

Carousel Activity Protocol

What is a Carousel Activity?

A Carousel Activity is a communicative and interactive opportunity for participants/students to get up and move around a room in a circular fashion (much like a real carousel might do), stopping intermittently to comment, discuss, or respond (verbally or in writing) to probing headings/ questions/topics/themes posted by a facilitator/teacher that is related to a given topic/theme.

Why would I use a Carousel Activity with ELLs?

You may want to use this activity to “Bridge” participant/student learning by generating connections or “opening doors” from prior knowledge to new knowledge – every participant/student brings ‘something to the table’ in the learning process. This is especially true of all ELLs, irrespective of their proficiency level in English.

It is a way for participants/students to share/display how much they know about a given topic/theme. Thus this activity is appropriately used when doing the following:

- Tapping-into-Prior-Knowledge to informally assess how much your participant/student knows about a given heading/question/topic/theme.
- Reviewing an assigned text/topic/theme
- Sharing and discussing information among participants/students to address a proposed heading/question/topic/theme
- Encouraging oral language development, by having participants/students use language within a specific context and content area
- Holding all participants/students accountable by having each make a contribution to the given heading/question/topic/theme (either verbally or in writing)

How do I implement a Carousel Activity in the classroom?

1. Depending on what you are “Introducing” or “Reviewing” and the size of your group of participants/students, write at least 4-5 headings/questions/topics/themes on chart papers that you will then post around the room/classroom.
2. Then assign participants/students to collaborative groups, usually by either numbering or lettering off, i.e., 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 or A, B, C, D, and E. At that time, provide each participant/student with a different colored marker.
3. Each collaborative group is sent to one of the chart papers and asked to review and discuss the posed heading/question/topic/theme.
4. After a brief discussion and sharing, each participant/student is required to write an individual response (with their colored marker) that must be different from his/her colleagues/peers.

Note:

Based on ELL proficiency levels, each student might contribute a drawing or an illustration/a one word or short phrase response/a complete sentence or 2-3 sentences. If you have ELLs that are more proficient in English (orally),

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but still exhibit difficulties in reading and writing, make sure to evaluate your initial grouping (in step 2 above) to make sure students are heterogeneously grouped, based not only on oral language proficiency but also bearing in mind their reading and writing skills.

If the students need to access their primary language (L1) or speak with another group member in their L1 to make sense of the heading/question/topic/theme, the students are encouraged to do so. In this case, the student is asked to make his/her contribution (orally and in writing) in English as best they can, with the assistance of another peer who is more proficient in English.

5. After the collaborative groups finish with one chart paper, the groups are moved around in a “carousel” fashion (clockwise) to facilitate the review of each chart paper by each collaborative group. This process can be maneuvered and/or facilitated by having groups move from one chart paper to the next once hearing any of the following reminders: music; a chime; a timer or some kind of noise maker that alerts the groups that it is time to move on.
6. Each collaborative group is given 7-10 minutes to complete their discussion and individual contributions.

Note:

If your classroom runs on 45-50 minute periods, you can stop here and pick-up the next day on step 7

7. Then, each collaborative group is given one of the chart papers to review it and recreate a new chart with the same heading/question/topic./theme, but generating a synthesized version of what was produced by the whole group, making sure to include each item/criteria only once – those that are repeated more than once are excluded. The end product (chart paper with heading/question/topic/theme) should be a representation of different contributions, and all other items that are repeated are excluded.
8. The synthesized chart papers are then posted again around the room. Each group has the opportunity to “carousel” around the room to see and read how other groups have “Synthesized” their chart papers.
9. Then the facilitator/teacher provides each of the groups a “Handout” that provides the correct information for each of the headings/questions/topics/themes. The participants/students are able to “Evaluate” how accurate their prior knowledge or reviewing skills were with each of the headings/ questions/ topics/ themes.
10. Have participants/students write a personal reflection in their professional journals/writing notebooks. The task: Have participants/students write about any reactions or an “aha” moment they may have encountered or experienced through the carousel activity.