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## How to Use the Round Robin Discussion Teaching Strategies

By: [Janelle Cox](#)



Brainstorming is a process teachers use as part of their **teaching strategies** to help students generate ideas. It is a great educational tool that encourages critical thinking and student participation. Many teachers use these brainstorming **teaching strategies** to facilitate cooperative learning. In a traditional brainstorming session, students may be in a whole-group setting, where the teacher encourages students to raise their hands to share their ideas. Unfortunately, in this type of setting, not all students get the opportunity to share their opinions. However, when using the Round Robin discussion **teaching strategies**, all students in the group get an equal chance to share.

Here we will take a brief look at what the Round Robin discussion strategy is and how you can effectively use it in your classroom.

### Teaching Strategies: The Round Robin

The Round Robin strategy is a brainstorming strategy where students are situated around a table in an academic discussion. Like other brainstorming sessions, students generate ideas on a specific topic or question. However, with this strategy, there is equal participation among students as well as multiple discussions taking place.

- **Equal Participation** – The most effective thing about this strategy is that each student within the group has an equal opportunity to participate in the discussion. One student leads the discussion, then each student takes her turn voicing their opinion on the topic. In some cases, one student will be assigned the recorder where their job is to record everything that each student says. If the teacher finds that students are talking out of turn then sometimes they will use "Talking chips," where students must turn in one chip each time they voice their opinion.
- **Group Discussions** – Tables are arranged around the classroom and positioned so that there are multiple brainstorming discussions taking place at one time. When the timer goes off or when the teachers says, each group moves to another table where the topic is different. Once groups have rotated to all tables, the Round Robin discussion strategy is over.

### How to Use it

Follow these steps to effectively use the Round Robin Discussion strategy in your classroom.

Steps:

1. The best way to implement this strategy into your classroom is to first think of the topic that you want students to discuss.
2. Next, decide on the amount of questions or topics you would like to be discussed so you know how many tables/groups you will need.
3. Arrange the desks or tables so that discussion flows nicely and students can move about easily. Also, consider the placement so that groups won't be distracted by other groups.
4. Give each table one discussion sheet (preferably a different color) along with a variety of different-colored pens (this will help distinguish groups from one another). Assign one person the leader of the group and another the recorder.
5. Set a timer for each group. Also, give groups tokens so when it's each student's turn to talk, they must turn in a token. This helps the groups move along.
6. Once each group has gone (and before they move to the next group), have the leader present their group's ideas.

### Tips to Making it Effective

Follow these tips to ensure that you are implementing an effective brainstorming discussion strategy.

- Try to make groups as diverse as you can. Do not make them too small or too large. The ideal size is about four students to a group, two boys and two girls.
- After posing the question or topic idea, make sure that you give students a few minutes to think about it versus having them answer right away. The ideal think time is about one to three minutes.
- Use the three-step method when implanting this strategy: 1. Pose the question (What are the planets in our solar system). 2. Have students take turns brainstorming the answers (mars, earth, etc.). 3. Have the recorder write down the answers then the leader read them back to the group.

Use the Round Robin Discussion teaching strategies to ensure equal participation by all students as well as a means to enhance a collaborative group learning environment.

**How do you use the Round Robin Discussion teaching strategies in your classroom? Do you find this technique to be an effective method to use? Please share your input in the comment section below, we would love to hear what you have to say.**

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Janelle Cox is an education writer who uses her experience and knowledge to provide creative and original writing in the field of education. Janelle holds Masters of Science in Education from the State University of New York College at Buffalo. She is a contributing writer to TeachHUB.com, TeachHUB Magazine, and Hey Teach. She was also the Elementary Education Expert for [About.com](https://www.about.com) for five years. You can follow her on Twitter [@EmpoweringK6ed](https://twitter.com/EmpoweringK6ed), on Facebook at [Empowering K6 Educators](https://www.facebook.com/EmpoweringK6Educators), or contact her at [Janellecox78@yahoo.com](mailto:Janellecox78@yahoo.com).

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