



Fishbowl and Checking-In

March 5, 2019

Timi Hunt and Debi Keane

Welcome to our March Webinar: Fishbowl and Checking –In. The crocuses are beginning to bloom and spring is just around the corner! Spring is a great time to renew our teaching practices.

My name is Timi Hunt and I am happy to be with you today. This brief webinar will highlight two strategies that provide unique ways for teachers to solicit responses from students while teaching important social skills that promote student engagement and improve classroom behavior.



S. Inca
"Here's my absence note. I had Spring fever."

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Two Strategies

Fishbowl

- Teaching Conversational Skills

Checking In

- Checking for Understanding



Hopefully, trying these simple strategies will put some “spring in your step”. Fishbowl is a strategy which teaches conversation skills but also provides you information on how well your students can articulate understanding.

There are a variety of ways to solicit student responses which we will share today. We have also attached a handout with additional ways you can check in with your students to gauge their understanding.



**“THE FISHBOWL”
CLASS DISCUSSION TECHNIQUE**

Two to Five seats are placed, in a circle, in the center of the room.

All other seats are pushed to the walls for seating for non-participants.

The five students in the circle, the fishbowl, are the only ones allowed to speak in the room. There is to be no conversation outside of the circle. The teacher chooses the first students in the circle, at random.

The students engage in debate on an issue presented, as an open-ended question, by the teacher.



All participants must abide by the rules of civic discussion. These rules are provided in the discussion rubric and reviewed by the teacher beforehand (Precorrection).

The participants must also operate under the standards of common courtesy. (Respectful voice levels, waiting your turn to speak, respectful disagreement etc.)

The teacher does not participate in the discussion except to provide a new question or to terminate an irrelevant, or inappropriate, line of discussion.



Teaching Conversational Skills

The Four Basic Conversational Skills

Pro-Social Skill	Definition	Examples
Find free information	To access the readily available conversational data	The weather, the school or class you attend, clothing you wear, where you live, etc.
Ask an open question	To pose a question that requires an elaborate response. A question that requires a yes or no answer is a closed question.	Use a "tell me statement" related to the free information. Examples: Tell me what you know about this class. Tell me a little about your school. Tell me about why you purchased that ...
Paraphrase	To briefly summarize the words of the speaker	"So what you're saying is ..."
Probe	To ask for more information, or clarification	"Tell me a little more about ..." "What do you mean by ...?"

