



BUZZ GROUPS

Purpose	<p><i>Buzz Groups</i> make it possible for students to talk to each other, even in large groups, without having to re-arrange the setup of the room.</p> <p>The technique allows participants to exchange ideas in order to activate their prior knowledge, to help them gain reassurance, and to hear different opinions. It can be used to reduce the amount of time the instructor would otherwise spend answering questions in class. In addition, <i>Buzz Groups</i> encourage informal conversations (at least initially) that can help reduce anxiety for students who would not be comfortable speaking in front of the whole group. Because participants only interact with their peers, they are more likely to share their own perspectives freely.</p>								
Directions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The instructor pauses their lecture. 2. Students are asked to form pairs or groups of three with their immediate seatmate(s) and to exchange ideas about a given topic for a short amount of time. 3. A clear, audible signal (bell; clapped hands; cellphone timer) indicates the end of the <i>Buzz Groups</i>. 4. After the <i>Buzz Groups</i> end, the instructor either continues with their lecture, or four to five small groups present the most relevant ideas or conclusions drawn from their discussions to the whole class. <p>Examples for guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Up to this point, what have I understood? What is still unclear? — How can I apply the content in practice? — How do we think we should proceed from here? — What have I noted down as important so far? 								
Parameters	<table border="0"> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 20px;">Group size:</td> <td>flexible</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Time required:</td> <td>5 minutes max.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Setup:</td> <td>flexible</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Materials:</td> <td>bell/timer, if desired</td> </tr> </table>	Group size:	flexible	Time required:	5 minutes max.	Setup:	flexible	Materials:	bell/timer, if desired
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Helpful Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — <i>Buzz Groups</i> can be used repeatedly within the same session. — The technique is useful for phases when the group appears tired or in need of a short break. — It can also be helpful to allow for a short exchange among participants when the group appears restless or inattentive. — Depending on the complexity of the question, it might make sense to display the prompt in writing. 								
Online Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — in heiCONF, via breakout rooms 								

Adapted from:
Wahl, D. (2013). *Lernumgebungen erfolgreich gestalten: Vom trägen Wissen zum kompetenten Handeln*. Bad Heilbrunn: Klinkhardt.
Klein, Z. M. (2013). *Kreative Seminarmethoden* (7th ed.). Offenbach: Gabal.



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