

Think-Pair-Share

This is a well known collaborative structure that is adapted here for classroom work with English learners. As the name indicates, the activity has three moments:

Think: The teacher asks one or two questions for students to consider. In order to see what they are thinking, and to provide further scaffolding to them if needed, the teacher asks students to jot down key elements of their answer using words or phrases, but not complete sentences. Depending on the complexity of the questions, the teacher may assign between three and five minutes for students to jot down their ideas. In the meantime, the teacher circulates around the classroom monitoring and checking what students have written. An empty piece of paper may be an indication that the student needs support from the teacher.

Pair: Students are asked to form dyads. There are many ways of doing this, depending on time available, the nature of the questions, or even what time of the day it is (classes immediately after lunch may require opportunities for movement).

Share: Dyads orally share their responses with each other. All students should be ready — if called upon — to present to the class their partner's responses first, and then their own.

Scaffolding: bridging, schema building

