

The Value of Utilizing Circles in Academic Classrooms

<https://www.pathways2rc.com/news/2021/1/25/the-value-of-utilizing-circles-in-academic-classrooms>

no author/ JANUARY 25, 2021

Incorporating circles into academic classrooms brings a range of benefits, including supporting the goals of SEL and PBIS. A circle can take 10 minutes at the beginning or end of class, or the entire class period if it complements the learning material. Here some of the benefits of using circles in the classroom, especially when they are used repeatedly over time:

1. **Build relationships and community:** Circles give everyone a voice, allowing classmates to get to know each other more deeply and enhancing the ability to have difficult conversations when needed.
2. **Create a structure that promotes safe sharing:** The circle structure builds mutual respect, understanding, listening and a sense of safety among all the participants.
3. **Build self esteem in students:** When teachers and peers take time to listen to and value what students have to say, it helps them build confidence and self-esteem. Through practice, students can enhance their ability to express themselves more articulately.
4. **Enhance participation:** The circle process creates the opportunity for everyone to participate equally, including students who often speak up less in class.
5. **Encourage questions:** The structure of circle rounds invites students to consider the class content in a new and different way, while giving teachers an opportunity to see what their students do and don't understand about the material.

6. **Enhance social and emotional learning:** In circles, students practice the SEL skills of self awareness, social awareness, self management and relationship skills.
7. **Communicate trust and regard for students' voices:** Holding circles demonstrates a teacher's respect and care for all students' ideas and sends a message to students that what they have to say is important and that their input is valued.
8. **Share teaching and learning responsibilities:** When used to share understanding and questions about academic content, circles allow students to learn from their peers as well as from their teachers.
9. **Align with culturally responsive teaching:** Circles give students a place to express themselves and interact with each other in a variety of ways, creating a more inclusive setting that is one tool among many for culturally responsive teaching.

There are many more benefits to using Circles.

Tell us how they support YOUR classroom!

See our ideas for [How to Create Circle Questions for Classroom Learning](#).