

List of agile teamwork methods for the classroom

Tiana Piesendel – Helliwood media & education
Maximilian Plag - Helliwood media & education





Overview of agile group methods:

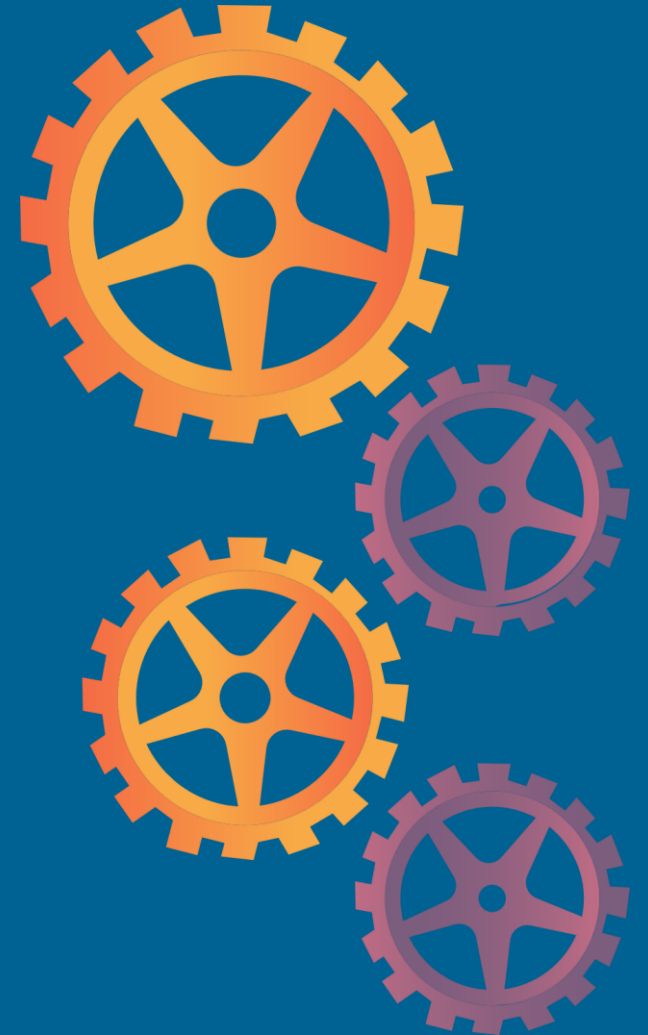
1. *Why use agile methods?*
2. *Brainstorming*
3. *Reciprocal teaching*
4. *Think-Pair-Share*
5. *The fishbowl*
6. *The placemat*

Why use agile methods?

In the modern workplace, agility is a concept that gains more and more popularity. Agile teams offer immense advantages - when they work. Through the application of the agile methods, agile teams build on these characteristics:

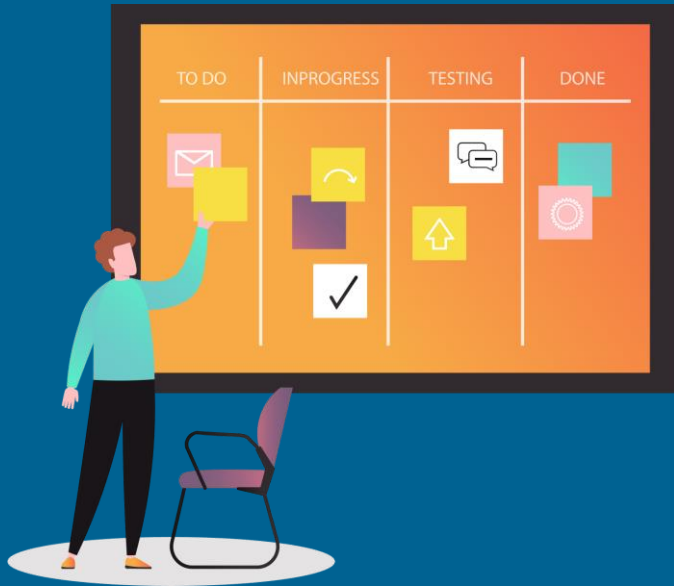
- Intensive communication and frequent exchange
- High autonomy, flexibility and self-organization of the team
- Fast, optimized decision-making processes
- Fluid instead of rigid structure
- Proactive, solution-oriented behavior
- Steep learning curve

Agile Methods



Method 1

The Brainstorming



What is brainstorming?

Brainstorming is a creative and very effective problem-solving technique where a group of students gathers different ideas about specific themes or questions. The main target of this method is to create new and constructive solutions and to give every student the chance to share their own associations and ideas, without evaluating or judging. When brainstorming the students visualize the ideas on a paper, board or with a digital tool and sort out the important ones.

The guidelines for effective brainstorming:

**1. Focus on
quantity**

**2. Withhold
criticism**

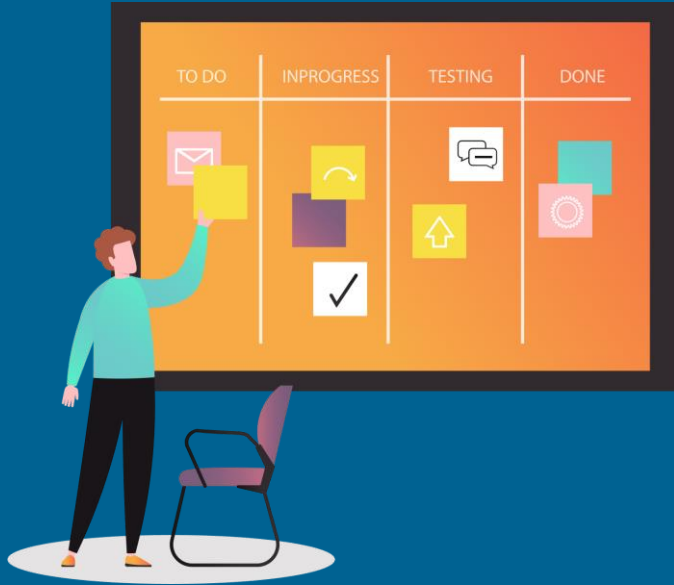
**3. Encourage
wild ideas**

**4. Build on
ideas**

This guidelines create a collaborative atmosphere where good ideas can expand, grow and get more traction.