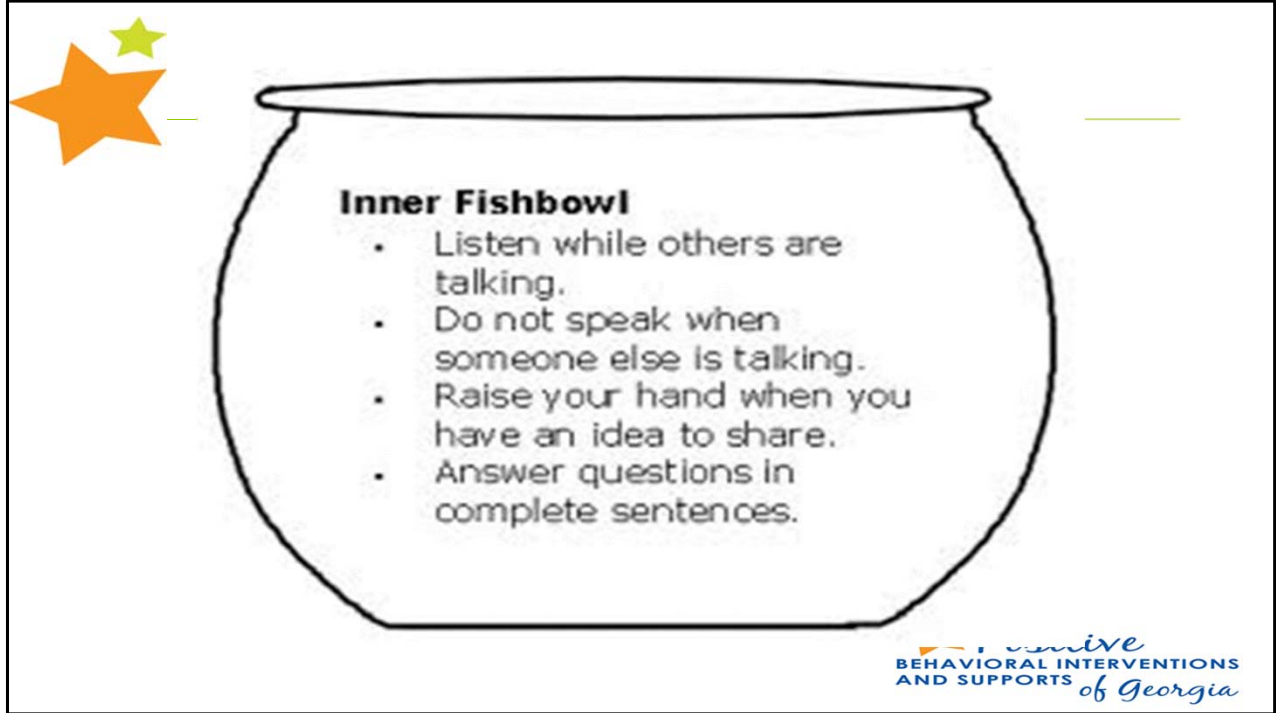


It is important to note that the Fishbowl technique is a useful way to teach and provide practice in conversational skills. Be sure to remind students of their expectations. Teachers should set goals for asking good questions and using good listening skills. It is important to provide the question for discussion ahead of time to allow students time to process. Pick the students (2-5) for the inner circle. Be sure to acknowledge students. You will acknowledge more frequently when first teaching the skill and gradually fade for when students have demonstrated mastery. Remind students in the inner circle that they will be watched. Review the rubric so that students are clear on their role. Remind students in the outer circle that they are observing and scoring the conversation based on the rubric.

