learning

Penda produces measurable gains with only 30 minutes of usage per week. The integration of cooperative learning strategies with Penda activities will lead to higher academic achievement for your students. Having students work together on Penda activities allows those who struggle academically to learn from peers who understand the material and exposes them to diverse populations of students (heterogeneous groups) they might not interact with under other circumstances. Higher level thinking skills are developed in students when they encounter different ways of approaching a problem that vary from one's own. As students work through Penda activities together, they experience the ways in which others think regarding the task at hand. Such exposure leads to students developing a higher level of thinking than previously possessed. Students are then able to transfer and apply those higher level thinking skills as they progress through their Penda activities, cooperatively or independently.

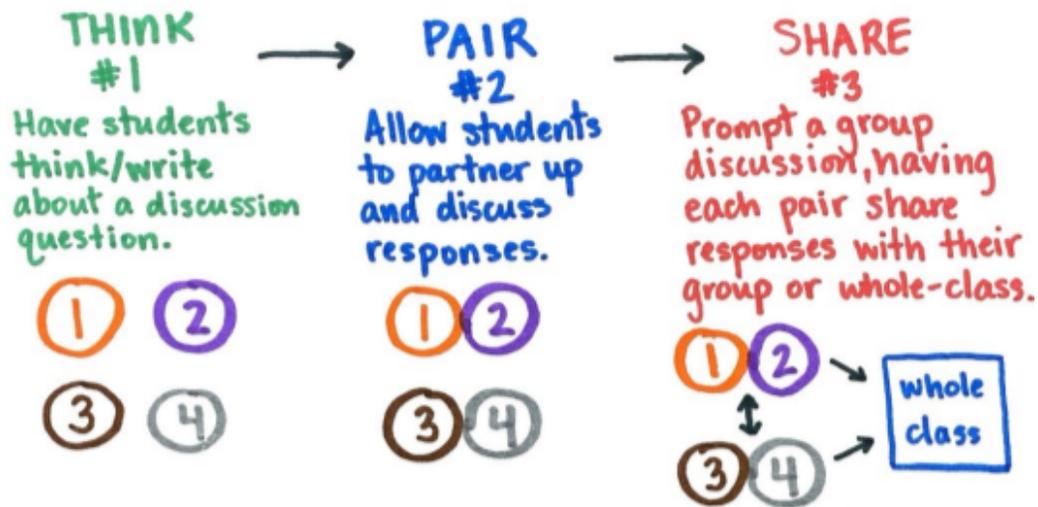
Give It A Try - Here's How:

1. Share with students activity goals and group norms/ behavior expectations/ protocols
2. Open the assigned Penda activity and completes the first 3 screens while thinking aloud and modeling behavior and task expectations as it relates to the cooperative learning strategy being used
3. Have students complete the remaining Penda activity screens independently
4. Have students transition to working with their partner for Think-Pair-Share or group for Jigsaw to complete the assigned task
5. Circulate around the classroom asking questions, and charting student responses to assess, check for understanding/ mastery of goals and clarify any misconceptions
6. Provide students an opportunity to reflect on their collaborative work using a checklist

Artifact/Example:

COOPERATIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES

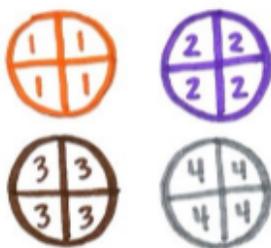
THINK-PAIR-SHARE



JIGSAW

STEP 1: Focus Groups

Group students and give each group a different topic or text to read and discuss.



STEP 2: Task Groups

Mix groups so that students can bring their focus or expertise to a common task or problem.

