

Partner Dialogue

Partner Dialogue (also Partner Talk or Partner Speaks) is a strategy in which pairs of students talk through an idea or question before bringing their thoughts to a larger group. It is designed to help students develop careful listening and paraphrasing skills because when the pair shares, each partner puts forward the ideas and thinking of the other. As partners dialogue, they provide feedback focused on the content and learn to consider others' points of view. A particular advantage to using this strategy is that students who typically dominate conversations may learn to honor and share the ideas of others instead of focusing only on their own ideas; and students who are generally less vocal get to hear their ideas expressed by their partners.

How to implement the strategy (Summarizing):

1. Establish partners randomly or assign students to partner with another student. Elbow partners works well with this strategy.
2. Present the prompt or question and provide time for students to dialogue about it. Tell students that when the class comes back together, they will be sharing their partner's ideas rather than their own.
3. Encourage students to make eye contact with their partners listen respectfully without interrupting.
4. Encourage students to ask probing questions and/or make statements that help clarify the ideas being discussed. Students may need stems in order to do this. For example:
 - I agree because...
 - I disagree because...
 - I'm not sure about _____, because...
 - True. Another example is when ...
 - Can you tell me more about that?
 - How do you know _____ ?
 - Can you give me an example of _____ ?
 - That's a great point...
5. Encourage students to paraphrase their partners' thoughts. Students may need stems in order to do this. For example:
 - I hear you saying that...
 - So, if I understand you correctly...
 - I like how you said...
6. Circulate as students dialogue, listening carefully to the conversations to provide feedback and ask probing questions.
7. Lead a whole group discussion following partner dialogue. Remind students that they are to share their partner's ideas rather than their own.

Adapted from:

- Keeley, P. (2008). *Science Formative Assessment: 75 Practical Strategies for Linking Assessment, Instruction, and Learning*, Thousand Oaks CA. Corwin Press.