

FISHBOWL

An effective strategy for helping students reflect on what they learned and experienced throughout a project-based learning unit as a whole group is the fishbowl protocol.

Within this protocol, two circles are created, one inside of the other. Students that sit within the inside circle are the only ones that can respond to or discuss the question that is being considered. As students in the outside circle have something to say or contribute to the conversation, they can tap a student sitting within the inside circle on the shoulder and take their place.

DIRECTIONS:

Setup two circles of chairs with 4-6 chairs in the inner circle and enough chairs for the rest of the class within the outer circle. If this format is not conducive to your classroom or space, set 4-6 chairs at the front of the classroom either facing the rest of the class or in a circle (this will serve as the inner circle).

Begin by describing the purpose of the two circles to the students and ask a framing question to begin the discussion. For example, a framing question may be "What were the main things that you learned during the course of our project-based learning unit?"

After asking the question, have students who have something to share or say on that topic move to the chairs in the inner-circle.

As the conversation begins to die out, ask more focused questions related to what they learned. For example, you could ask "What did you learn about (a certain standard or skill)?", "What surprised you during the unit?", or "What would you do differently in future units?"

One way to ensure that all students contribute to the conversation is to let them know that you expect them to be a part of the inner-circle at least 2-3 times during the discussion. You can keep track of this by putting tally marks next to each students' name, or by giving each student 2-3 chips or tokens and having them give you one each time they enter the inner-circle.

