

Make room for learning.

Good learning can feel like a conversation around a kitchen table or a campfire: people have room to contribute, share experience, listen, and think together.

Eight practical classroom routines, with a facilitator guide and copy-ready materials for each. Choose the pages that fit your group.

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PRINTING: US Letter (8.5 x 11 inches). Print at actual size / 100%. Designed for black-and-white printing. Print card and ticket sheets single-sided; cut on dashed lines.

COPIES: Keep one facilitator guide for yourself. Copy learner sheets as needed. Check-in cards: one set per learner. Role cards: one deck per team. Voting ballots and exit tickets: one per learner.

PARTICIPATION: Explain the purpose and offer ways to pass, write, draw, or contribute privately. Set out how you will use and retain responses before collecting them.

ABOUT THESE RESOURCES: Adaptable versions of established classroom formats, brought together for the Daley Ditch Diggers facilitator toolkit. Timings are starting points.

Put It on the Table

Give learners a low-pressure way to contribute questions, ideas, or uncertainties before opening a discussion.

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Prepare: give each learner a small piece of paper and a pen. Put a collection box near the front. Choose one clear prompt, such as "What question would you like us to explore?"
2. Allow two minutes for quiet writing. Ask for one idea per slip and no names. Explain that you will select themes to discuss rather than read every submission aloud.
3. Collect the slips, shuffle them, and read them privately first. Set aside anything that identifies someone or is unsuitable to share.
4. Group related contributions and read two or three themes aloud, paraphrasing where needed.
5. Invite a short pair discussion before bringing responses back to the whole class.
6. Close by naming what has been answered and what you will return to.

Materials: paper, pens, and a box or envelope.

Participation: learners may pass, draw, or give a note to you privately. Handwriting or details may reveal an author, so describe submissions as unnamed rather than guaranteeing anonymity.

Ask afterwards: Did writing first change what you contributed? What question should we keep exploring?

Facilitator note: do not invite sensitive disclosures. Explain before collecting whether slips will be kept or discarded.

Put It on the Table

One thought per slip. No name needed. You may pass. Avoid identifying details.

A question or idea

What would you like us to explore?

My thought:

A question or idea

What would you like us to explore?

My thought:

A question or idea

What would you like us to explore?

My thought:

A question or idea

What would you like us to explore?

My thought:

Quick Check-in

Find out whether learners need more explanation, a different pace, or time to practise.

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Prepare: choose one question and define a simple scale. For example: "How ready do you feel to try this?" with 1 = need another example, 2 = ready with support, 3 = ready to try.
2. Give people a moment to choose their answer privately.
3. Collect numbered slips, or offer a visible finger or card signal if the group is comfortable with it.
4. Summarize the pattern without singling anyone out.
5. Respond with a specific adjustment: show one more example, offer practice in pairs, or move ahead with optional support.
6. Check again after the adjustment if useful.

Materials: paper or numbered cards; no technology needed.

Participation: use written labels alongside numbers and colour. Allow a private response or a pass.

Ask afterwards: What would help you take the next step?

Facilitator note: a confidence rating is a starting point for conversation, not proof of understanding. Pair it with a short example or practice task when you need to check learning.

How ready do you feel?

Copy one set per learner. Cut out the cards. Show a card or hand it in privately.

1 / Another example

I need another example before I try.

2 / With support

I am ready to try with some support.

3 / Ready to try

I am ready to give it a go.

1 / Another example

I need another example before I try.

2 / With support

I am ready to try with some support.

3 / Ready to try

I am ready to give it a go.

Think, Pair & Share

Give everyone thinking time before inviting a wider conversation.

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Prepare: select a question with more than one reasonable answer. Write it where everyone can see it and explain the three stages.
2. Think (2 minutes): learners jot down ideas independently.
3. Pair (4 minutes): each partner gets an initial turn, then they compare their thinking.
4. Share (3-4 minutes): invite pairs to offer one insight or question to the wider group. They can pass, and nobody needs to speak on behalf of their partner's personal experience.
5. Connect the contributions back to the session topic and identify a useful next question.

Materials: a visible prompt, optional paper, and a timer.

Participation: offer a trio, written exchange, or individual reflection when pairing is not a good fit. Ask before sharing another person's story.

