

Peer Assessment

Considerations for using peer assessment

- Let students know the rationale for doing peer review. Explain the expectations and benefits of engaging in a peer review process.
- Consider having students evaluate anonymous assignments for more objective feedback.
- Be prepared to give feedback on students' feedback to each other. Display some examples of feedback of varying quality and discuss which kind of feedback is useful and why.
- Give clear directions and time limits for in-class peer review sessions and set defined deadlines for out-of-class peer review assignments.
- Listen to group feedback discussions and provide guidance and input when necessary.
- Student familiarity and ownership of criteria tend to enhance peer assessment validity, so involve students in a discussion of the criteria used. Consider involving students in developing an assessment rubric.
- Complete a Fishbowl Conference to model peer assessment (see below)

Formative Peer-Assessment

Think-pair-share	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. In the first phase of this activity, the think step, students are asked to individually reflect and work out the answer to a question, or to reflect on a prompt.1. In the second pair step, students form pairs, and compare and discuss their
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	<p>individual responses. The objective of this step is to discuss the steps they took in arriving at the response, and to debate among each other.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">2. In the final share step, the students discuss the solution as a class. In situations where there is one right answer, the correct answer is revealed. For topics with no one single correct solution (ex. philosophy), students are instead exposed to a wide range of perspectives.
iClickers	<p>In a peer instruction activity described by Mazur (2009), instructors use iClickers, or another similar software to involve students in formative assessment.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Students are asked to select a solution to a multiple-choice question, with several different possible answers, using iClickers, another similar software, or by asking students to raise their hands. The responses are tallied and presented to the class.2. Students are asked to pair up with another student, or to form a small group with classmates who have selected different answers. The students spend several minutes discussing how they came up with their solution.3. The instructor once more asks students to answer the same multiple-choice question, allowing them to change their answer based on the feedback they gave and received from their peers. The new responses are tallied and presented to

	<p>the class. The instructor discusses the correct answer, and spends additional time on the material if many students select the incorrect answer.</p>
Peer Review	<p>Peer review is a process in which students both provide feedback to their peers about their work, and receive feedback about their own work. This method of peer assessment does not only benefit students because of the feedback they receive. As students make judgments about their peers' work, the actual process of producing feedback to their peers encourages students to engage with the assessment criteria more deeply, and to thereby reflect on their own work more effectively (Nicol, Thomson, and Breslin, 2014).</p> <p>In the formative assessment section of this module, we described a process of sequencing writing assignments. Peer review in this type of multi-stage drafting assignment replaces the formative feedback the instructor would otherwise give.</p> <p>Peer Review Strategy Guide Here</p> <p>How to Peer Review Here</p>
Think-Aloud Pair Problem Solving	<p>In this activity, adapted from Barkley, Cross and Major (2005), pairs of students are provided with a complex set of problems based on course material. Students take turns attempting to solve a problem, describing</p>

	their process step-by-step. The other student observes the problem-solving process and provides insights, asks questions about anything that is unclear, and provides suggestions, if necessary. The students then switch roles for the next problem.
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Getting Started with Peer Assessment

- Identify assignments or activities for which students might benefit from peer feedback.
- Consider breaking a larger assignment into smaller pieces and incorporating peer assessment opportunities at each stage. For example, assignment plan, sketch, revision, research, artist as inspiration, etc.
- Design criteria for checklists or rubrics with clearly defined tasks for the reviewer. Ideally co-create criteria with the students.
- Introduce rubrics through learning exercises to ensure students have the ability to apply the rubric effectively.
- Determine whether peer review activities will be conducted as in-class or out-of-class assignments. For out-of-class assignments, peer assessments can be facilitated through online digital tools.
- Help students learn to carry out peer assessment by modeling appropriate, constructive criticism and descriptive feedback through your own comments on student work and well-constructed rubrics.
- Incorporate small feedback groups where feedback on assignments can be explained and discussed with the receiver.

This video describes one way to implement effective peer assessment in the classroom. Watch as teachers and students from IS 223 (Brooklyn, NY) discuss peer assessment and reflect on its benefits. [Here](#)

Preparing Students for Self or Peer Assessment

The ability to assess the merits of one's own and others' work is a complex cognitive and social skill that requires guidance and practice in order to develop over time. This means that as teachers, we can't just ask our students to assess their own work or that of their peers. It is important to build in instructional opportunities for students to develop their capacities to provide substantive feedback and make informed judgements about what counts as good work in a particular domain of knowledge.

In order to provide thoughtful and detailed feedback, students need both guidance and practice in the following areas:

- How to give constructive feedback
- How to receive feedback
- How to generate assessment criteria (if students participate in the development of assessment criteria/standards)
- How to use a rubric/evaluation form to follow

To prepare students, it is useful to have a practice session where the instructor provides the rationale for using self- or peer assessment in the course, coaches students on how to perform this type of assessments using a well-designed rubric, answers student questions and provides an opportunity to practice these skills.

Clearly, the process would require some in-class time at the beginning, but the time-investment is well worthwhile, as it will lead to better self- and peer assessments and more positive response from students. It is also important to communicate to students, who are accustomed to teacher instructor-led assessments, the value of developing the skills of self- and peer assessment which are expected in the professional context. Help them

understand that improving these skills will help them in their future careers.

Watch as expert Dr. Heidi Andrade, Ed.D describes the key components for self- and peer assessment, explains why you should try it in your classroom, and reflects on her experience observing it in action. [Here](#)

Ask Yourself

- What can I do to help students see the value in the process of self or peer assessment?
- What strategies could I use in my own classroom to encourage students to provide meaningful peer feedback?

Fishbowl Conference [Here](#)

Addressing Students not knowing how to provide meaningful feedback try a Fishbowl Conference.

Fishbowl is **a strategy for organizing medium- to large-group discussions**. Students are separated into an inner and outer circle. In the inner circle or fishbowl, students have a discussion; students in the outer circle listen to the discussion and take notes.

Use a Fishbowl Conference to have students learn appropriate academic conversation around self and peer assessment.

Fishbowl Rationale [Here](#)

In a Fishbowl discussion, students seated inside the “fishbowl” actively participate in a discussion by asking questions and sharing their opinions, while students standing outside listen carefully to the ideas presented.

Students take turns in these roles, so that they practice being both contributors and listeners in a group discussion. This strategy is especially useful when you want to make sure all students participate in a discussion, when you want to help students reflect on what a good discussion looks like, and when you need a structure for discussing controversial or difficult topics. A Fishbowl discussion makes for an excellent pre-writing activity, often unearthing questions or ideas that students can explore more deeply in an independent assignment.