



THINK-PAIR-SHARE (TPS)

Individual Processing to Extending Thinking Cooperatively

Instructional Difficulty



Easy



Summary

Think-Pair-Share (TPS) or Write-Pair-Share (WPS) is a cooperative learning strategy designed to help students process information individually before they interact with partners, small groups, or in large class discussions. This strategy involves giving students time to **think** or write about their responses to content, problems, questions, etc. then giving them time to compare their ideas with others (in small groups or **pairs**), then having them **share** out a summary or synthesis of the conversation in a larger group or classroom setting.

Prep: 5 minutes

Class Time: 5 - 15 minutes

Outcome



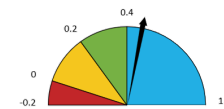
Concept Development

Learning Level



Surface to Deep and into Transfer Learning

Learning Impact



.55 Effect Size

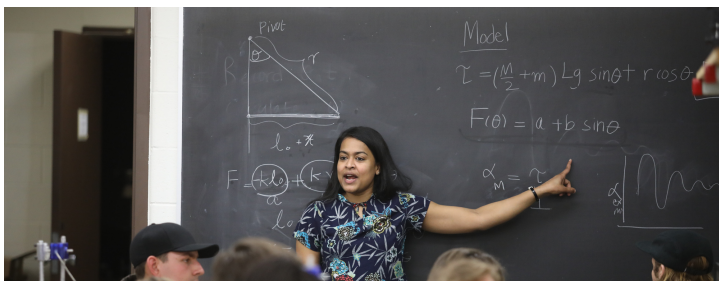
Interaction



Individual & Cooperative Processing of Content

Start Strong

Time is one of the greatest strengths of this strategy. Students are given layers of time to build their understanding of concepts throughout the process. Learners interact with content on their own first and are given the time to make sense of it. The second layer builds on the first and allows students to interact and compare ideas with one other individual or small group. Then time is devoted to sharing insights from other groups. Ultimately, when you devote the time to start strong, you're setting the foundation for a more engaging discussion in the end.



1 PREP and FACILITATION

1. **Provide learners with** some form of **content** such as an article, mini lecture, short video, a problem, etc. or even a **short experience** such as a lab experiment, demonstration, or role-play.
2. Select or create a method for how students will **interact** with the **content or experience individually**. It can be as simple as giving responses to questions or summarizing the main points of a text. It can also be more involved like creating a diagram or solving a problem.
3. Select or create a method for how students will **interact** with a **partner or group**. Will they just share their responses or begin to create something together?
4. Select or create **questions to guide** the large group **discussion**. Once they've had time to interact with the content and each other, determine what is most important for them to share with the class.



3 Pair

- Give students or learners **time** (at least a few minutes) dedicated to **further make sense of** the information or the experience in **pairs or small groups**. Ideally, they should build on ideas and learn from each other.
- It is often helpful to have them create a summary, insights, or a synthesis of their discussion that they could share with the class.
- Sharing in pairs or small groups promotes safety and builds **confidence to share** in larger group discussions.



2 THINK

- Give students or learners **time** (at least a few minutes) dedicated to **process** the information or **reflect** on the experience **individually**.
- Students can just sit quietly and reflect, but it is often helpful for them to **write** down their responses as it promotes **independent thinking**. They can also refer back to their writing in later conversations.
- Please do not skip this first step of giving students individual time as it affects the quality of discussion in later steps.



4 Share

- Give students or learners **time** dedicated to **reflect** on the information or the experience in **groups or as an entire class**.
- At this point, it is important to hear from several conversations.
- Allow them to speak freely or select a designated voice for the groups.
- The key is to encourage **discussion and dialogue** rather than just have each group or pair share what they said.
- Encourage learners to ask questions, reflect, build on the ideas of others, etc.



Why it Matters

Processing - Learners need time to process questions and content before engaging in discussions. This helps them to access their prior knowledge and start connecting it with what they are currently learning. Actively processing also impacts the learners retention of information for future use and engagement in further discussion. An advantage to this method is that it allows students to process individually as well as cooperatively.

Pair With

Think-Pair-Share is a very effective way to improve any discussion based strategy. By its design, it engages every student and not just the louder few. For example, consider using it to refine questions before students begin their large group Socratic Seminar.

This method assumes learning objectives have been chosen prior to employing this strategy.



CATALYST DESIGN