Method 1

The Brainstorming

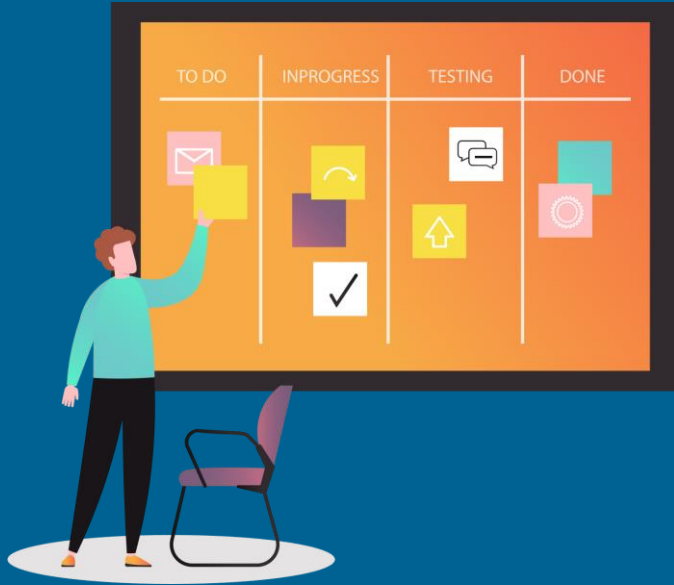


Brainstorming can be a powerful method in the classroom that helps students to...

- Tap into prior knowledge
- Express their individual ideas
- Inspire each other
- Eliminate fear of failures
- Create new ideas
- Solve problems
- Gain motivation
- Achieve project goals
- Encourage the free flow of ideas

Method 1

The Brainstorming



The Dos and Don'ts of Brainstorming:



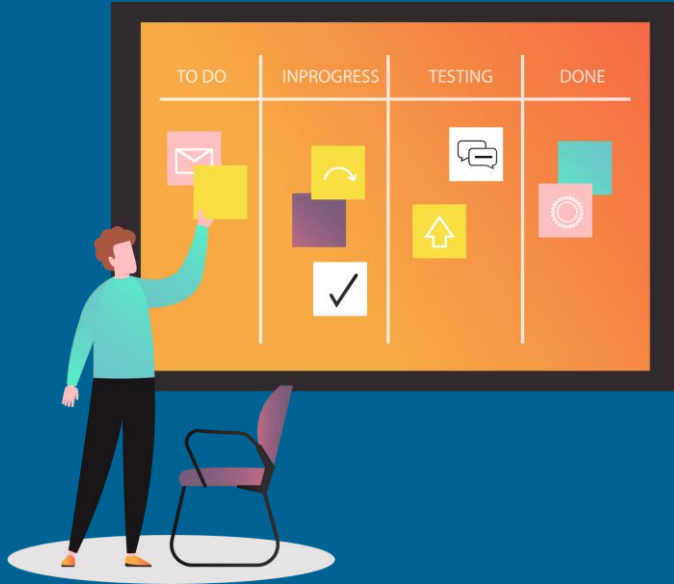
- Appoint a facilitator
- Create a creative climate
- Visualize your ideas using a physical or digital board
- Encourage non-linear thinking and welcome unusual ideas
- Go for quantity over quality



- Don't get attached to your ideas
- Don't dismiss or evaluate ideas of others
- Don't force participation

Method 1

The Brainstorming

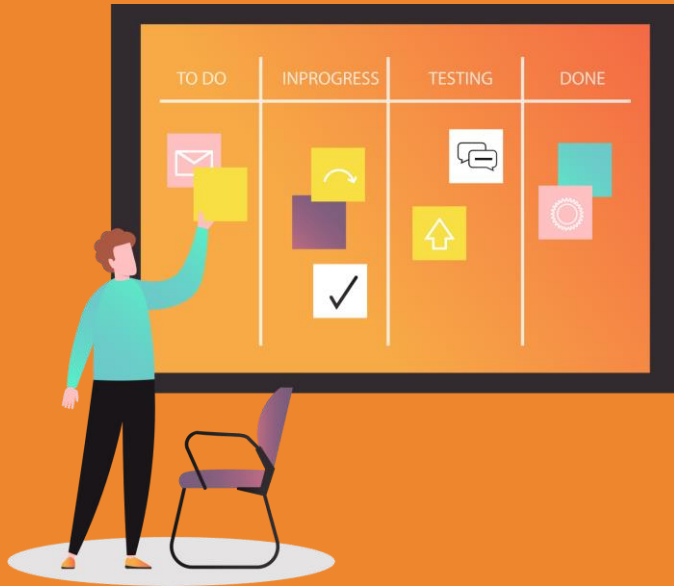


How can I facilitate brainstorming in the classroom?

- Define the problem or issue
- Create a creative climate
- Create heterogenic, manageable groups of 5-7 people for the session
- Appoint group facilitators who moderate and record shared ideas
- Provide necessary (digital) tools to document ideas (flipchart, paper boards, sticky notes, etc.)
- Select a time frame for the session
- Let students review the ideas at the end of the session
- Summarize the strongest ideas and build on them

Method 2

Reciprocal teaching



What is the Reciprocal teaching method (RT)?

Reciprocal teaching is an effective interactive and guided method, that helps students to improve their reading comprehension, while practicing both roles as teacher and learner within a small group. Before or after reading an assigned text, each student is assigned one of four strategies:

Predicting

Predicting what the text is about or what happens next.

For example:
„The text might be about..., because....“

Summarizing

Summarizing the text and pointing out highlights and keywords.

