

# Teacher Talk: Presentation Skills for Teachers

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with Kevin McCaughey



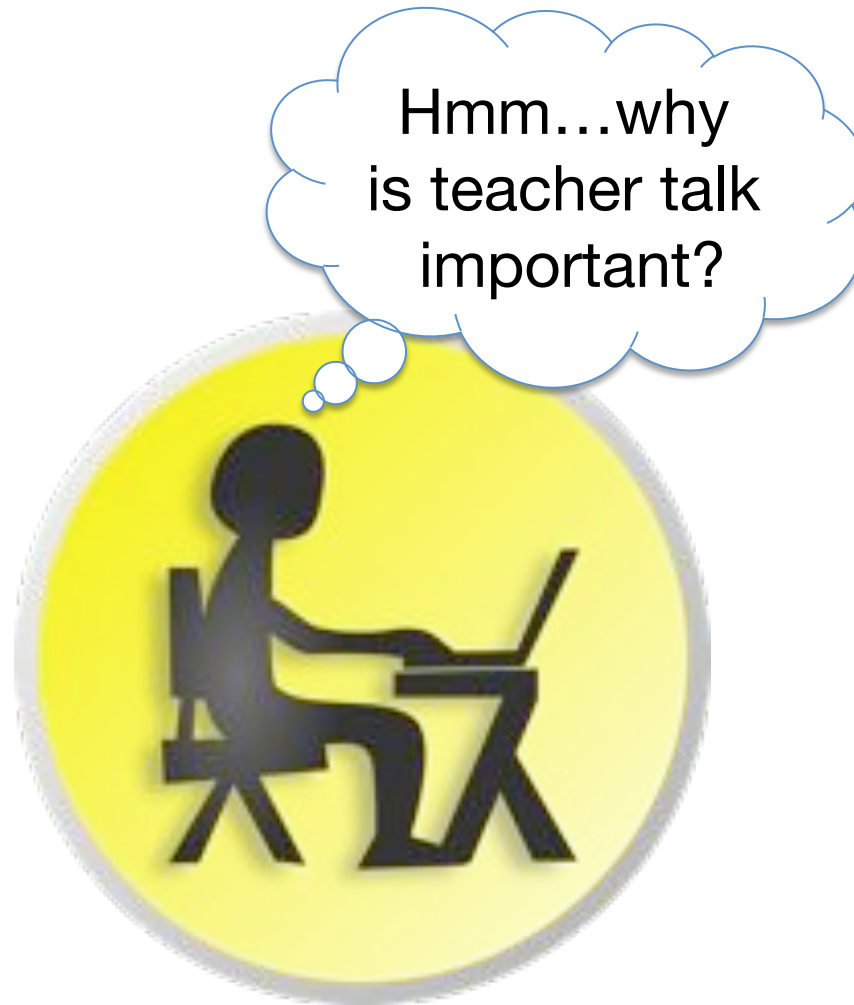
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U.S. Embassy in  
Pretoria, South Africa

