# PAIRING

In pairing, students interact with a partner to complete their work requirements. This strategy sometimes appears so obvious that its full potential often is neglected. It is an excellent introductory structure for a teacher who has displayed some initial interest in co-operative learning arrangements. The skills gained during this activity can be used in many other activities associated with learning in a team situation.

To introduce the basic pairing arrangement:

1. Ask students to form into pairs.
2. Outline a particular task to be completed by each pair of students.

If there is an 'extra' student left over after the pairs have been organized, try the following options:

a. The teacher can become the partner (but be careful; the 'last' child may have difficulty socializing with other children, and may simply prefer to work with the teacher);
b. Form one 3-way group, and ask them to share the activities.
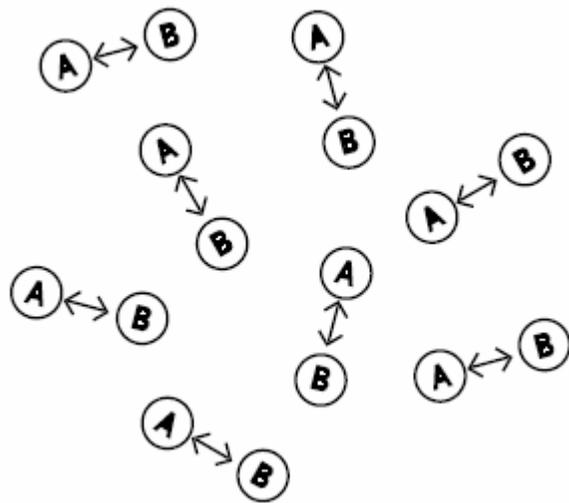
Variations

1. Pair-Check (Spencer Kagan):
a. Students divide into pairs.
b. Each student is given a problem to complete.
c. When they finish, they take turns to check their partner's answer, and then praise their partner for their efforts. Roles are then reversed.

2. Think-Pair-Share (Spencer Kagan):
a. Divide the students into pairs.
b. The class is asked a question by the teacher.
c. Each person silently thinks about the possible answer for at least five seconds (this amount of time can vary widely).
d. Partners turn to each other, and discuss possible answers.
e. The teacher then asks for one pair to share their answer with the class.

3. Moving Circles:
a. Form two concentric circles, with half of the students in the outside circle, and half on the inside.
b. Create pairs by linking an inside person with an outside person.

(N.B. It becomes an easy matter to constantly reform the pairs; the outside circle merely needs to be moved one place to the left. In fact, this strategy has been used in activities such as bushdancing for many

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ALPHABET CARDS IN THE APPENDIX