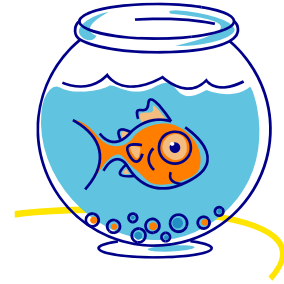


Fishbowl



Purpose: To allow a large group to participate in a discussion. Teacher takes a back seat, allowing students to carry the conversation.

Grouping: Whole class

You will need: Prepared question/s that students answer on paper prior to discussion.

Application: Five to eight chairs are arranged in an inner circle. This is the fishbowl. The remaining chairs are arranged in a circle outside the fishbowl. A group of students is assigned to fill the fishbowl, while the rest of the class sits on the chairs outside the fishbowl. In an **open fishbowl**, one chair is left empty. In a **closed fishbowl**, all chairs are filled. The teacher introduces the question and the participants begin discussion. The students outside the fishbowl listen in on the discussion.

In an open fishbowl, any member of the outer circle can, at any time, occupy the empty chair and join the fishbowl. When this happens, an existing member of the fishbowl must voluntarily leave the fishbowl and free a chair. The discussion continues with participants frequently entering and leaving the fishbowl. Depending on how large your group is, you can have many students spend some time in the fishbowl and taken part in the discussion. When time runs out, the fishbowl is closed and the teacher calls upon students to summarize the discussion.

In a closed fishbowl, the initial participants speak for some time. When all students in the inner circle have had an opportunity to share their thoughts, students from the outer circle may enter the fishbowl, tapping a student on the shoulder to gain access to the inner circle. The teacher can set limits as to how many taps are permitted to minimize distraction. Discussion continues until the teacher decides to close the fishbowl. Once again, students are asked to summarize the discussion.

Adapted from Wikipedia

Schaumburg #54 Gifted Resource Services, *Opening the Door to Gifted Education*, February 2, 2009, IAGC