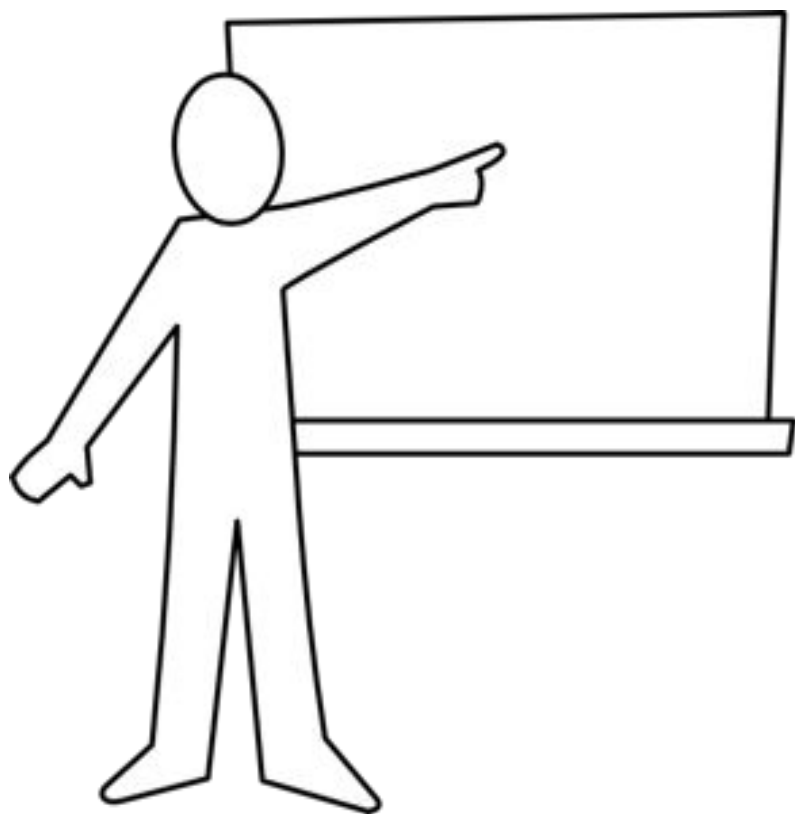


Office of English Language Programs  
U.S. Department of State

# Why this topic?

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# Critical Thinking

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“[I]t is the greatest good for a man to discuss virtue every day and those other things about which you hear me conversing and testing myself and others, for the unexamined life is not worth living.”

—Plato, *Apology* 38a.

# Contents

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## 1 Teacher Talk Time

- How much do we talk in class?
- How much should we refrain from talking?

