Response Journal 'Speed Dating'

The 'Speed Dating' Activity

Students complete Response Journals using the slightly modified Response Journal Guidelines at right.

Students form two concentric circles, and we begin with each student asking the student opposite for reactions to the text. After a few minutes have the outer circle move to the right three places, and chose another question (out of order) for students to talk about. The next time have the inner circle move five spaces, and so on.

The class can continue until all questions are asked. Then, with the class back in their seats, ask individuals in random order for the most interesting response they heard from a classmate, who then expands on the response deemed so interesting by the peer. This way *all* students both ask about and present their response to *every* question.

With a large class, two pairs of concentric circles might work better.

Response Journal Guidelines

- REACTIONS: Take time to write down your reaction to the text. If you're intrigued by certain statements or attracted to characters or issues, write your response.
- MAKE CONNECTIONS: What does the reading make you think of? Does it remind you of anything or anyone? Make connections with other texts or concepts or historic events. Do you see any similarities?
- ASK QUESTIONS: What perplexes you about a particular passage? Try beginning, "I wonder why..." or "I'm having trouble understanding how...' or "It perplexes me that..." or "I was surprised when ...."
- AGREE / DISAGREE: On what points, or about what issues, do you agree or disagree? 'Write down supporting ideas. Try arguing with the author. Think of your journal as a place to carry on a dialogue with the author.
- QUOTES: Write down striking words, images, phrases, or details. Speculate about them. Why did the author choose them? What do they add to the story? Why did you notice them? Divide your notebook page in half and copy words from the text onto the left side; write your responses on the right.
- POINT OF VIEW: How does the author's attitude shape the way the writer presents the material?

Guidelines adapted the Bard College Language and Thinking Program. Assignment modified by Eileen Bach from an idea on the AP Community