

The Trust Poem

I trust you!

I trust that you want to learn.

I trust that you have
amazing things to share,
and I'm going to shape
opportunities so that you
can share them.

I trust that you can learn
from each other.

I trust that our collective differences
make us all a bit smarter.

I trust that if you trust yourself,
the best in you will come out.

TPTs Question & Answers

NOTE: The questions in this Q & A come from both the Preassignment Worksheet and questions asked during the webinar. I tried to address all the questions. Responses to your questions are below. Thanks for your great interest! If you have any further questions or want additional discussion on a topic, email me (nickipatton@msn.com).

Question: How many TPTs should you use in a training (e.g., in 1 hour, in 3 hours)? **NOTE:** This was the most frequently asked question 😊

Question: When do you use TPTs in relation to the content (e.g., the end of content chunks)?

I am going to address both these questions together.

Answer: There is no simple answer or formula for this. All training activities should be selected, not because they are fun or interactive, but rather, training activities should support the content you are teaching and your objectives.

To ensure new information gets stored in participants' long-term memory, they MUST actively process the new information in some way. They need to DO something with it (e.g., write about it, think about it, talk about it, etc.). When I am putting together my training plan, I try to chunk my content into 10-15 minute chunks (participants' attention starts to wander after about 8-10 minutes). After each content chunk (and sometimes during the content chunk), I plan an activity that has participants thinking about and doing something with the content/new information they just learned. TPTs work well as a way to have participants mentally process/do something with a chunk of content. However, I am not saying that I use a TPT after every 10-15 minute chunk nor am I saying that TPTs are the only kind of training activity that I use.

First, I ask myself, "What kind of processing do participants need to do with this content?" And then I ask myself, "What activity fits the content and processing that participants need to do?" At that point, I might review the list of TPTs to see if any of them fit what is needed. I also consider how much time I want to spend on an activity at that point in the training. A Think/Pair/Share can be done in 3-5 minutes whereas activities like the Debate Carousel or a Chalkboard Splash would probably take longer (e.g., 10-15 minutes).

NOTE: I have created a Dropbox folder with TPT resources in it. In the subfolder labeled *TPT Activities*, there are several documents that contain description/instructions for most of the TPTs that are covered in the TPT book. You will definitely want to check those documents out.

Another thing to consider is that different TPTs have different purposes. For example, some TPTs provide an opportunity for participants to summarize (e.g., Confer, Compare & Clarify; Pause, Star, Rank) and therefore, would work well at the end of a lecture or even the end of the training. Whereas the Debate Carousel would only work with content that has multiple viewpoints/perspectives.

Question: How many varieties of TPTs should be/can be used in a training?

Answer: As I said in the above answer, there is no one right answer or formula. However, Think/Pair/Shares and Hold-Up cards are probably the only two TPTs that I personally would consider using more than once in the same training. I definitely use Think/Pair/Shares frequently throughout my trainings. While I have never counted how many I use in a training, I estimate that I may use a couple of Think/Pair/Shares every hour (this is just an estimate!). I have also used Hold-Up cards more than once in a training. I did learn that participants may get a little Hold-Up card fatigue after using them 3-4 times in a training. So be careful to not overuse Hold-Up cards. Depending on the length of the training, you may also want to incorporate a couple other TPTs (e.g., Chalkboard Splash, Debate Carousel, Inside/Outside Circles, etc.). **NOTE:** We did not discuss Line-Ups and Inside/Outside Circles. See description on next page.

Line-Ups and Inside-Outside Circles

1. Prepare questions or prompts that allow for discussion by a pair of students. When we do this activity, we usually allow time for students to see the questions, jot down notes, and bring their books to the Line-Up to use as a reference.
2. Ask students to stand in two parallel lines of the same length, or in two concentric circles. Ask students to turn and face the person across from them in the line or opposite them in the circle. You may choose to do an Inside-Outside Circle if you have a large class and students can more easily interact in circles.
3. Ask students to refer to their first prompt and take turns talking it over.
4. Ring a bell or use a signal to get everyone's attention. Ask students to thank their line-mate, and then ask only one of the lines or circles to move two steps to the left so that each person is now facing a different person.
5. As the students are interacting, be sure to move along the lines or circles, listening to student interaction. Doing so will give you a feel for the various levels of understanding as well as provide you with excerpts on which to focus a closing discussion with the larger group.

