



## **Sweet Talk**

Sweet Talk is a student grouping strategy in which students create their own groups by selecting preferred items from a box and then respond to prompts that relate to their choices. This grouping strategy can be used in any subject area.

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## **SWEET TALK**

## **Summary**

Sweet Talk is a flexible grouping strategy that works especially well as an icebreaker activity. Students choose one of several different kinds of items (candy, manipulatives, etc.) from a box or tray that indicate a personal preference and then form groups based on the kind of item they selected. Sweet Talk places the locus of control on students, not the teacher.

## **Procedure**

This activity works with any items, not just candy.

- 1. Put 4 to 6 of each item type in a box. Have at least as many items as students.
- 2. Each student picks one item. Then they find others with the same item to form groups.
- 3. Assign each group a discussion prompt based on their item.
- 4. Give groups time to discuss their prompt.
- 5. Students switch to new groups with different items and discuss the same prompt again.

Repeat steps 2-5 as needed.

Alternate strategy application: Make and laminate cards with several category images on each card. Have each student choose a card. To group students, ask one to name one of the categories; students pair up with others who have the same item in that category.

Lukas Kiessling, Jonas Radbruch, Sebastian Schaube (2022) Self-Selection of Peers and Performance. Management Science 68(11): 8184-8201.