

# 20 Active Participation Techniques to **SUPERCHARGE** Your Lessons!

## Oral Responses

TECHNIQUE	IMPLEMENTATION STEPS
<b>Choral Response</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask question.</li> <li>2. Provide students think time (3-5 seconds).</li> <li>3. State verbal cue (i.e., "sound?", "answer?", "everyone?") followed by the physical signal (lowered hand, tap, finger snap, etc.) to prompt students to answer together.</li> <li>4. Provide constructive feedback, as needed.</li> </ol>
<b>Think-Pair-Share</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assign partners.</li> <li>2. Designate partner roles (i.e., A-B partners, 1-2 partners, peanut butter-jelly partners, etc.)</li> <li>3. <b>THINK:</b> Ask question and provide think time (3-5 seconds).</li> <li>4. <b>PAIR:</b> Direct students to discuss answer with partner (can designate who shares—i.e., A's share first, then B's, B's share A's summarize, etc.)</li> <li>5. <b>SHARE:</b> Call on 3-5 students to share out to whole class OR if answer is short and wording is the same, do a choral response and have all students share at once.</li> </ol>
<b>Inside-Outside Circle</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Divide students into two equal numbered groups. Designate one group as 1's and the other group as 2's.</li> <li>2. Direct 1's to make a circle facing out, and 2's to make a circle around the 1's, facing in.</li> <li>3. Direct students to pair up—i.e., each student in the inside circle should face and partner up with one student from the outside circle.</li> <li>4. Place list of questions on classroom whiteboard, smartboard, document camera, etc. for all students to see.</li> <li>5. Direct 1's to ask question and 2's to answer. Partners then switch roles and 2's ask question and 1's answer.</li> <li>6. Give signal for movement. For example, ask students in the outer circle to rotate two steps to the left.</li> <li>7. Repeat the questioning process and movement within the circle until all questions are answered.</li> </ol>

<p><b>Numbered Heads</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number off students from 1 to 4. This is their numbered head team.</li> <li>2. Ask question or give problem and provide think time.</li> <li>3. Direct students to lean forward (put heads together) to discuss the answer with their team. They must ensure that everyone on the team knows the answer.</li> <li>4. Randomly call out a number from 1 to 4 (use a spinner, toss a die, draw popsicle sticks, etc.)</li> <li>5. On each team, the student whose number was called stands to verbally share the answer.</li> <li>6. Once the signal is given, the designated students share their answer.</li> <li>7. Repeat with additional questions. Give team points for correct responses if desired.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Study-Tell-Help-Check</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assign partners.</li> <li>2. <b>STUDY:</b> Give students a short time to individually study their notes, handout, textbook, etc. (1-2 minutes).</li> <li>3. <b>TELL:</b> Direct students to tell their partner all they remember about the topic without consulting their reference materials.</li> <li>4. <b>HELP:</b> Direct partners to help out by asking their partner questions, giving hints, or filling in any missing information.</li> <li>5. <b>CHECK:</b> When both partners feel they have shared all of their information, they go back to their reference materials to check their responses and locate any information they might have missed.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Sentence Starters</b></p>	<p>Prompt discussion about a topic among the group by using sentence starters. This can be embedded within choral responses, paired responses, or small group responses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I agree because.../I disagree because...</li> <li>- I'm still confused about...</li> <li>- I understand why you'd say that, but...</li> <li>- And then there was another example of that...</li> <li>- I understand and would like to add...</li> <li>- There is another piece of evidence that....</li> <li>- Another way you might interpret that is...</li> </ul>