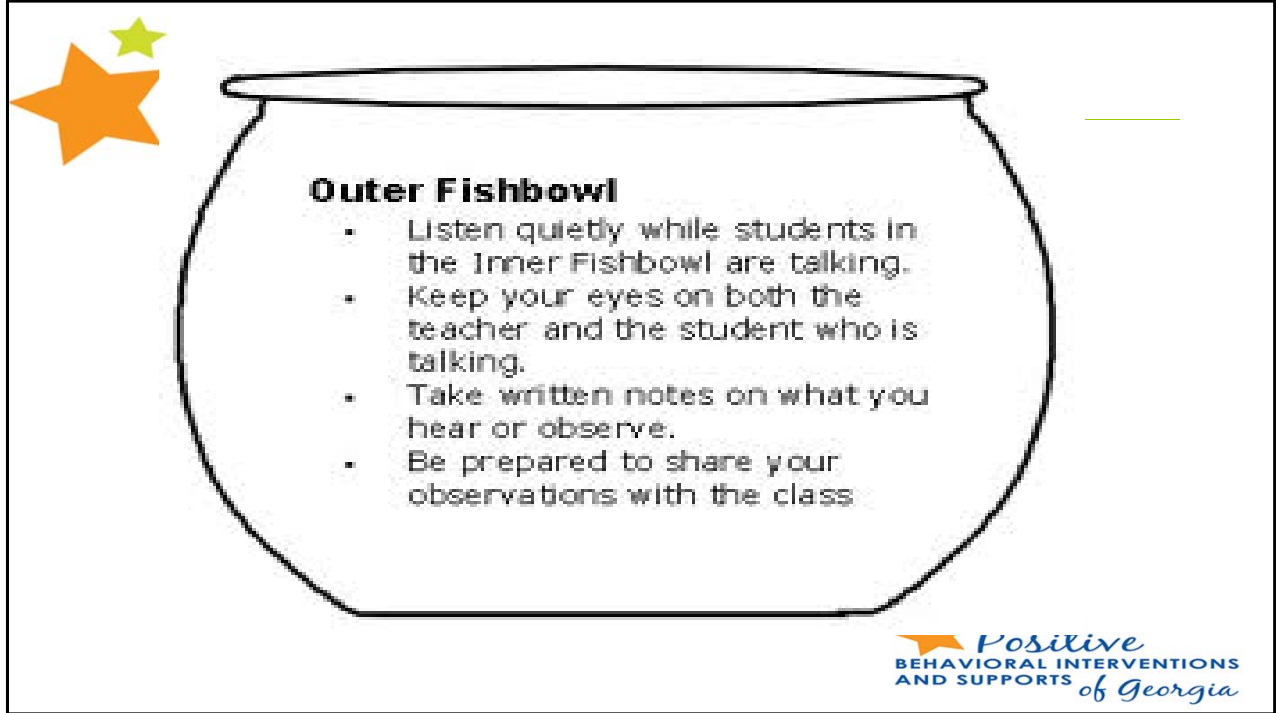


An **open** fishbowl allows for rotation into the circle. Once a student in the circle has spoken, a student from outside the circle may come and tap that student. The student in the circle must then give the one who tapped them their seat and return to the outside observation seats. The new entrant may not be tapped until he or she has spoken at least once.

Students, once removed from the circle, may return at any time. (They may not be tapped until they have spoken again) The teacher may grant preferential seating to students who have not yet participated in the debate.



Here are some procedural rules you will want to review with your students before starting the fishbowl activity. These are for the students in the inner fishbowl.



Outer Fishbowl

- Listen quietly while students in the Inner Fishbowl are talking.
- Keep your eyes on both the teacher and the student who is talking.
- Take written notes on what you hear or observe.
- Be prepared to share your observations with the class.

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These procedural rules are for students in the outer fishbowl.



Helpful Tips



Some students have a difficult time paying attention in the outer circle. These students may be given a special task such as “time-keeper”.

Make sure there is a balance of time when students are speaking.

Students who have ‘stage fright’ or difficulty speaking in front of a group may need extra encouragement or another choice activity.

You will need to provide reminders for students to engage in deliberation rather than debate.

We have included a YouTube link in the notes to find out more about a using a fishbowl strategy.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xkWl9b0FZSE>



Checking In



In our PBIS Classroom face-to-face training we teach ways teachers can actively engage students by providing them with multiple opportunities to respond. There are a variety of ways to check for student understanding by eliciting a response. We will discuss a few more of these strategies. Many research studies have correlated student engagement with improved student achievement and behavior.



3-2-1/Fist to Five/Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down



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Students simply communicate their level of understanding using their fingers.



ABCD Whisper

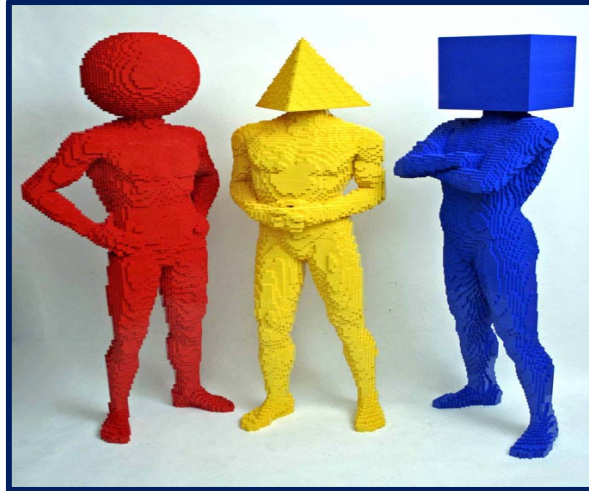


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Students should get in groups of four where one student is A, the next, B, and so on. Each student will be asked to reflect on a concept and draw a visual of his/her interpretation. Then they will share their answer with each other in a zig-zag pattern within their group:



Circle, Triangle, Square



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Circle- Something that is still going around in your head

Triangle- Something poignant that stood out in your mind

Square- Something that “squared” or agreed with your thinking.

Decisions, Decisions

- Philosophical Chairs



Given a prompt, students will go to the side of the room that corresponds to their opinion on the topic, each side shares out their reasoning. Students are allowed to change sides after discussion.



We hope you have benefitted from hearing about these strategies to promote student engagement, improve achievement, and improve behavior. We have included a hand-out that outlines these strategies along with a few others we did not highlight in the webinar. Thank you for tuning into our final webinar for the 2018-19 school year. Remember, all of our webinars are archived on our GADOE PBIS webpage so you will be able to view them at your convenience.