

14. THREE-STEP INTERVIEW

Approx. duration: 45-60 min

Groups of: 4-6

Competencies involved: S, L, W, R

Level: All

Required Material

- Notebook or piece of paper and pen
- Whiteboard and marker (optional)

Activity Description

This is an excellent icebreaker activity that can be done as early as the first class of the semester. The three-step interview “helps to promote improvement in communication skills, participation, and networking [since] students are put in a situation where they have to listen carefully and elaborate their thoughts with others.” [1]

First, based on questions previously developed by the teacher, students interview each other in pairs within their group (teams of four or six: student A interviews student B and vice versa; the same applies to students C and D and students E and F). Each interviewer “[...] asks questions, listens, and probes for further information but does not evaluate or respond.” [2].

Next, students A and B introduce each other “[...] with synthesized summaries of their partner’s interview responses” to their group. [2] Students C, D, E and F do the same.

Finally, the students share only a selection (as prescribed by the teacher) of their partner’s responses to the whole class. The result is a synthesized version of the initial interview answers presented by the interviewee’s partner. This strategy ensures that no student introduces themselves, which helps alleviate public-speaking-induced stress.

To take the activity a bit further, the teacher can decide to let the students create their own interview questions. The topic choice itself can vary (social, scientific, literary, field-related, etc.).

TEACHER

- Topic selection and interview questions preparation (if applicable)
- Assessment and/or feedback tool preparation (optional)
- Activity instructions
- Team formation

STUDENTS

- Preparation of the interview questions (if applicable)
- Review of the evaluation criteria (if applicable)

Preparation

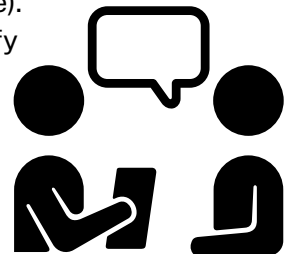
TEACHER

1. Gives the activity instructions.
2. Displays the questions (if applicable).
3. Walks around the classroom to verify the students’ progress.
4. Ensures transitions (if there is no timekeeper).
5. Proceeds to a collective recap.

STUDENTS

1. Select a timekeeper (if applicable).
2. Interview their partner and take notes.
3. Take part in an interview.
4. Introduce their teammate to their group.
5. Introduce their teammate to the class.

Workflow



Evaluation options

TEACHER

- Formative assessment using evaluation criteria that have previously been shared with the students or that are shared during the activity, e.g. based solely on presentation skills

STUDENT

- Formative assessment of other teams’ answers based on the teacher’s criteria

Tips

- The teacher should limit the interviewing time based on the number of questions.
- This activity can be done at any time when used to cover more specific topics than the usual “getting-to-know-each other” questions.
- The interview answers can be used in a subsequent activity.

[1] Utah State University. (n.d.). Teaching tips : Student engagement. 3-step interview. <https://www.usu.edu/teach/help-topics/teaching-tips/3-step-interview>

[2] University of Wisconsin-Madison. (2020). Using Three-Step Interview activity to facilitate discussion in a classroom. Instructional Resources. Center for Teaching, Learning & Mentoring. <https://kb.wisc.edu/instructional-resources/104155>