For example:
„The most important facts/ ideas are....“

Clarifying

Clarifying words, pronunciations and phrases that are unclear.

For example:
“This part is hard to understand, but I think....”

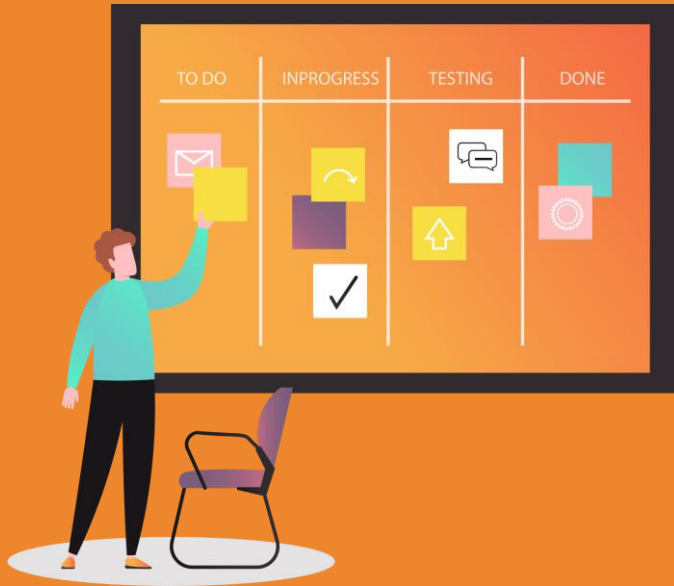
Questioning

Asking deep questions about things that are important.

For example:
„What do you think about...?“

Method 2

Reciprocal teaching

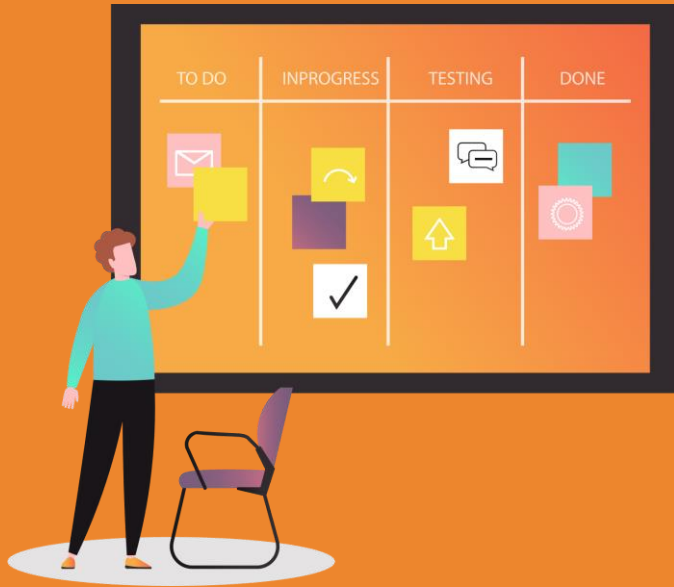


The different steps of Reciprocal teaching(RT):

- Introduce the students to the RT-method and the four strategies
- Create heterogenic, equal groups of four students
- Distribute the roles and responsibilities or let them decide themselves
- Let them read the assigned text
- Let the students begin with the group activity following the four strategies of reciprocal teaching
- Help and support the activity, if necessary
- Let them switch roles within the group and repeat the process with the next chapter

Method 2

Reciprocal teaching

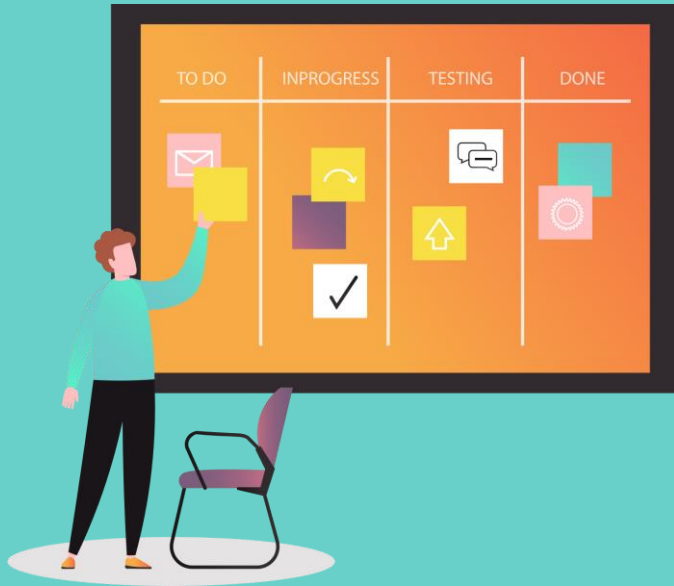


Reciprocal teaching can be a powerful method in the classroom that helps students to...

- Improve their reading comprehension
- Discuss main questions in a group situation
- Learn while they teach others
- Develop new ideas, thoughts and questions
- Gain metacognition and social skills
- Summarize and break down complex texts into highlights
- Learn how to ask important questions about a text
- Develop new vocabulary and knowledge
- Increase empathy

