

Collaborative Learning Techniques

Collaborative learning techniques (CLTs) refer to how the group is arranged. We can use these with an activity idea to help run our session. You can often arrange the group in different ways and use the same (or very similar) activity. This is especially useful when you have a larger or smaller group of students than you were expecting, as you can often keep the same activity and just arrange the group differently. Below are some CLTs you could use in your sessions:

Group Discussion

Discuss ideas or questions with the entire group. Students can contribute to the conversation if they want to.

Turn to a partner

Split the group into pairs (and a 3 if there's an odd number) to work on an activity.

Individual presentation

One member of the group presents an answer, topic, or discussion to the group.

Clusters

Split the group into subgroups – you may let the students choose who they want to work with or you may allocate groups. Get each group to work on the same question or topic.

Think, pair, share

You give students time to think on their own about a topic or question, before turning to a partner to discuss further, and then finally sharing with the whole group. Try to have a slightly different thing to do at each stage of the activity.

Assigned discussion leader

A participant gives their answer or interpretation of a topic and then leads the group discussion.

Jigsaw

Split your activity into multiple parts and allocate each part to a different group – the activity should be reliant on every group doing their bit.

Group survey

Each member of the group gives their opinion or answer to a question or topic.