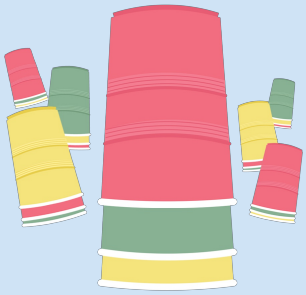
INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES



Try It, Talk It, Color It, Check It

This strategy is a quick way to scan the room and know exactly how students are feeling about their work. Students are given the opportunity to Try an approach, Talk it out with a group, display a Color of cup that reflects their understanding, and then Check their work as a whole group. While great for math classes to test out problem solving techniques, this strategy is also a great way to get scaffolded support in understanding for any content area.

TRY IT, TALK IT, COLOR IT, CHECK IT

Summary

Provide each group or pair of students three cups: green, yellow, and red. Green means "We got it and can teach others!" Yellow means "We are a bit uncertain." Red means "We need help. We may be wrong." (This could be done alternatively with sticky notes.) Provide a question or problem that you would like students to engage with, then have students follow the procedure below. Additionally, consider displaying the procedural steps in the classroom for students to reference.

Procedure

1. **TRY IT**: Work out the problem independently.
2. **TALK IT**: Discuss your strategy to solve the problem with a partner and decide on one final answer. (Virtually, this can be done in breakout rooms.)
3. **COLOR IT**: Place the red, yellow, or green cup at the top of the stack of cups to indicate your confidence in your final answer. (Digitally, this can be done with sticky notes through tools like Canva, Google Slides, or Figma.)
4. **CHECK IT**: Debrief with the whole class and share your work. Ask questions and make corrections if needed.

While students are in the **TALK IT** step, circulate the room and listen to discussions. Use what you hear to inform which students you plan to call on for the **CHECK IT** step.

Use the **COLOR IT** step as a formative assessment. Check on students who display a yellow or red cup. Challenge students who display a green cup to approach the problem differently or defend their answer.

Taplin, A. (2019, December 20). A Strategy for Boosting Student Engagement in Math. Edutopia. https://www.edutopia.org/article/strategy-boosting-student-engagement-math