

IMPROVING CLASSROOM DISCUSSIONS

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Learning which significantly influences behavior is self-discovered, self-appropriated learning.



Discussion includes a variety of teaching approaches which focus on two-way spoken communication between the teacher and the students, and more importantly, among the students themselves.



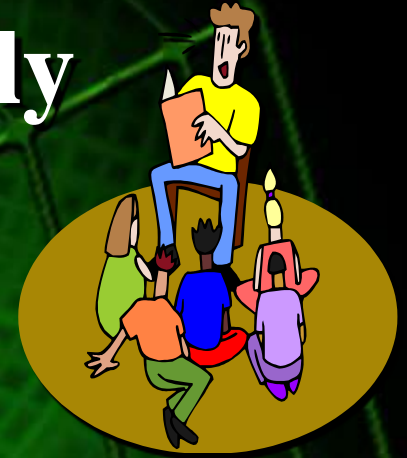
Strengths of Discussion Approaches

- provide the teacher with *feedback about student learning*
- appropriate for higher cognitive objectives
- appropriate for affective objectives
- allow students to be more active participants in their learning

Weaknesses of Discussion Approaches

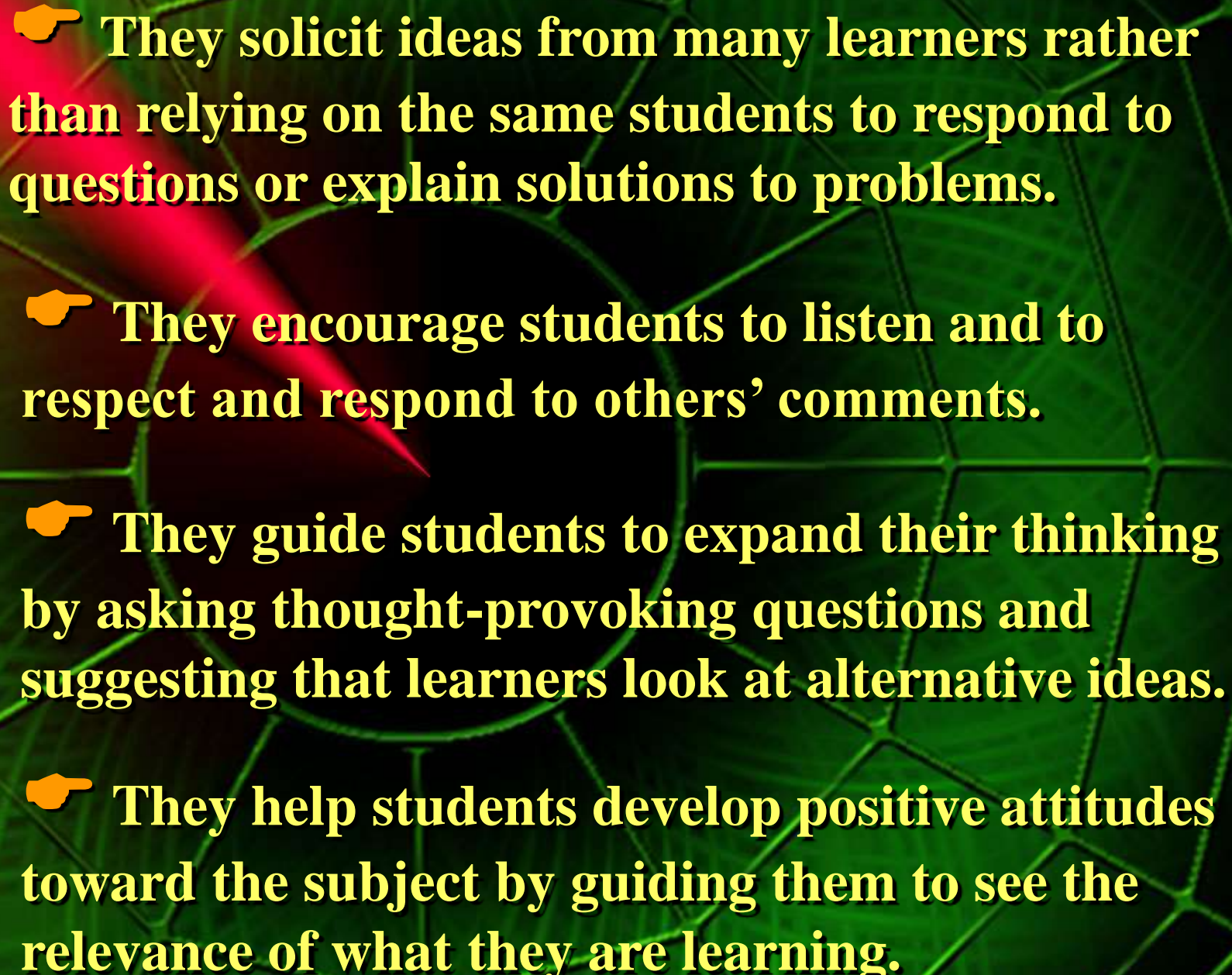
- difficult to get student participation
- time-consuming
- not well suited to covering significant amounts of content
- require more forethought than do lectures
- less teacher control

Leading Discussions Effectively



Characteristics of effective discussion leaders:

- They involve all class members in the discussion.
- They give students time to share their thinking.
- They make certain that those who wish to explain their ideas have the opportunity to do so.

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- **They solicit ideas from many learners rather than relying on the same students to respond to questions or explain solutions to problems.**
 - **They encourage students to listen and to respect and respond to others' comments.**
 - **They guide students to expand their thinking by asking thought-provoking questions and suggesting that learners look at alternative ideas.**
 - **They help students develop positive attitudes toward the subject by guiding them to see the relevance of what they are learning.**

Discussion Techniques

1. TURN TO YOUR NEIGHBOR



2. THINK-PAIR-SHARE



3. THINK-PAIR-SQUARE-SHARE

4. ROUND ROBIN



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5. Line-Ups

- ⇒ Students line up to some criterion
- ⇒ The teacher poses a question or problem
- ⇒ The line folds
 - ⇒ Students discuss with the person in front of them
 - ⇒ Have volunteers share with the entire class or randomly call on students

6. Value Lines

- The teacher reads a statement
- Each student stands on one side or the other of an imaginary line (for or against the issue)
- Students turn to their neighbor to discuss why they agreed or disagreed with the statement
- Each pair turns to another pair across the line and discusses why they believe the way they do
- Randomly call on an individual to share with the class

Frequently Asked Questions about Discussion

- ➔ **What mechanisms can I use to keep the discussion going?**
- ➔ **What can I do if a discussion falls apart? How can I keep it from dying?**
- ➔ **How can I best keep conversation flowing without lapsing into long silences or a lecture?**



➔ How can I promote discussion in a large class so that more than just the vocal few are involved?

➔ How do you get everyone participating, especially the quiet ones, without putting them on the spot?

➔ How do you handle "discussion monopolizers"?

How can I evaluate discussions?

"To grade or not to grade"

The Not-to-Grade Approach

- Make participation the norm

The Graded Approach

- Teacher assigns grade
- Peers assign grade
- Students self-evaluate

The Indirect Approach

Make exam questions or written assignments reflect class discussions and activities.

Be A Smart Teacher

Thank You!!

- www.roletech.net

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