



Quick on the Draw

A research activity with a built in incentive for team work and speed.

HOW?

1. Prepare, say, 10 questions about the topic in hand. Each question should be printed on a separate piece of paper or card. Print enough copies for each group to be designated their own set. Each set of questions should be a distinctive colour. Put the sets out on the teacher's desk.
2. Divide the class into groups of 3 (4 if necessary, although this invites passengers). Allocate a colour to each group (so they can identify their question cards).
3. Give each group source material, which contains the answers to the questions.
4. At the word 'Go', one person from each group 'runs' to the teacher's desk, takes the first question only and runs back with it to the group.
5. Using the source material, the group finds and writes down the answer on a separate piece of paper.
6. This is taken to the teacher by the second person. The teacher checks the answer. If it is accurate and complete, the second question is collected ... and so on. If any answer is inaccurate or incomplete, the teacher sends the runner back to the group to try again.
7. The first group to complete all answers 'wins'.

APPLICATIONS

- ◆ Endless from Year 7 onwards - the depth and complexity of questions can be varied to suit many different contexts. At *A Level* for example, run it over a week with questions that demand out of classroom research.
- ◆ **Science:** in addition to straightforward questions on text, run it with apparatus! Groups can collect their next piece of equipment only when they have got the earlier bits set up correctly.
- ◆ **Maths:** can be done with complex calculations, or with separate steps of a task. This trains students to check that each stage of a process is correct before moving on to the next.
- ◆ **English, Humanities, PSE, Business Studies:** the source could be text, pictures, artefacts.

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- ◆ **Modern Foreign Language:** the source material could be a text such as a story, making the activity a straightforward comprehension exercise. Or the material (or the questions) could be pictorial. Or it could be an exercise in sentence construction, matching one half with the other.
- ◆ Debrief the study skills used (skim reading, scanning, close reading, key word identification, collaboration) and the ways in which students can organise more effective learning in future.

WHY DO IT?

- ◆ Encourages team work
- ◆ Gives experience of a variety of reading skills.
- ◆ Gets students used to basing their learning on resources other than the teacher.
- ◆ Suits learners with a kinaesthetic disposition who can't sit still for more than two minutes!

VARIATIONS

1. Can be played as a race against other groups or 'against the clock'.
2. Alternatively, the activity does not have to be competitive at all - groups can check answers with each other to ensure detail and thoroughness.
3. A short cut: instead of copying a set of questions for each group, the teacher whispers the question to the runner as she comes out.
4. The questions could be graded: the first ones deal with essential information (MUST), the next few embellish or deepen understanding (SHOULD), the final ones 'extend' understanding (COULD).
5. Rather than all groups having the same questions, each group could have it's own. If the groups are carefully composed, this enables learning to be differentiated to a very precise degree.
6. Alternatively, different groups could have questions on different aspects of the topic. Afterwards, this would lead to peer teaching.
7. Once all the answers have been gathered, discussed and consolidated, each student could make a written record.

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