Question: How can we incorporate TPTs into a training without changing the content?

Answer: Easily! 😊 I know that some trainers are facilitating trainings where the content has been pre-determined and you aren't allowed to change the content (e.g., Orientation). However, you wouldn't be changing content if you inserted a Think/Pair/Share to give participants an opportunity to process/discuss the content.

Question: What TPTs work best with groups that know each other and those who are all strangers to each other?

Answer: For the most part, I don't think how well participants know each other will impact the effectiveness of TPTs. Remember, most TPTs involve a "ripple" – 1) each person considers their answer to a question/prompt first individually, 2) then they discuss with one another person (This is less stressful, even if they don't know their partner), 3) then only those that want to share a response do so in a larger group. However, several of the TPTs do involve opinions (e.g., Debate Carousel) and/or giving feedback on what another participant said or wrote. These TPTs might work somewhat better if the group knows each other (maybe).

Question: There were several questions about what to do with disengaged/disinterested/shy/reluctant participants.

Answer: I think TPTs offer a great solution to the problem of disengagement. For example, it is hard to not engage when you are in a pair with a specific topic to discuss or do. Remember.... You can't get lost in a pair. TPTs such as the Line-Ups and Inside/Outside Circles are another good way to get participants paired with each other and they involve getting participants up and out of their seats.

I think it is our responsibility as trainers to plan trainings that include engaging activities such as TPTs (as opposed to 3 hours of lecture). Even the most engaging, interactive training may not meet the needs of all your participants. Like the old saying states, "You can bring a horse to water but you can't make it drink."

Question: Have you had resistance from students in participating in TPTs?

Answer: Nope.

Questions: Are there any approaches that aren't appropriate for small groups of people, 15 or less? What works best with groups of 20-30 participants?

Answer: I guess a few of the TPTs like Chalkboard Splash might be less effective if you had a really small group (e.g., less than 10 or so). And some of the TPTs that require movement (e.g., Line-Ups or Inside/Outside Circles) might be difficult to do with large groups (e.g., more than 30 or 40). I think that most TPTs will work for all size groups.

Question: How do you collect this data while doing a live workshop so you can use it later and how do you use it later?

Answer: Hmm... I don't think I have collected data from TPTs to be used after the training. But... I do think all of the TPTs provide the trainer an on-the-spot opportunity to evaluate whether or not participants understand the content, identify areas of confusion, etc. That's one of the reasons for soliciting a few answers from volunteers in the 3rd phase of a ripple.

But now that this question has me thinking.... Some of the TPTs involve participants writing their thoughts down (e.g., Chalkboard Splash, Debate Carousel, Three 3's in a Row, etc.). You could collect these and use them as a way to evaluate participants' understanding. You could identify concepts that need to be revisited or clarified and incorporate these into the next session (if the training was part of a series or multi-session course). You could also use this information to revise the training (e.g., figure out another way to present content that participants didn't seem to understand, etc.).

Question: If you are training on new policies (for example) which of these techniques do you find most helpful?

Answer: I think many of the TPTs could be used for policy-based trainings. The key is the question/prompt. For example: Let's say you teach about a specific policy. You could use Hold-Up cards to give them an opportunity to identify whether they are already doing that or not. Or, you could use a Think/Pair/Share asking them to discuss something like: What is the benefit of this policy? OR What do you think will be most difficult when implementing this policy? Or, you could do a Line-Up or Inside/Outside Circle in which they discuss/share policy implementation tips/ideas.

Question: What is your favorite TPT and why?

Answer: Think/Pair/Share. They don't take much time and don't require materials. They do break up the monotony of a lecture. And, they meet the needs of auditory learners who need to process information orally (by talking to someone). And it is just really, really hard NOT to engage when you and another person are supposed to do something together. And most importantly, Think/Pair/Shares provide the necessary mental processing that the brain requires.

