

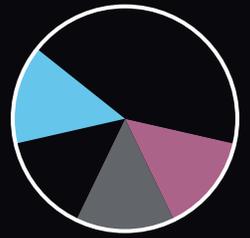
# FISHBOWL DISCUSSIONS

A great way to structure meaningful dialogue and gauge learner comprehension on a specific topic.

**Gamestorming.** (2011, January 27). Fishbowl.  
<https://gamestorming.com/fishbowl/>

**Stanford University.** (n.d.). Fishbowls: Tomorrow's teaching and learning.  
<https://tomprof.stanford.edu/posting/629>

COMMUNICATION  
CRITICAL THINKING  
GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP



## QUICK TIP!



This activity can be used as a formative assessment tool to help instructors assess learners' understanding of a specific topic or concept. Make sure learners are familiar with the learning outcome they are working towards.



## TIME

**PREP:** ~1 hour

**ACTIVITY:** 1 hour



## MATERIALS

• LMS



## PREP

### SUMMARY OF PREP STEPS:

- Study topic or concept
- Learning resources that inform on the topic or concept



## PARTICIPANTS

10-30 HUMANS, PLUS 1 FACILITATOR



## DIFFICULTY

2/5 DOABLE



STEPS ON  
BACK!



# 1 THE LEARNING OUTCOME

- Provide learners with a concept or topic that is aligned with the learning outcome.
- This can be done in advance by providing learners with readings, videos and other resources that will help inform their thinking and understanding of various viewpoints and perspectives associated with the topic.

# 2 BLENDED LEARNING

- In a blended course (partially delivered online, partially delivered in a face-to-face setting), materials can be placed in the learning management system along with key questions to help guide learners' thought process.

# 3 FACE-TO-FACE

- If the class is brought together in the same face-to-face setting (e.g., a classroom) have learners sit in a circle.
- Choose 4-5 learners to form an inner circle.

# 4 OBSERVE

- Instruct the outer circle to remain quiet, observe, and take notes on what is being discussed in the inner circle.

# 5 DIALOGUE

- Either the instructor or a learner can facilitate.
- The facilitator does not participate in the discussion but does pose questions to prompt more in-depth dialogue and ensure all participants in the fishbowl have an opportunity to speak.

# 6 ROTATION

- The facilitator tracks the time and rotates learners from the outer circle into the inner circle one by one every 5 minutes.
- Timing may vary depending on the size and duration of the class.

# 7 DISCUSSION

- Once all learners have rotated through the fishbowl, invite them to discuss how the conversation evolved.
- Ask them to share how their own perspective on the topic also evolved after everyone had participated.
- This part of the activity can be done in an online discussion forum.
- For more ideas and best practices in designing online discussions, type "discussions" into the toolkit search engine.