First Pair Reading Activity

This strategy is designed to immediately transfer what the student is learning from short-term into long-term memory through focused academic conversations in student pairs. This provides students the opportunity to develop a basic understanding and personal interpretation of the material being presented.

Steps of the Process

1. The students are divided into pairs or triads. Teachers may assign all of the pair/triads, randomly select pairs/triads or a combination of both. However, it is advisable for teachers to select the reading pairs/triads if:
   - a number of students possess limited background with the material to be read,
   - their reading level is below that of the text, and
   - the text is complex or is fact and process laden.

2. The teacher assigns the pair/triad to read silently a section of the text (this may vary from paragraphs to pages; charts and diagrams; maps, matrices and lists of directions).

3. The students or the teacher may chose who is to be either the Listener or the Recaller.

4. The Recaller will read the text silently and will be expected to recall the important and significant information in the text. The Recaller may take notes, make charts, or draw pictures and symbols to more clearly and accurately represent the “gist” of the text. The goal is to translate the text into the Recaller’s own words, insights, and interpretations and not a rereading of the text.

5. The Listener will read the text silently and will wait patiently while the Recaller completes reading the text and note taking. The teacher may assign the Listener to help the Recaller read the text.
   Options - The Listener may also be asked to:
   • create “Teacher Like Questions” to ask the Recaller. (No T/F or Yes/No).
   • take notes and/or draw a graphic representation of the assigned material.

6. When both have completed their assigned roles the Recaller closes their text, faces their partner and shares what they remember using their memory, notes, and/or drawings. The Listener, while facing their partner with their text open so the Recaller cannot see it, has the primary role to be supportive and encouraging while pointing out important parts of the text the Recaller may have left out, quickly skipped over, or presented inaccurately.

7. Together the Recaller and Listener attempt to generate a short statement about what they have read. They may fill out a Flow Chart or Sequence of Events Graphic Organizer to record the key terms, facts, events, and concepts they just read.

8. All this time the teacher is walking around the room monitoring and intervening where needed, but, more importantly, is listening to the pair/triad share and discuss the content they have just read to determine the students who not only understood the text or are confused but also their depth and breadth of understanding. This will prove invaluable to guide the teacher’s lesson.

9. Finally, the teacher randomly calls on several of the Listener’s to summarize what they read, what they heard from their partner(s), and/or what they had discussed.

10. The students now switch the roles of Recaller and Listener and the process is repeated.