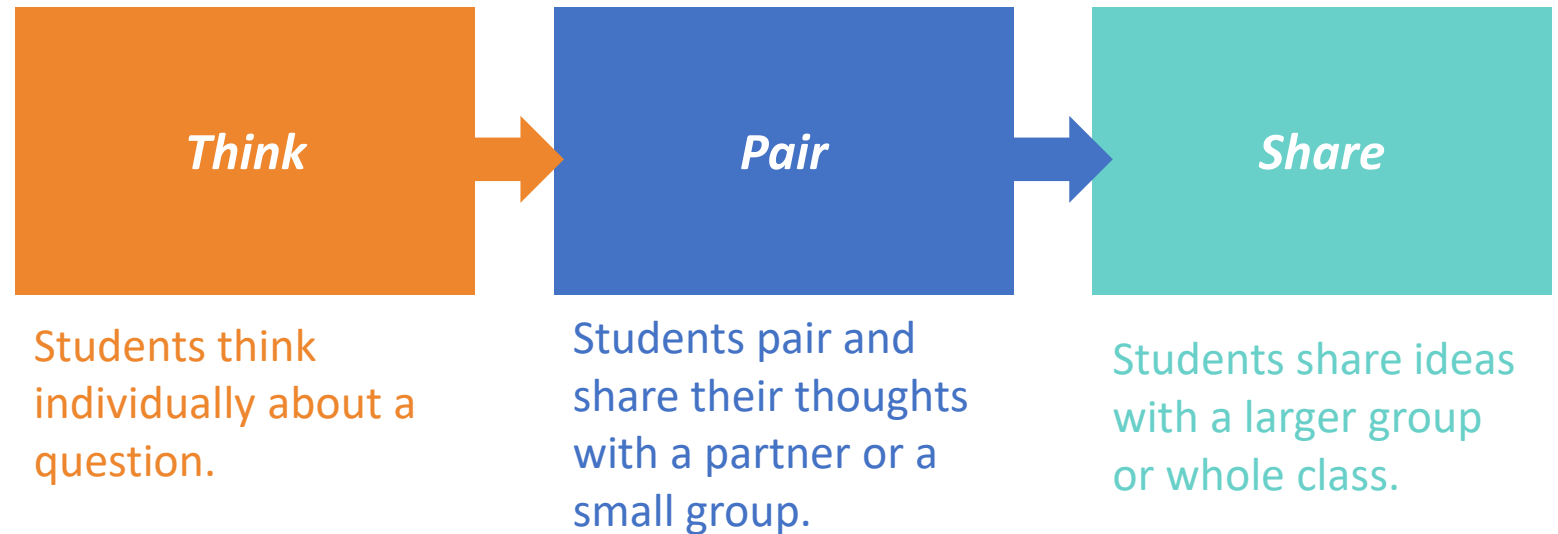
Method 3

Think-Pair-Share



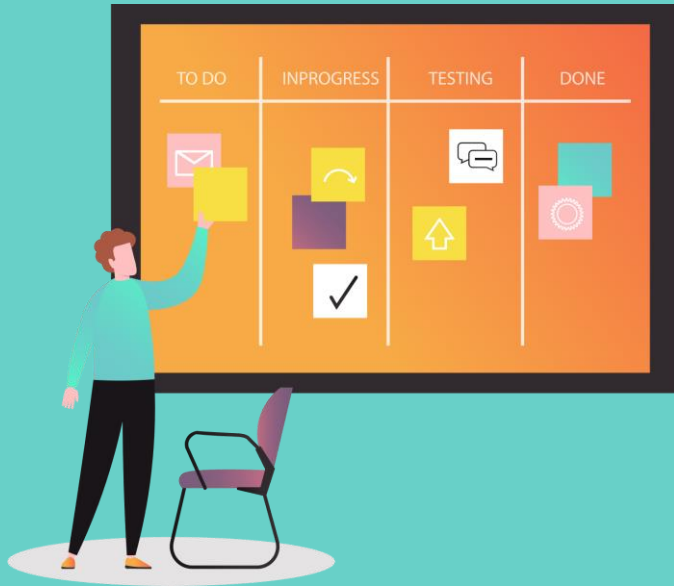
What is the Think-Pair-Share method?

The Think-Pair-Share method (TPS) is a collaborative learning strategy where students work together to solve a problem or to discuss a question on a given topic. It can be easily used for different daily classroom activities and in any subject. This learning tool helps shy participants to feel more comfortable while sharing their thoughts.



Method 3

Think-Pair-Share

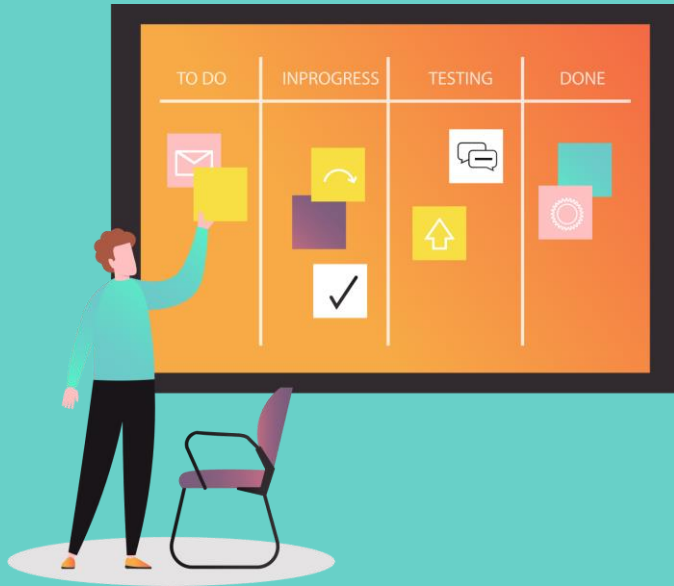


The different steps of Think-Pair-Share (TPS):

- Introduce the students to the TPS-method
- Ask a specific question about a topic or text
- Let each student think individually about the question and let them write everything down (1-3 minutes)
- Assign the pairs or small groups or let the students decide themselves
- Let the students share and discuss their thoughts and ideas with their partner or small group (2-5 minutes)
- Expand the pair-share into a class- or larger-group discussion
- Allow each group to decide which student or students will present their thoughts and ideas about the given question
- Students can visualize their thoughts on a whiteboard

