



Speed-Dating: Integrating the Common Core into History and Reading with Conversation, Humor and Role-Playing

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AGENDA

 Ice-breaker: You have two minutes to create a visual of the cover of your “desert island” book. While you’re creating, think about how you would describe the book in 3 minutes to someone you’ve never met. Next: get ready to date!

 A Little Background...

 Speed-Dating Your Favorite Lesson

 Speed-Dating to Learn about Some Very *Cool Women!*

- The procedure
- The standards
- The logistics
 - Time (and timing)
 - Space
 - The rotation
 - Assessment

 Your Thoughts—What did you have to do to make this work? What will students do? What challenges do you see? I noted a couple CCSS areas; do you see more?

A little background...

I first tried out the concept of speed dating in the classroom about 3 years ago in a graduate class on curricular issues. I lined up my grad students (about 16 of them) in two rows of 8 chairs facing one another. Their instructions were to tell their “date” all about their literature reviews in three minutes. The purpose was to help them determine the most important aspects of what they learned from completing their reviews, as well as to assist them in developing their levels of comfort in talking about their academic work. It went so well! The room was abuzz with not just good talk, but also high energy! You could see the level of concentration on the students’ faces as they worked to find just the right ways to explain their projects.

The next occasion to implement speed dating arose about a year later, when I asked one of my sections of undergrads to speed date and talk to one another about their field experiences. Again: high energy, 100% engagement, strong critical thinking going on!

Third occasion, and one of my favorites thus far (I’ve used this version twice!): when I teach children’s literature, I use speed dating to foster discussion of favorite books. The session prior to the meeting I asked everyone to please bring one of their favorite books to the next class. Almost everyone did, and in hindsight I should have asked the couple who did not to write and illustrate the title & author on a sheet of paper so that there was a visual aid. Again, the chairs facing one another; again the 100% engagement and the continual thinking about how to talk about it better the next time! Plus, in surfing the conversations I learned some great new titles!

It occurred to me that speed dating would also be a great way to teach students about key figures in history. That is the format we will try out today. I realized, though, that it is similar to Linda Christensen’s activity called, “The Tea Party,” (2000, p.108) in which she gives students information on characters from whatever new novel they’re starting and has them role play in a tea party fashion. I also found several speed dating activities online when I googled “speed dating lesson plans;” however, the majority of them were for ESL classes. I’ll list a few relevant links at the end of this.

Common Core State Standards that are addressed with these activities (with many thanks to Jim Burke for his excellent new text, *The Complete Common Core State Standards: Decoded* (2013)!)

- Reading 1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - Grades 9-10: Informational Text—Cite strong and thorough evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
 - Grades 11-12: Informational Text-- Cite strong and thorough evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
 - Grades 11-12: History/Social Studies—Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

- Speaking & Listening 4: Present information, findings, and supporting evidence so listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience
 - Grades 9-10: English Language Arts and Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects—Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.
 - Grades 11-12: English Language Arts and Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects— Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

Suggested Resources and References

Burke, Jim (2013). *The complete Common Core State Standards: Decoded*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Chipman, D., Florence, M., & Wax, N. (1998). *Cool women: The thinking girl's guide to the hippest women in history*. P. Nelson (Ed.). A. Inouye (Designer). Los Angeles: Girl Press.

Christensen, Linda (2000). *Reading, writing, and rising up: Teaching about social justice and the power of the written word*. Milwaukee: Rethinking Schools. ("The Tea Party" begins on p.108.)

http://www.palisadessd.org/cms/lib03/PA01000106/Centricity/Domain/146/Book_Speed_Dating_web_lesson.pdf (books in speed dating)

<http://www.developingteachers.com/tips/pasttips80.htm> (for developing language teachers)

<http://riyl.wikispaces.com/Book+Activities> (From a Read if You Like blog.)