

Elbow Exchange

Instructional Goal: Share and further ideas, questions, knowledge

Why use an *Elbow Partner Exchange*?

As one teacher says, “If students don’t have prior knowledge it is hard to ease them into actual lessons. However, during an Elbow Partner Exchange, students talk about what will happen, unfamiliar vocabulary or terms, or integers they are going to use... to make sure they understand the basics.”

Elbow partner, Turn and Exchange Directions

Goal

1. State the goal or reason for the Elbow Exchange. Typically, teachers use an Elbow Exchange to give students an opportunity to check and clarify their thinking while gaining feedback from a peer. Responses can be gathered by the teacher to ensure that all students are comprehending the lesson.

Starting Position

1. Provide participants a few moments to think about their ideas, questions, and/or answers.

Action Pattern

2. Ask participants to turn to an elbow partner (someone’s whose elbow is near one of your elbows).
3. Give participants a minute or two to exchange an idea or question. It is an exchange where the ideas or questions are like gifts; everyone should be sure to give one and receive one in the allotted amount of time.

Return and Reflect

4. Ask partners to return to silent thinking for them self. Ask participants to note how their thinking was confirmed or changed by exchanging with an elbow partner. Participants might share out how their thinking changed.

How to Begin Using Roles

Introduce “roles” with students by starting with a task to be completed with an “Elbow Partner Exchange.” Usually when partners are assigned roles they complete their task and then change roles so that each partner does both roles. Once students know the routines then the roles can easily be used along with rounds in groups of three, four, and teams.

Elbow Exchange		
Partner 1	Partner 2	Directions
Questioner	Speaker	Questioner finds out from partner. Speaker shares question or summary.
Summarizer	Detail Adder	Summarizer sums-up lesson or main idea of a reading. Detail adder adds to the summary a vocabulary word or connection to a previous lesson, or a question.

Recorder Note-taker	Presenter Summarizer	A recorder jots down notes from a short discussion with an elbow partner. Together they star the most important points or questions in the notes. Then the Summarizers reports out to the class a summary of the discussion.
Problem Solver	Problem Checker	Problem solver shares answer and strategy used to solve a problem. Problem checker monitors if the solution and strategy shared were the same or different than his/her own work.
Word Definer	Word Illustrator	Word definer offers a definition for a vocabulary word. Word illustrator makes the meaning visible by using the word in a problem or sentence, drawing the meaning or suggesting synonyms.