**What is speed-dating discussion?**

This is a discussion activity modeled on the speed dating format of each person in a group speaking to every other person in the group before moving on to the next partner. It creates complete participation, as every student in the class discusses each question, with the added benefit of working with a variety of people.

**What kind of questions work best?**

Open-ended questions work best—ones that will keep students talking for one or two minutes.

The questions can be designed as a pre-reading or pre-lecture activity, or as an after-reading activity.

**Where to use it:**

You can do this inside the classroom or go outside to make it less noisy. In the VC IDC building, you can take the students out to the stair landing.

**Preparation:**

Teacher prepares a short list of questions and gives every student a copy. (Use half sheets to save paper.) You can create as many or as few questions as suits your purpose and time. Five to ten questions work well.

**How it works:**

1. Students line up facing each other in two rows. If you have an odd number of students, you will participate in the line, too. I usually tell students to get close enough to shake hands with the partner facing them. (In fact, once the activity gets going, tell them to shake hands and introduce themselves with each new partner.) Give each person a list of the same questions.
2. Designate one line the *stationary* line, and one the *traveling* line.
3. Explain—better yet model with a student—that they’ll be discussing just one question with each person for one or two minutes (each person in the pair gets to answer and talk), and then when you call time, the traveling line moves one place to the left. That means everyone gets a new partner and then moves on to Question #2. *Each question is used just one time*. Teacher is the time-keeper and calls out each time for the traveling line to move to the left and start question # \_\_\_\_.
4. When all questions have been discussed, reconvene in the classroom and ask for some highlights from the discussion. Ask people to share something particularly interesting or surprising that came up. The first time you use this activity with a group, also ask them if they liked it. They will.

You can collect the question sheets back and re-use them for the next section or next semester.

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