## 2 Unfortunate Teacher Talk Types

- A humorous(?) look at avoidable things we say and do in front of a class

## 3 Student Talk and Presentations

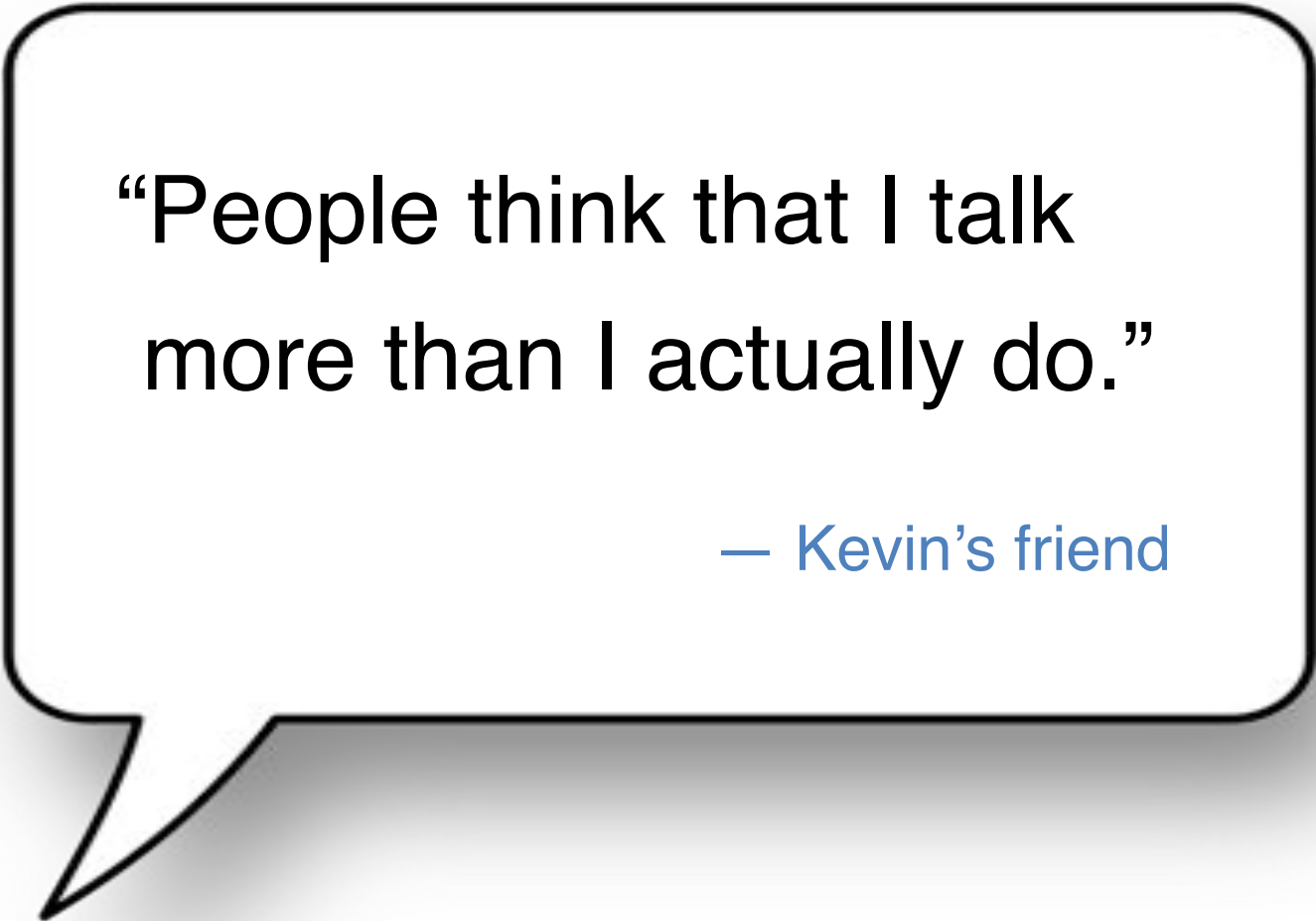
- Tips for organizing students

# **Part 1**

## **Teacher Talk Time**

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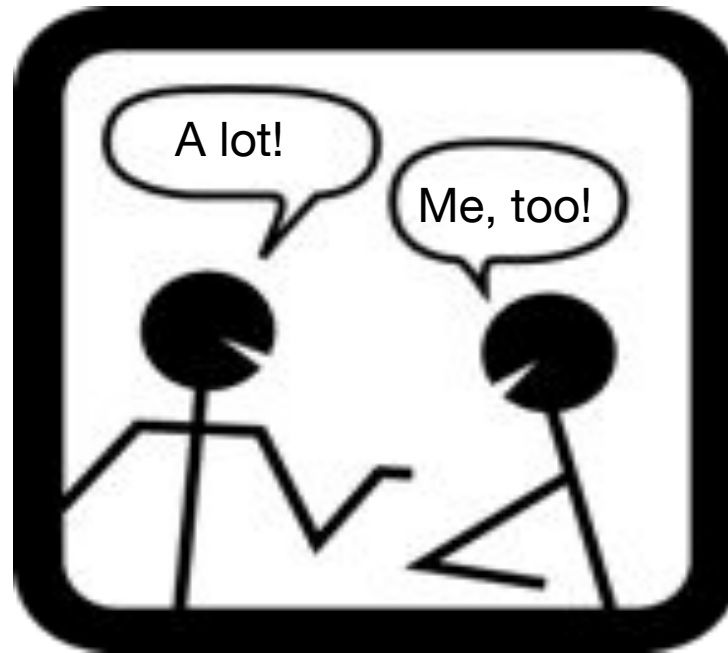


“People think that I talk  
more than I actually do.”

— Kevin's friend

# How much do you talk in class?

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**Take Poll 3**



# Teacher Talk Time (TTT) is a concern

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**Chat:** When is teacher talk time necessary and helpful to your students?

# Not all TTT is bad

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- Are your learners young enough that you don't demand output?
- Are you telling stories, providing comprehensible input?
- Does your teacher talk consist of prompts which generate student talk?
- Are you a lecturer who is expected to talk for the entire class?

# Student Talk Time (STT)

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“Teachers of English in many countries are now being trained to give more attention to the development of speaking skills in their learners... [S]poken language is seen as such a vital tool in modern communication.”