<p><b>Follow-On</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask question</li> <li>2. Provide think time (3-5 seconds)</li> <li>3. Call on student to share answer with class. Then, prompt students to “follow-on” the previous answer through the use of prompts such as “<b>ADD ON...</b>” or “<b>DEVELOP...</b>” or “<b>EVIDENCE?</b>”</li> </ol> <p>Example:</p> <p>Teacher: <i>What bad news in this chapter does Wilbur get from the old sheep?</i> (Teacher provides think time, then calls on student)</p> <p>John: <i>Wilbur finds out that he is going to be killed.</i></p> <p>Teacher: <i>Excellent, John. <b>ADD ON</b>, Mary.</i></p> <p>Mary: <i>Wilbur finds out he is going to be killed at Christmastime.</i></p> <p>Teacher: <i>You’re right, Mary. Now, work with your partner to find <b>TEXT EVIDENCE</b> for Mary’s answer.</i> (Teacher gives partners 15-20 seconds to find evidence, then calls on student)</p> <p>Teacher: <i><b>EVIDENCE</b>, Marcus.</i></p> <p>Marcus: <i>On page 49, it says, “There’s a regular conspiracy around here to kill you at Christmastime. Everybody is in the plot—Lurvey, Zuckerman, even John Arable.”</i></p> <p>Teacher: <i>Very good! Now, work with your partner as to <b>DEVELOP</b> and discuss an interesting word in the text that Marcus just read—<b>conspiracy</b>. What does that mean? What clues from the text help you to figure that out?</i></p>
<p><b>Pause and Connect</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>PAUSE:</b> After 10-15 minutes of lecture or learning of new information, ask students to Pause.</li> <li>2. <b>CONNECT:</b> Students should then reflect with a partner or small group by, using one or more of the following connections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Summarize: What have you learned so far?</li> <li>– Question: Students answer a focus question related to the content presented.</li> <li>– Highlight: What do you want to be sure to remember? (students can highlight in their notes)</li> <li>– Experience: What personal experiences have you had that connect with the content?</li> <li>– Predict: What do you predict will be covered next?</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<p><b>Whip Around</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask question (use type of question that can have many possible answers) and provide think time (3-5 seconds)</li> <li>2. Whip around the room (up and down rows, counterclockwise around room, etc.) as students quickly say their answer with no intervening comments by the teacher or other students.</li> </ol>

<p><b>Talking Chips</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Place students in groups of 3-4.</li> <li>2. Pass out 2-3 “talking chips” to each student, i.e., items such as counting chips, buttons, paper squares, M&amp;Ms, etc.</li> <li>3. Ask discussion question. Students then discuss. As students contribute to discussion, they place a talking chip in the center of the table.</li> <li>4. Group discussion continues until each student in the group has used all of his/her chips. When a student has used up all of his/her chips, he/she no longer talks. Meanwhile, teacher monitors group discussions and takes notes.</li> <li>3. Teacher signals to bring group back together and then shares notes and/or call on 2-3 students to share out key points from group discussion.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Four Corners</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Label each corner of the room with a content-relevant number, name, word, or phrase, i.e., Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree; Multiple Choice—A, B, C, D, four key characters from the text, etc.</li> <li>2. Pass out index card to each student. Ask question and have students individually write down the corner they would like to choose. They should then turn over their card without talking.</li> <li>3. Say “Four Corners!” which signals students to move to their chosen corner.</li> <li>4. At the corner, students find a partner and discuss their answer and their rationale for choosing it.</li> </ol> <p><u>Examples</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Which character from the text is the most stubborn? Be ready to cite text evidence to back up your answer.</li> <li>– Choose one of the posted four words and use it in two sentences that are at least eight words long each.</li> <li>– Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: Frankenstein was a novel where the monsters behaved humanely and the humans behaved like monsters. Be ready to cite text evidence to back up your answer.</li> <li>– Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: Frankenstein was a novel where the monsters behaved humanely and the humans behaved like monsters. Be ready to cite text evidence to back up your answer.</li> <li>– Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: In Chapter 4 of A Separate Peace, Gene is responsible for Ginny’s fall. Be ready to cite text evidence to back up your answer.</li> </ul>