Method 3

Think-Pair-Share

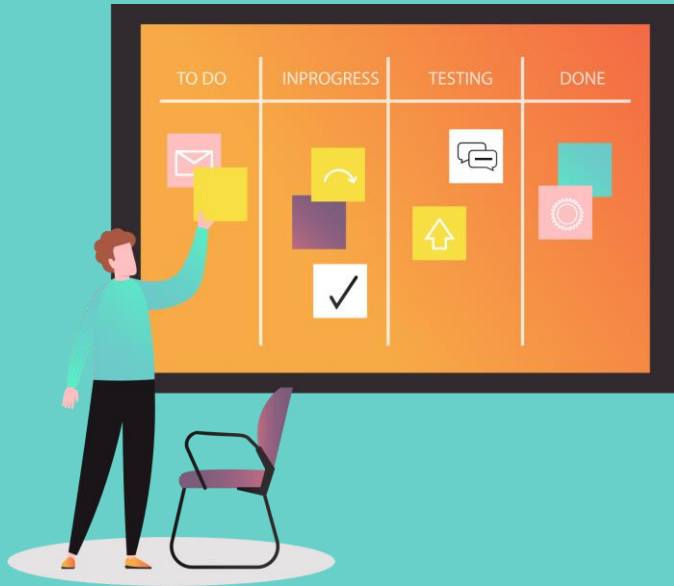


Think-Pair-Share can be a powerful method in the classroom that helps students to...

- Feel more comfortable sharing own thoughts and ideas
- Foster social, communication and problem-solving skills
- Increase a better understanding of the topic
- Expand their vocabulary and build on prior knowledge
- Improve their speaking and listening skills
- Express their own ideas
- Inspire each other
- Create new ideas
- Achieve project goals
- Increase confidence

Method 3

Think-Pair-Share

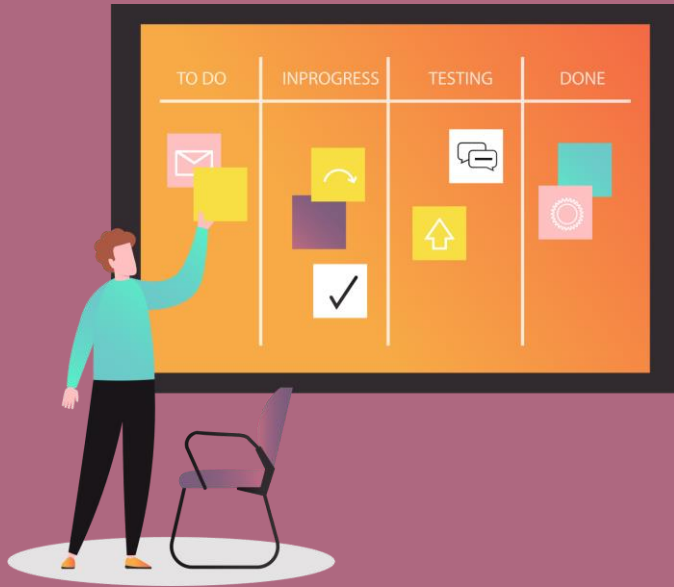


How can I facilitate Think-Pair-Share in the classroom?

- Set a target for the lesson
- Describe the purpose of the strategy
- Provide discussion guidelines
- Allow enough time for clarification and questions
- Ask a clear and specific question about a topic
- Be sensitive to the needs of each student when creating pairs or small groups
- Provide the necessary tools for the session

Method 4

The Fishbowl

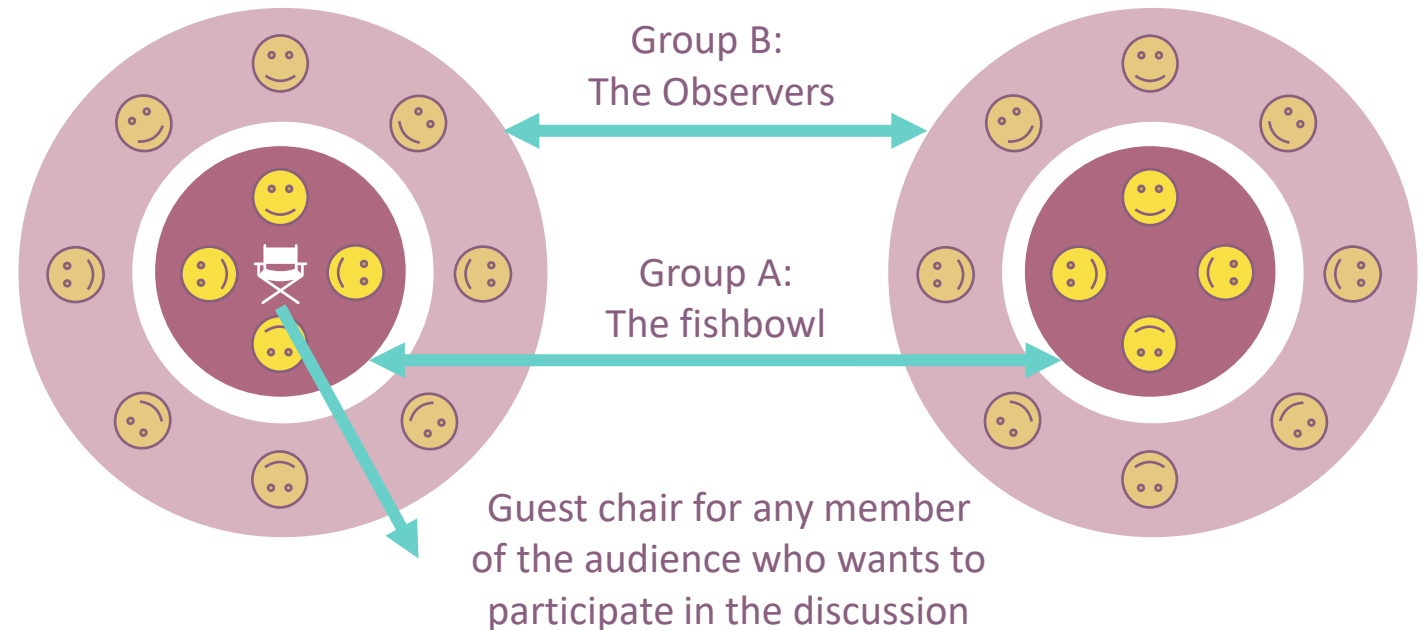


What is the fishbowl discussion?

The fishbowl method is an effective student-centered strategy which is used to manage larger group discussions. It can be used in any subject and for post-reading, pre-writing or as an end-of-the-unit review activity. It consists of two circles. The 5 – 8 participants of the inner circle or “fishbowl” talk about a topic or question while the outside circle observes the debate without interrupting. There are two common variations:

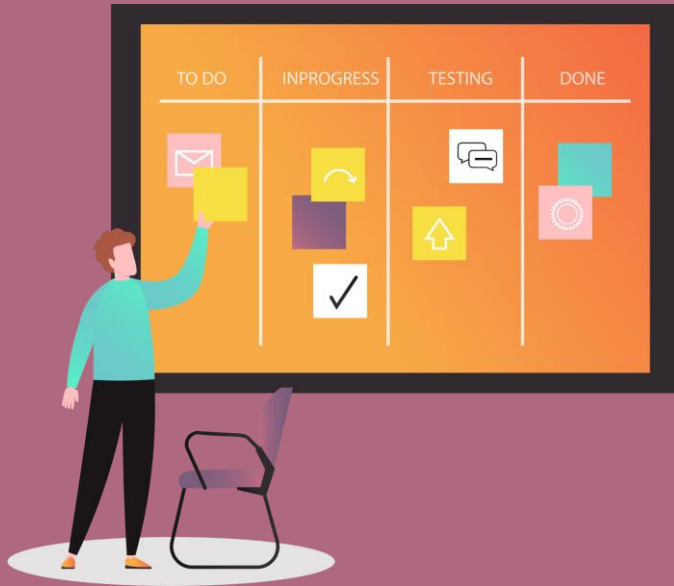
1. Open fishbowl

2. Closed fishbowl



Method 4

The Fishbowl

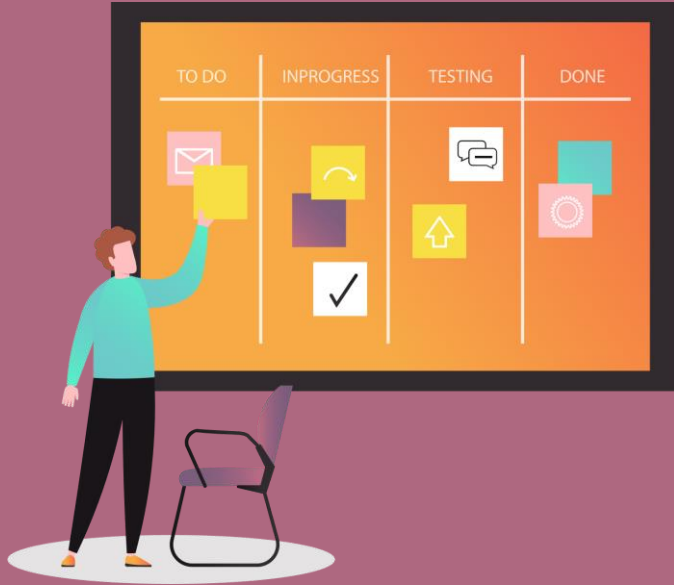


The different steps of the fishbowl method:

- Set up the room and rearrange the chairs
- Explain the method and the different roles to the students
- Choose a central topic or text and define an open-ended question
- If you use a text, let the students read the text first
- Select 5-8 volunteers or let them decide themselves who wants to be in the fishbowl and discuss the asked question or text
- Optional: Integrate a facilitator, who poses questions to answer during the discussion but does not participate
- Let the rest observe the debate. They should take notes on the content and process without disturbing the discussion
- Let the students rotate and allow the conversations to continue for 15-20 minutes
- Divide the class into small groups and let the students share their observations from the outer circle
- Expand the group exchange to a classroom discussion

Method 4

The Fishbowl

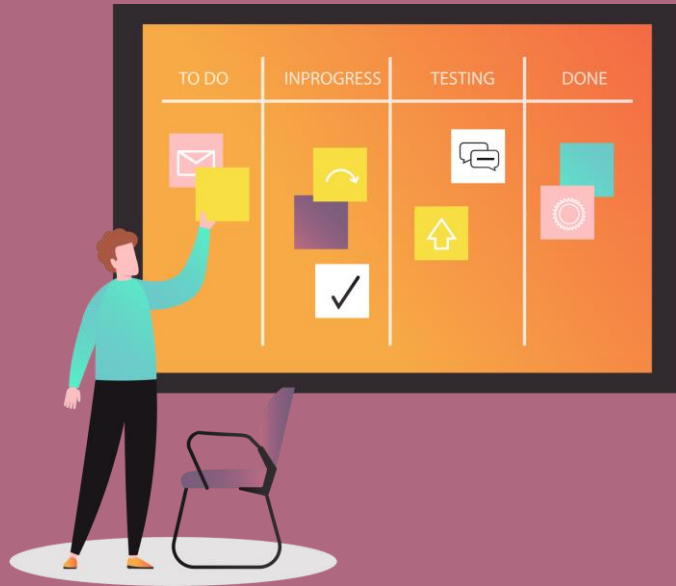


The fishbowl discussion can be a powerful method in the classroom that helps students to...

- Foster their listening and communication skills
- Ask insightful questions without judgment
- Identify the important elements to effective verbal communication
- Concentrate on the speakers while actively listening
- Learn to comprehend complex ideas and new perspectives
- Articulate their point of view or opinion on the subject in relation to perspectives of others
- Increase a better understanding of the topic
- Expand their vocabulary and build on prior knowledge

Method 4

The Fishbowl

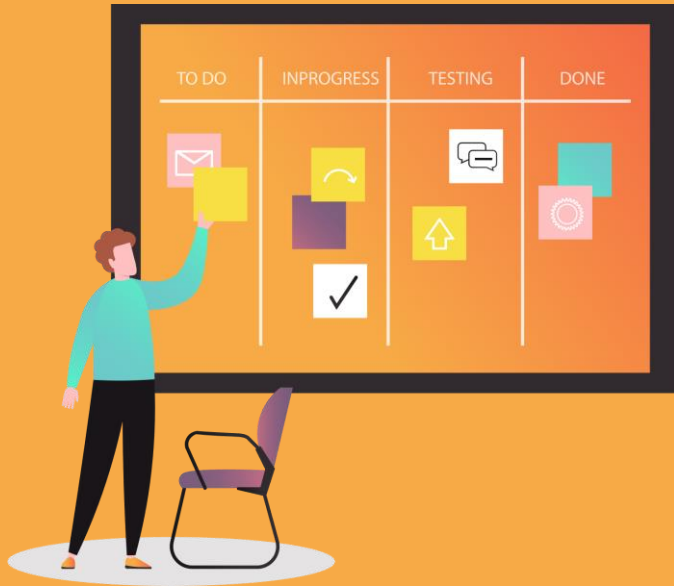


How can I facilitate the fishbowl method in the classroom?

- The question should be open enough to draw out different perspectives
- Make sure that the physical space permits a fishbowl setup
- Repeat the fishbowl discussion until every student feels comfortable with the strategy and with every role
- If you choose the students of the inner circle, create mixed groups with different personalities and academic performances
- Set fixed rules and guidelines for the inner and the outer circle
- Make sure that the observers don't interrupt the discussion
- Create a relaxed atmosphere without abasement or judgment

Method 5

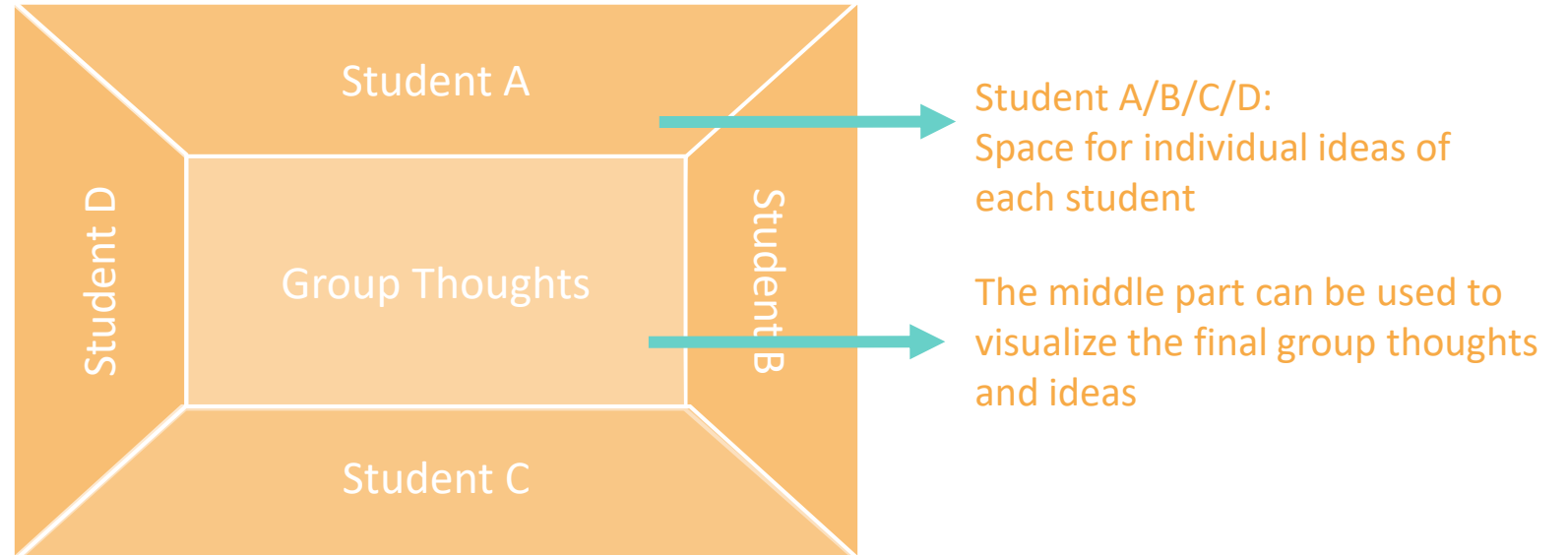
The Placemat



What is the Placemat method?

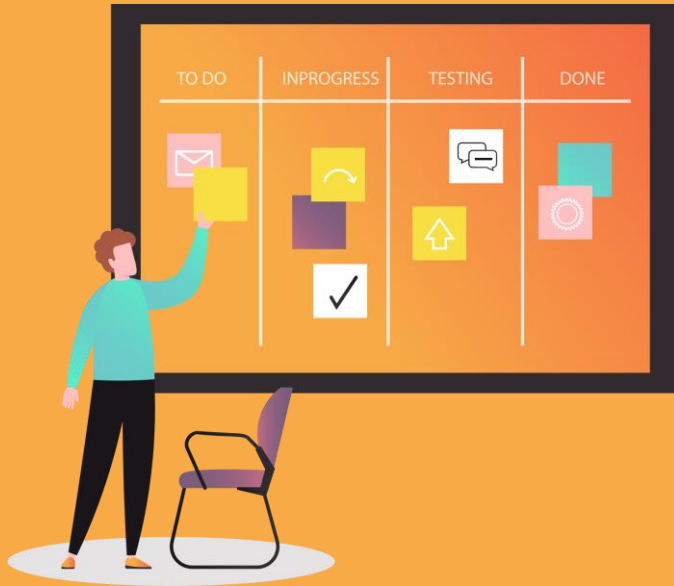
A Placemat is a group activity and a part of the cooperative learning, which provides an opportunity for the students to record and note individual ideas about a topic or asked question at any subject. It is an ideal strategy to brainstorm ideas, record researched information or to easily analyze documents of any subject.

The Placemat template for four students:



Method 5

The Placemat



The different steps of the placemat method:

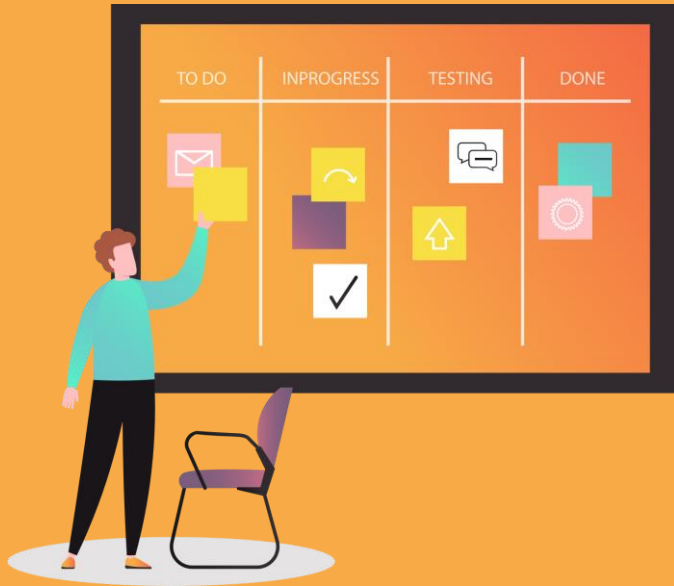
- Choose a topic or question for the session
- Explain the activity to the class and answer open questions
- Break the class into small groups of 3-5 students
- Handle out a placemat template or let the groups draw their own



- **Phase 1:** Each student thinks individually and record the ideas on the section that is in front for 1-5 minutes
- **Phase 2:** The Groups rotate the placemat and the next person responds by agreeing, disagreeing or adding new thoughts to the notes from the neighbor. After everyone has been able to read and write in all outer sections, the group will decide collectively the most important responses and write them in the center
- **Phase 3:** The group will share their results with the rest of the class

Method 5

The Placemat

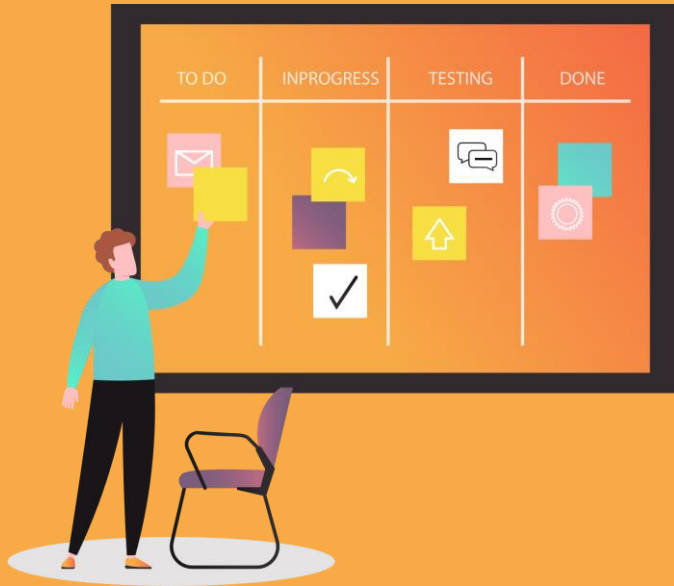


The placemat activity can be a powerful method in the classroom that helps students to...

- Learn how to cooperate in a group situation
- Increase a better understanding of the topic
- Expand their vocabulary and build on prior knowledge
- Foster social, communication and problem-solving skills
- Think individually first and reflect afterwards
- Learn to differentiate between important and unimportant responses
- Achieve project and group goals
- Be heard and recognized

Method 5

The Placemat



How can I facilitate the placemat method in the classroom?

- Define the problem or issue and explain the benefits of the activity to the class
- Support students, if they have problems finding own ideas
- Provide necessary (digital) tools to document ideas (template, A3 papers, sticky notes, etc.)
- Select a time frame for any phase
- Let students review the ideas at the end of the session
- Underline the importance of respectful behaviour and communication

Bibliography

Becker, F. (n.d.). Teamfähigkeit Stärken: Definition, Beispiele, test. WPGS. Retrieved October 20, 2022, from <https://wpgs.de/fachtexte/agile-teams-definition-und-fuehrung/>

Drew, C. (2022). The Reciprocal Teaching Method (Examples, Pros, Cons). Helpful Professor. Retrieved October 20, 2022, from <https://helpfulprofessor.com/reciprocal-teaching/>

Herting, Nora. "The Four* Rules of Brainstorming." Web log. *LinkedIn* (blog), March 9, 2021. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/four-rules-brainstorming-nora-herting>.

Lehniger, Kai. "Methoden Für Einen Kompetenzorientierten, Kooperativen Und ..." LehnigerNet. Accessed October 21, 2022. <https://www.lehnigernet.de/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Methoden-f%C3%BCr-einen-kompetenzorientierten-Unterricht.pdf>.

Place Mat - Teacher Training. YouTube. The Fourth R, 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=405i4g2SXfQ>.

Reciprocal Teaching - An Introduction for Students. YouTube. Rachael Waltke, 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vsfzZKMickl>.

Teaching Technique 44: Fishbowl. YouTube. The K. Patricia Cross Academy, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sB143EA1ZGU>.

"Think-Pair-Share." Strategies for Students. Retrieved October 21, 2022. <https://spedellreadingstrategies.weebly.com/think-pair-share.html>.



The project „Agile2Learn was financed with the support of the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Commission under the Grant No.: 2021-1-CZ01-KA220-VET-000025558

[Agile2learn.eu](https://agile2learn.eu)