

Gallery Walk and Carousel

Gallery Walk

Goal: To establish students' prior knowledge and/or to set the tone or offer background information before reading a text. This strategy might also be used during or after reading as a way to chronicle and respond to one another's interpretations or questions related to the text.

Rationale: This strategy allows students to offer ideas and to interact with their peers' ideas in a "safe" manner. It prepares students for a more thoughtful discussion because they have specific ideas.

Steps:

1. Choose quotations, pictures, cartoons, music lyrics, questions, words, or other primary source references that are related to the text you'll be reading and that will elicit students' prior knowledge or help them to understand some background information for the text. For example, using pictures of migrant workers from around the country and families living in the dust bowl might help establish background for *The Grapes of Wrath*. Using words such as *apartheid*, *Nelson Mandela*, *South Africa*, *African National Congress*, and *Gandhi* might help establish background for *Cry, the Beloved Country*. Using quotations from different poets/musicians on what poetry means might help establish students' reactions to and feelings about poetry.
2. Post each item at the top of a sheet of butcher paper so there's room below the quotation, question, word, picture, etc. for students to write.
3. Hang the butcher paper around the room in places where students can access them and with enough room between them for students to get around comfortably. If space is an issue, you might do the gallery walk in a hallway, in the library, etc.—somewhere where students won't be distracted but will have enough room to move around.
4. Students and teacher walk around with a marker in hand, making comments, asking questions, or interpreting what they see on the papers. Students/teacher can respond to the prompt provided and to other students' thoughts and questions. It's important to establish what's acceptable in terms of responding to other students' ideas prior to this activity.
5. At a selected time, ask students to stop writing and to re-visit each paper, reading the ideas that are written there—it's like moving from exhibit to exhibit in a gallery.
6. Pull students together to discuss the exhibits and to work through issues and questions that have arisen. This is the point at which the teacher can fill in missing information or help to establish a link between the exhibits and the reading.



Carousel Variation

The goals and rationale are the same as for the gallery walk with the addition of a verbally collaborative component. The carousel allows students to discuss their ideas and to determine what they want to write on each paper as a small group. This fosters small group discussion.

Steps:

1. Follow steps 1-3 above, keeping the number of topics to between 4-8 (depending on the size of the class).
2. Break students up into small groups so each group is standing in front of a hanging paper. The number of groups should match the number of hanging papers. Each group has one marker, each a different color.
3. Give students approximately 5 minutes (depending on the topics) to observe/read the prompt, to discuss it with one another in the small group, and to write their ideas/questions/etc. on the paper.
4. Call time and have each group move clockwise to the next paper. Give them approximately 5-6 minutes to observe/read the prompt, to read the other group's ideas, to discuss it with one another in the small group, and to write their ideas/questions/etc. on the paper.
5. Continue to move groups clockwise, increasing the time if necessary so they have time to read the other groups' ideas before writing their own. Each group should visit each paper.
6. After all groups have written on the papers, do a gallery walk to allow each group to read what was added after they wrote—they re-visit each "exhibit."
7. Pull students together to discuss the exhibits and to work through issues and questions that have arisen. This is the point at which the teacher can fill in missing information or help to establish a link between the exhibits and the reading.