Example prompt: What could make this service easier for a first-time user?

Ask afterwards: How did your thinking change after hearing another perspective?

Think, Pair & Share

You may write, sketch, or use another way to reflect. Ask before sharing someone else's personal experience.

Our question

1 / Think - 2 minutes

What is your first idea, and why?

2 / Pair - 4 minutes

Take turns. What did your partner help you notice?

3 / Share - 3 to 4 minutes

What insight or question would you like to offer? You may pass.

Challenge Cards

Use an unexpected constraint to help learners rethink an idea and explain their choices.

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Prepare: write one constraint on each card. Examples: no extra budget; no internet connection; serve a different audience; make it usable in five minutes; use only reusable materials; cut the number of steps in half.
2. Give each team an everyday problem or let them choose an idea they are already developing.
3. Allow three minutes to describe their initial solution.
4. Draw one card per team and give them six minutes to adapt the idea. Clarify that constraints are fictional and can be swapped if they make the task inaccessible.
5. Ask each team to explain what changed and what trade-off they made.
6. Finish by identifying one improvement they would keep even without the constraint.

Materials: handwritten cards, paper, and pens.

Participation: rotate who sketches, records, or speaks; offer a choice between two constraints.

Ask afterwards: What did the constraint help you notice? What would you need to test with the people using your idea?

Facilitator note: use constraints to open up possibilities, rather than reward the fastest answer.

Change the conditions

Draw one per team. Adapt your idea for 6 minutes. Swap a card if needed.

No extra budget

Use resources that are already available.
What can you borrow, share, or simplify?

No internet

Your idea must work without an internet connection. How will people get what they need?

A different audience

Choose a different audience for your idea.
What would you ask them before making changes?

Usable in 5 minutes

A first-time user has five minutes to get started. What needs to be immediately clear?

Reusable materials

Use only materials that can be reused.
What changes about your design?

Half the steps

Reduce the steps in your process by half.
What can you combine or remove?

Rethink your idea

Our starting idea

Describe or sketch your first solution.

Our constraint

Which card did you draw?

Our revised idea

What changed? Show the new version.

The trade-off

What did you gain, and what became harder?

What we would keep

Which improvement is worth keeping? What should we test?

Team Role Cards

Share responsibility for the process and help learners try different ways of contributing.

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Prepare four role cards: discussion guide, note-taker, timekeeper, and presenter. Add a question-asker role for a fifth person.
2. Explain each role: the guide invites contributions; the note-taker captures decisions; the timekeeper gives agreed reminders; the presenter shares the team's summary; the question-asker checks assumptions.
3. Let people choose or draw a role, with an option to swap. For a team of three, combine timekeeping and presenting.
4. Run the activity, making clear that everyone still contributes ideas and decisions.
5. At the next round, invite learners to try a different role.
6. Debrief how the roles affected participation.

Materials: paper role cards or a list displayed on a board.

Participation: roles should support people, not lock them into a public-speaking or writing task they cannot comfortably do. Shared roles are welcome.

Ask afterwards: Which role helped the group most today? What would you change next round?

Facilitator note: the discussion guide is not the team's boss; decisions stay shared.

Share the responsibility

Choose or draw roles. Swap or share a role if needed. Everyone contributes to decisions.

Discussion guide

Invite ideas and make space for others. You are helping the conversation, not acting as the boss. "Whose perspective are we missing?"

Note-taker

Capture key ideas, decisions, and next steps. Check that the notes reflect the group. "Have I captured that correctly?"

Timekeeper

Agree on reminders and help the team use its time. "We have two minutes left. What should we focus on?"

Presenter

Share the team's agreed summary. You can co-present or provide it in writing. "What do we want others to take away?"

Question-asker

Check assumptions and ask for clarity. "What evidence would help us? What might we be overlooking?"

Everyone

Contribute, listen, and share decisions. Rotate roles next round. With three people, combine timekeeping and presenting.

Dot Voting

Choose a small number of ideas to explore next after everyone has had time to consider them.

