

Goal

Students will use small group discussion to guide problem solving of a major issue.

Rationale

The World Café strategy uses collaborative groups to investigate a large case or issue and work toward solutions. Participants are asked to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the effectiveness of solutions and respond to group decisions. Designed and outlined by Juanita Brown and David Isaacs (2005), World Café is a powerful strategy to approach critical problems and global issues. The strategy as adapted and presented engages students in deep analysis; rotates them through collaborative structures where expertise can be shared; and encourages cooperative problem solving. Presentation and discussion skills are developed and refined as each group leader must concisely present issues and facilitate the discussion between group members.

World Café

Instructional Steps

1. Arrange the room before the World Café begins. Set up a “station” for each discussion question. Tables are ideal for this strategy, but desks can be arranged in small circles if tables are not available. Each station should have chart paper and markers. The question or prompt should be attached to or printed on the chart paper.
2. Decide on an issue or problem for students to discuss. One text can be used with different questions for discussion at each station. Or multiple texts can be selected and each one read and discussed at a station. Questions should be thought-provoking and lead to analysis and evaluation of problems and solutions related to the issue.
3. Review the Student Handout: Discussion/Dialogue Scoring Guide (in the Discussion and Debate section of this book). If the focus will be on one or two of the discussion skills, inform students of the particular skills.
4. Assign students to small groups of 3–5 students. One student volunteers to be the group leader for this round. Students will rotate through the 10 minute phases with a partial rotation of groups after each phase. One student volunteers to stay behind in each rotation to report to the next group. This person becomes the new group leader.
5. Provide students with the text/issue for discussion.
6. Ask groups to read the text and discuss the questions. Students should record their responses and key ideas on chart paper.
7. Rotate students. Most students from each group will move to the next group. One student stays behind to summarize the work that the previous group completed. The group leader focuses on the targeted discussion skills.
8. Have students discuss and respond to the questions for this station. Responses are added to the chart paper.
9. Rotate students again and repeat the process. Continue until students have rotated through each station or as many stations as time permits.

10. Process the small group discussions with the class. How might they prioritize the various responses? Who else should be involved in the discussion? What are some next steps?
11. Debrief the World Café strategy. If time allows, this can be done at the end of the class period. If not, ask students to write their reflection and debrief as homework. Possible questions: Did everyone in the group contribute to the discussion? Did students consider other students' ideas? What can be done next time to improve the work in the groups? What presentation and speaking skills should be the focus?
12. Have students assess their performance of the targeted presentation/discussion skills using the Discussion/Dialogue Scoring Guide. Students should provide feedback to the teacher in a reflection—either in oral or written format.

Differentiation

Increased Scaffolding

- Model presentation or discussion skills that students will need to use in small groups.
- Focus on one or two skills each time before addressing all skills.
- Provide multiple opportunities to practice.

Increased Rigor

- Use case studies of complex, global issues that provide multiple viewpoints for discussion.
- Provide a more detailed rubric to assess presentation skills.

Using Technology

- Use a three-part text, reading, or case study. The text can be a longer one that is divided into three chunks, or it can be three articles on a related topic. The class responds to each part through the use of discussion forums, blogs, or Wikis.
- Debrief and/or reflection can be submitted using a specific Twitter hashtag.

Other AVID Resources

- *The Write Path English Language Arts: Exploring Texts with Strategic Reading*