The TPTs that I either use or plan to begin using (though not all in the same training) are:

- Think, Pair, Share
- Chalkboard Splash
- Hold-Ups
- Line-Ups and Inside/Outside Circles
- Three 3's in a Row*
- Categorizing and Sorting*
- Appointment Agendas
- Bounce Cards
- Confer, Compare, Clarify
- Three Sentence Wrap-Up*
- Pause, Star, Rank*
- Debate Team Carousel

* You can find descriptions of these TPTs in the documents located in the online Dropbox subfolder, *TPT Activities*.

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/c6q60s2528dik9x/AADe3U5L2jgO_IRNt-D4UXAa?dl=0

Question: When have you used a TPT that did not have the outcome you expected? Positive or negative?

Answer: I learned that you can overuse Hold-Up TPTs.

Question: Which is the most effective for education staff?

Answer: I don't think participant background/job/education determines the effectiveness of TPTs. I think effectiveness is determined by a) selecting the right TPT for what you want to accomplish and b) asking appropriate well-designed questions/prompts.

Question: Which TPTs have you found that your trainee's like the best and why?

Answer: So far, I haven't used any that participants didn't like/find useful. But there are some like the Debate Carousel that I plan to use but haven't used yet.

Question: Do we need to use only the techniques that we learned in this training?

Answer: NOPE! As a trainer, you have a lot of training strategies in your trainer's "toolbox." TPTs are just one of the many training strategies that can be effective and promote learning.

Question: How do you make homemade white board?

Answer: Laminate a piece of heavy cardstock. Use dry erase markers. Or you could put heavy cardstock inside a document protector. Instead of erasers, you can use old socks or "footies."

Question: For a one-hour training, how many time slots in the Appointment Agenda would be used?

Answer: I am not sure I would use the Appointment Agenda in a one-hour training because an hour just isn't much time. If I did use the Appointment Agenda, I don't think I would do more than 1 or 2 in a one-hour training. I think it would depend on the content.

Question: Is the timer a function on Zoom? (I think this was in reference to the timer I used on the PPT slides to indicate the amount of time available to respond to a chat question).

Answer: No, the timer is not related to Zoom. Patti Singleton had suggested that I could find timers on YouTube. So it's actually a video embedded or linked to the slide. Just search YouTube for the timer length you need (e.g., 60 second timer, 3 minute timer). NOTE: Some timer videos have sound and some don't.

Question: How did you communicate to participants what the Hold-Up Card colors means for specific questions?

Answer: I use the PPT slide. I represent the color cards on the slide. Then type on the "card" the answer that each color card represents. Participants look at the slide and pick the card representing their answer. See examples below. Notice how the same color cards were used on each slide, but the colors represented different answers.

The image shows three examples of PPT slides illustrating how color-coded cards are used for responses. Each slide has a blue header and three colored cards (blue, yellow, pink) at the bottom.

- Slide 1:** Header: "1. Which of the 3 statements below best describe what you currently think about using a Letter of the Week approach to teach the alphabet? 2. Pick the appropriate colored index card (do NOT hold it up). 3. Turn to your elbow buddy, share your response and why you chose it." Cards: "Absolutely (blue card)", "Maybe. I am not sure. (yellow card)", "No (But what should I do instead?) (pink card)".
- Slide 2:** Header: "Use 'thinking routines' to make thinking visible". Cards: "Use Thinking Routines regularly (blue card)", "Know what they are but don't use (yellow card)", "What is a thinking routine? (pink card)".
- Slide 3:** Header: "Word walls build word consciousness when they are used DAILY". Sub-header: "I use the word wall ...". Cards: "Daily (blue card)", "At least once a week (yellow card)", "Every now and then (pink card)".

Slide 4: Header: "Did you include the words 'collect, collector, or collection' in your list of 4 target words?". Cards: "YES (blue card)", "NO (pink card)".

Remember... A TPT will only be as effective as the question/prompt that's asked. Make sure you ask appropriate, relevant questions/prompts.