

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES



Responsive Circle

Responsive circle is a strategy that builds a positive classroom community through discussion. It can be used for academic, conflict, and proactive community-building discussions with teachers and students.

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RESPONSIVE CIRCLE

Summary

Responsive circles, also known as community circles, are used to help teachers lead discussions with their students. These discussions give students voice and choice in sharing their responses. A circle can be adjusted for a variety of topics. Teachers can present new content, discuss community building topics, and help the class reflect on behavior and discuss ways to improve the classroom environment.

Procedure

1. Choose a topic: academic, behavioral, or community building.
2. In advance:
 - Prepare a set of open-ended questions, including a check-in question about how students are feeling or what they are doing that day, and a reflection question for the end.
 - Create norms for the circle.
 - Choose a talking piece or object to be passed around (ball, bean bag, stuffed animal).
3. Have students sit in a circle.
4. Introduce the topic for the circle and cover the norms for the discussion.
5. Start with the check-in and pass the talking piece to the first student.
6. Have students pass the talking piece around the circle until each student has had an opportunity to speak or pass.
7. Continue the process until all the prepared questions have been shared and students have had the opportunity to respond.
8. End the circle with a reflection question and thank the students for participating.