## Written Responses

TECHNIQUE	IMPLEMENTATION STEPS
<b>Think-Write-Pair-Share</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assign partners and designate partner roles (i.e., A-B partners, 1-2 partners, peanut butter-jelly partners, etc.)</li> <li>2. <b>THINK:</b> Ask question and provide think time (3-5 seconds)</li> <li>3. <b>WRITE:</b> Direct students to write their answer. While students are writing, use a clipboard and paper to record student's ideas as you walk around and monitor responses.</li> <li>4. <b>PAIR:</b> Direct students to what they've written with partner (can designate who shares first—i.e., A's share, then B's); if their partner shares something they didn't have, they may add it to their answer</li> <li>5. <b>SHARE:</b> Place clipboard with notes under a document camera and share out to whole class.</li> </ol>
<b>Think-Write-Show</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>THINK:</b> Ask question and provide think time</li> <li>2. <b>WRITE:</b> Direct students to write their answer.</li> <li>3. <b>SHOW:</b> Direct students to hold up their board and show what they've written. This is a great opportunity for the teacher to formatively assess, provide feedback, and adjust instruction as necessary.</li> </ol>
<b>Quick Write /Quick Draw</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask question or give prompt.</li> <li>2. Direct students write or draw answer (short timeframe)</li> <li>3. Give signal to finish, i.e., "Finish your sentence/picture. Put down your pencil and look up when you're done."</li> <li>4. Have students share work—individually, in partners, or small groups.</li> </ol>
<b>Roundtable</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Place students in groups of four.</li> <li>2. Ask question or give topic/problem.</li> <li>3. Direct students to simultaneously respond to the question by writing or drawing (or using manipulatives)</li> <li>4. Provide signal for when time is up</li> <li>5. Direct student to pass their papers one person clockwise</li> <li>6. Students then continue to add to what was already on the paper.</li> </ol>

# Action Responses

TECHNIQUE	IMPLEMENTATION STEPS
<p><b>Show Me</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish with students the appropriate response signal (i.e., thumbs up, show the number of fingers, stand up, hands on head, etc.)</li> <li>2. Ask question and provide think time.</li> <li>3. Say "Show Me"; students respond.</li> </ol> <p><u>Examples</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Thumbs up if what I say is an example of the word reluctant; thumbs down if it is not.</li> <li>- Stand up if the word I say has the same beginning sound as mat.</li> <li>- Say and hold up a finger for each sound you hear in cup.</li> <li>- Hands on your head if these two words are synonyms. Touch your toes if they are antonyms.</li> <li>- Before you spell the word, tap each sound you hear on your desk.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Response Cards</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Direct students to write possible responses in each corner of index card (i.e., A-B-C-D) OR on front and back of response card (Yes/No, Agree/Disagree, etc.) OR use prepared response cards</li> <li>2. Ask question or give prompt.</li> <li>3. Students privately select number/letter/word answer from response card</li> <li>4. On teacher's signal, students hold up response card for teacher to see</li> <li>5. Teacher monitors responses for student understanding of skill or strategy and provides feedback and reteaching as needed.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Act It Out!</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask question where the answer can be physically demonstrated</li> <li>2. Have students "act it out" either in partners or small groups</li> <li>3. Call on 3-5 students to share with class</li> </ol> <p><u>Examples</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One of our vocabulary words is reluctant. Show your partner what your face looks like when you're reluctant to do something</li> <li>- Number students off into groups of three. Assign 1's a character, 2's a character, and 3's a character. Students act out pages _ of the text.</li> </ul>

## Touch/Point

The Touch/Point method is particularly useful for teachers of primary students. Students should “show” their work or thinking by touching or pointing. The request of touching/pointing should ring throughout the lesson.

### Examples

- Put your finger on the title of the book.
- Touch the letter.
- Put your finger on the word.
- Point to the answer in the text for the following question: Why did Meg’s book fall in the puddle?

Note: A simple directive such as “put your finger on the answer” followed by “Now, check your partner,” helps increase the amount of students on task and in the right place (Archer & Hughes, 2011)

Resources: Archer, A.L. & Hughes, C.A. (2011). *Explicit instruction: effective and efficient teaching*; Lemov, D. (2015). *Teach like a champion 2.0*