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Prepare: display clearly numbered ideas in similar-sized spaces. Agree on a voting question, such as "Which idea should we test next?"
2. Read each idea and allow clarification without campaigning.
3. Give each person three dots or marks. State whether multiple votes on one idea are allowed; a simple starting rule is one vote per idea.
4. Allow quiet voting. For more privacy, collect slips listing the idea numbers instead of marking the wall.
5. Count the votes, explain ties, and choose the next step. If necessary, hold a second vote between tied ideas.
6. Invite concerns or overlooked perspectives before treating the result as a decision.

Materials: sticky dots or pens and paper.

Participation: offer a seated copy of the ideas or collect votes individually. Do not require everyone to reach a wall display.

Ask afterwards: What made the leading idea worth exploring? Is there an important concern the vote did not capture?

Facilitator note: voting shows preferences; it does not establish that an idea is feasible, fair, or effective.

An idea worth exploring

Display one sheet per idea. Number each idea clearly. Use the same amount of space for every idea.

Idea number: _____

Our idea in a sentence

How it could work

Who it could help

Choose what to explore next

Agree on the voting question first. Each person has up to 3 votes: one vote per idea.

My votes

Write different idea numbers. You may use fewer than three votes.

Idea numbers:

My votes

Write different idea numbers. You may use fewer than three votes.

Idea numbers:

My votes

Write different idea numbers. You may use fewer than three votes.

Idea numbers:

My votes

Write different idea numbers. You may use fewer than three votes.

Idea numbers:

My votes

Write different idea numbers. You may use fewer than three votes.

Idea numbers:

My votes

Write different idea numbers. You may use fewer than three votes.

Idea numbers:

The Parking Lot

Keep worthwhile questions visible while helping the current conversation stay focused.

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Prepare: label a board or sheet "Questions to return to." Leave room for the question, the next step, and who will follow up.
2. Explain when you will review it: before a break, at the end, or in the next session.
3. When a useful side question appears, acknowledge it and ask whether you can park it. Record enough detail that the learner recognizes the question later.
4. At the agreed time, review the list together. Answer, connect to a resource, or agree on a realistic follow-up.
5. Mark resolved items and carry forward only those with a clear plan.

Materials: a flip chart, board, or sheet of paper.

Participation: people can contribute a note rather than interrupt aloud.

Ask afterwards: Which question still needs attention? What should we revisit first?

Facilitator note: urgent access needs or concerns about someone's wellbeing should be addressed when they arise, rather than parked. Do not promise a follow-up you cannot provide.

Questions to return to

Review time: _____ Session: _____

Question	Next step	Who?	By when?

Review together at the agreed time. Mark resolved questions and give remaining items a realistic next step. Address urgent access or wellbeing needs as they arise.

Keep the question moving

Record an agreed follow-up. Keep one copy where the group can find it.

A question to return to

Question:

Next step:

Who / by when:

A question to return to

Question:

Next step:

Who / by when:

A question to return to

Question:

Next step:

Who / by when:

A question to return to

Question:

Next step:

Who / by when:

Exit Ticket

Find out what learners are taking away and what could shape the next session.

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Prepare three short prompts: "One thing I learned...", "One thing I'm still wondering...", and "One thing I'll try next...".
2. Allow three minutes of quiet writing near the end of the session. Ask for brief responses rather than polished paragraphs.
3. Explain whether responses should be unnamed and how you will use them.
4. Collect the slips as people leave, with an option to pass or respond privately in another format.
5. Review for themes and choose one adjustment or follow-up for the next session.
6. Open the next session by acknowledging what you heard without identifying individuals.

Materials: paper slips and pens.

Participation: accept a drawing, short conversation, or a response to just one prompt.

Ask next time: What happened when you tried your next step?

Facilitator note: keep only what you need, avoid collecting unnecessary personal details, and make clear that this is reflection rather than a graded test.

Before you go

Brief notes or sketches are welcome. You may answer one prompt or pass. This is not graded.

My exit ticket

One thing I learned:

One thing I am still wondering:

One thing I will try next:

My exit ticket

One thing I learned:

One thing I am still wondering:

One thing I will try next:

My exit ticket

One thing I learned:

One thing I am still wondering:

One thing I will try next:

My exit ticket

One thing I learned:

One thing I am still wondering:

One thing I will try next:
