

Roundtable and Roundrobin

Use: Highly effective at the beginning of a lesson to stimulate thinking and content-related teambuilding. This method may be used effectively with any subject matter.

Overview of Roundtable:

Step 1: The Problem

During this step, the teacher asks a question that may have many possible correct answers. Ex: "Name as many jobs in the automotive field as you can."

Step 2: Students Contribute

Students develop a list of responses on one sheet of paper. The first student writes an answer, then passes the paper to the student on his/her left until all students have had the chance to contribute. The paper literally goes around the table – thus the name: "Roundtable."

Overview of Roundrobin:

The counterpart to Roundtable is Roundrobin. The method is very similar with one exception: students take turns responding orally rather than responding on paper. The teacher or another student can act as the class scribe and record the answers on the board or a flipchart if desired. This method is very effective for students who are unable to write (for developmental, mental or physical reasons). This method is also effective when participation is the goal rather than the creation of a product.

Variations:

Time can be a factor, creating a scenario where students perform under pressure. Alternatively, students can respond in teams creating a competitive situation. This activity can also be done with no time restriction.

Options for Evaluation:

Typically the effectiveness of this method is found in the process rather than the product. However, if the need for evaluation exists, there are several options. One option is to evaluate the class effort or to evaluate the product with respect to a predetermined class goal. Alternatively, recognition can be given to the team with the highest quality product.