

How To: Use Inside-Outside Circle

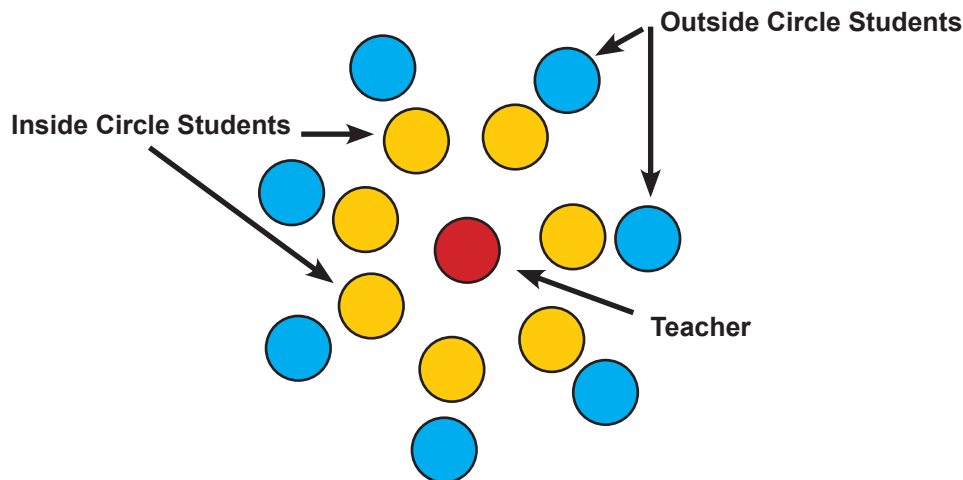
DQ3: HELPING STUDENTS PRACTICE AND DEEPEN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF NEW KNOWLEDGE

Element 15

Organizing Students

Kagan and Kagan (2009) outline a cooperative grouping strategy called **Inside-Outside Circle** that allows movement and is an excellent way to have the students summarize and review information or extend thinking.

Students form two circles, one within the other. Each circle will have the same number of students. The students in the inner circle turn outward and the outside circle turns inward so the students are facing each other. The teacher poses a question or presents a problem and the students discuss their thoughts, solutions and ideas with the person they are facing. When the discussion time is up, the teacher has one of the circles move to the left to face a new partner. These new partners share and compare their answers or solutions with each other and then the teacher asks the students to share with the whole group. The teacher might ask how the partner discussions changed (or didn't change) their thinking. These steps can be repeated until all of the questions have been addressed or until times runs out.



Things to consider in managing this strategy:

- The teacher can ask the students find a partner initially or can number the students off (1, 2) to help form the circles.
- The teacher can stand inside the circle to oversee the process. This will allow the teacher to be in close proximity to all students and will encourage student engagement in the activity.
- The teacher could ask the students to turn around to the center and face her when they have finished their discussion. This step will allow the teacher to quickly monitor who is still working.

- When asking the students to move to their new partners, the teacher can skip students and say “move two students to the left or 5 students to the right to keep the movement process from getting monotonous.
- The questions posed should be short answer and use higher level thinking skills. They should not require paper and pencil.
- Cards with questions could be provided instead of the teacher asking the question each time. Provide one set for the inside circle and a different set for the outside circle to allow everyone to be the question poser.
- The teacher should discuss and model active listening, the correct way to coach, giving and accepting praise and constructive criticism before the activity begins.