

360° Directions

Purpose: To find out how individual or small group ideas are the same or different than the larger group. To answer the question, “How are our ideas related to others in our class?” and “How can viewing other ideas help us clarify and stretch our own ideas?”

Starting Position

Create an expression (written, drawn, and/or recorded) of ideas.

Actions

1. Place small groups of learners and their expression of ideas around the walls or tables of the room so that there is some space between groups to help with noise from small group conversations.
2. Ask learners to huddle around their own expression and look carefully at the details.
3. Ask learners to face the facilitator who is standing in the center of the room on a specific cue - such as a bell or hand clap. Wait for all learners to both face the facilitator and stay in their group before giving directions.
4. Establish the first recorder for each group. Pass out small slips of paper or post it note to one person from each small group, who has strong skills in recording a few of the group’s ideas. Give each group a different colored pen or post it notes for accountability - or ask the recorder to write down the names of all group members when they leave notes.
5. Ask learners to move to the next group’s expression and huddle around it when the facilitator says “go”. Tell learners that when they arrive they will just look in silence - no talking for 30 seconds at the new expression to see the details. Tell learners that they are searching for things that are the same and different than their own expression.
6. Wait for 30 seconds then invite learners to have an open exchange to find out what their group members noticed. Ask a recorder to jot down a note on a post it note for the group who created it letting them know what your group noticed that was the same and different. Leave the note behind when the facilitator calls time. Give about 3 minutes for an open exchange and writing the note. Remind learners that the only rule with open exchange is that all members of the group must both give and get ideas.
7. Ask learners to face the center before moving to the next group. Change who the recorder will be. Give the signal and have learners arrive at the next expression in silence. Then repeat the Open Exchange and Note Taking.

Return and Reflect

8. Continue as time permits. Ask learners to pass by an expression to save time. Ask learners to end at their own expression. Require them to look again in silence, noticing the notes that were left from the other groups, thinking about patterns they have seen around the room, and identifying revisions of their own expression that might they do.