Fishbowl

Provides support for Reading:

After

Description:

The fishbowl is a classroom discussion strategy. The strategy is useful in engaging students in discussions, giving students autonomy, and modeling discussions. It is particularly helpful in large classes.   The strategy helps build deep questioning skills, attention to detail, discussion etiquette and confidence.

Sharing the Strategy with Students:

1) The class watches a video, reads an article, or works on a lab.
2) Students and or the teacher write questions on index cards about the focus topic.
3) The class is divided into a small inner circle of students (4 or 5 students in the fishbowl) surrounded by an outer ring of students.   This can be a random selection, or by teacher choice.
4) The students in the center start discussing the topic using the questions on the index cards.
5) Students in the outside circle also have a role that can be varied depending on the goals of the class. The outer ring students can:
   a. Take notes and provide written suggestions to help move the discussion forward by tapping a student in the center circle and handing them their note. An alternative to this is that students from the outer circle can take the place of a student in the fishbowl by tapping in.
   b. Keep two-column notes of the discussion by writing questions asked in the left and answers provided in the right column
   c. Keep track of the types of comments the fishbowl members make (? Questions, C connections, I inference, T use of text to comment, P for prediction). This gives the students feedback on the variety and types of comments made during their discussion.
6) It is helpful to either give students discussion rules and guideline or have the class come up with the rules and etiquette themselves.

Video Example:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RwxnBv-dNBI