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## Think, pair, share


An outgrowth of 'natural' teaching techniques

- instructor question/student response

Adaptable to any size or configured classroom  
Structures student discussion, improves focus  
Provides opportunities for participation for typical non-participants  
Enables instructors to get immediate feedback on what is working, what is not

Lyman, F. T. (1981). The responsive classroom discussion: The inclusion of all students. In A. Anderson (Ed.), *Mainstreaming Digest* (pp. 109-113). College Park: University of Maryland Press.





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## The 'thinking' part

Similar to an in-class reaction paper

- Set a time limit
- Pose a question/problem for students to ponder
- Ask students to think about or write down their response or reaction





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## The ‘pairing’ part

Students swap ideas/responses

- It can literally be a pair
- It can be a square (two pairs)
- It can be a larger number of students
- Consider the logistics before the first time you do this—time and trouble of making it work:
  - Driven by class size/room configuration
  - Works for 2 or more students, works very well with 100-120—there may be some upper limit





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## The “sharing” part

- Pair (or group) reports back to the entire class
- Notetaker, write on the board or overhead
- “Saturate” on one or two points (that’s what students get)
- Take outliers into account (these can be novel ways of thinking, or misunderstandings)


Elaborated example in practice: assessing evidence-based preference for different welfare state types in terms of desired public policy outcomes




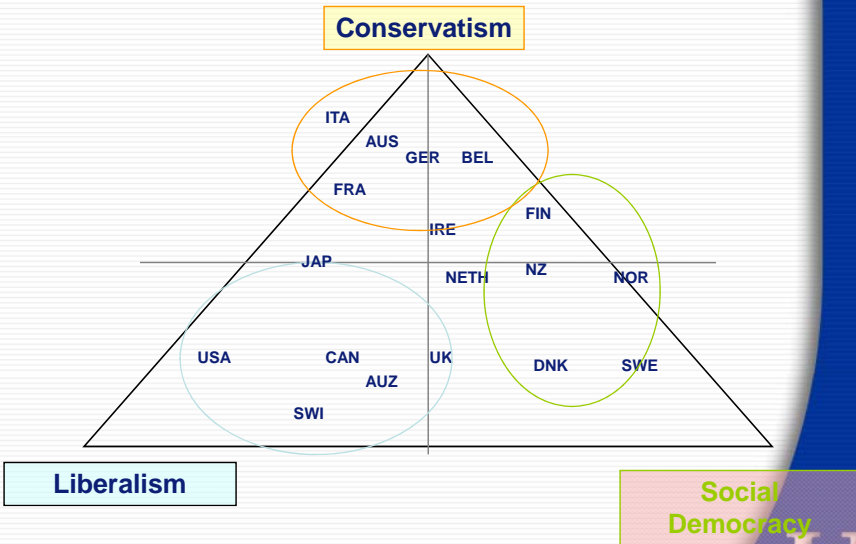

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## Where do you want to live?

Appointed Health, Education, Pension/Employment Ministers for pairs of developed countries  
 Each Minister needed ten pieces of information for each country  
 Ministers of the country pairs swapped data  
 Homework: pick a country, write up why  
 Pair, share: Three ministers have a 'cabinet' mtg  
 Pick their 'best' country, explain why to class




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**Conservatism**

ITA AUS GER BEL  
 FRA IRE FIN  
 JAP NETH NZ NOR  
 USA CAN AUZ UK  
 SWI DNK SWE

**Liberalism**

**Social Democracy**



## What “think-pair-share” helps an instructor accomplish

1. Active, collaborative learning, teamwork
2. Self expression
3. Synthesis, critical thinking
4. Assessment
5. Connections among students, between instructor and students (especially in large classes)