— Rod Bolitho (2006)

“Teacher Talk and Learner Talk”

<http://archive.ecml.at/mtp2/GroupLead/results/Lucru/4/Rod.pdf>

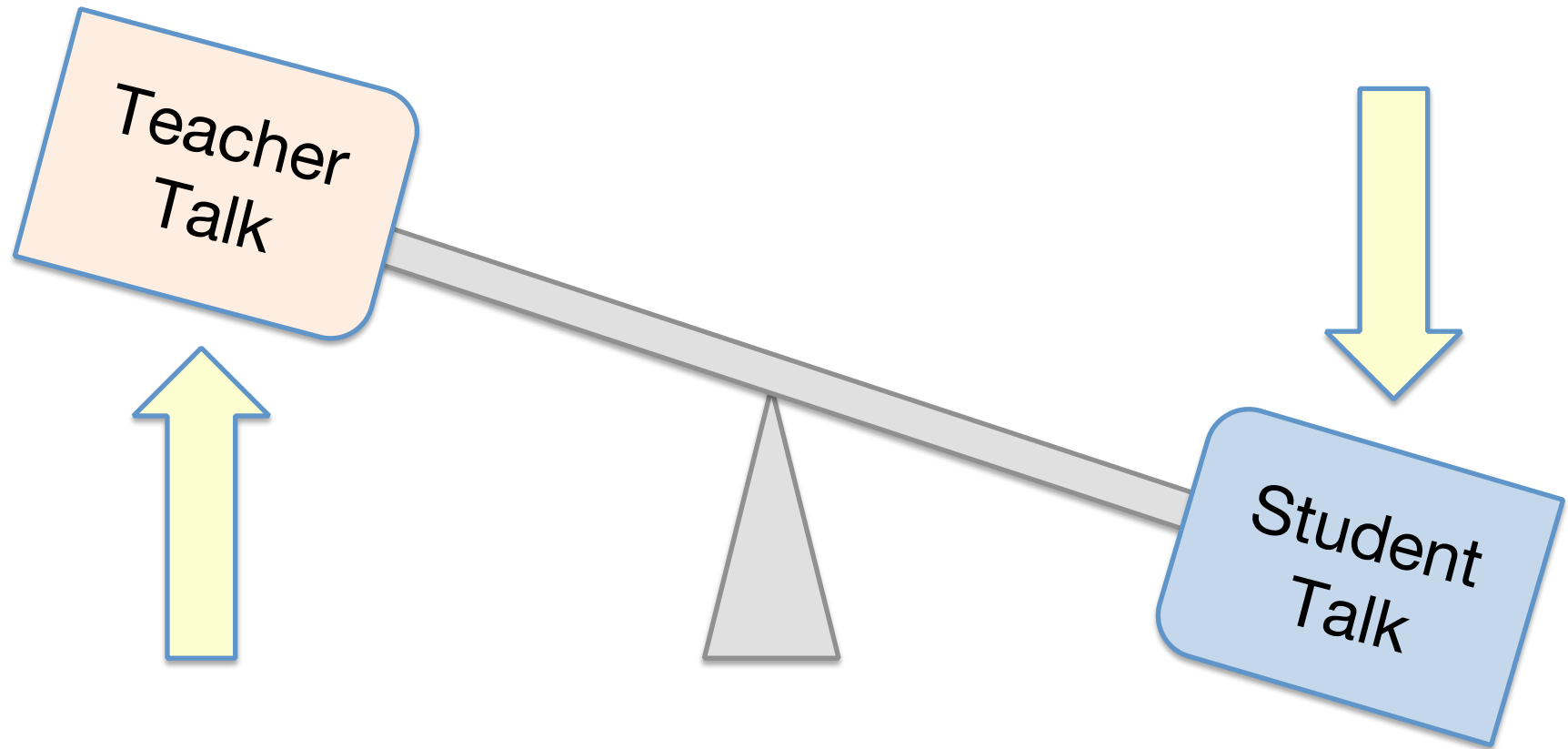
# Not all STT is good

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- Sometimes student speaking is rote memorization or responses that involve little **thinking**
- Unless group or pair work is involved, students get little practice

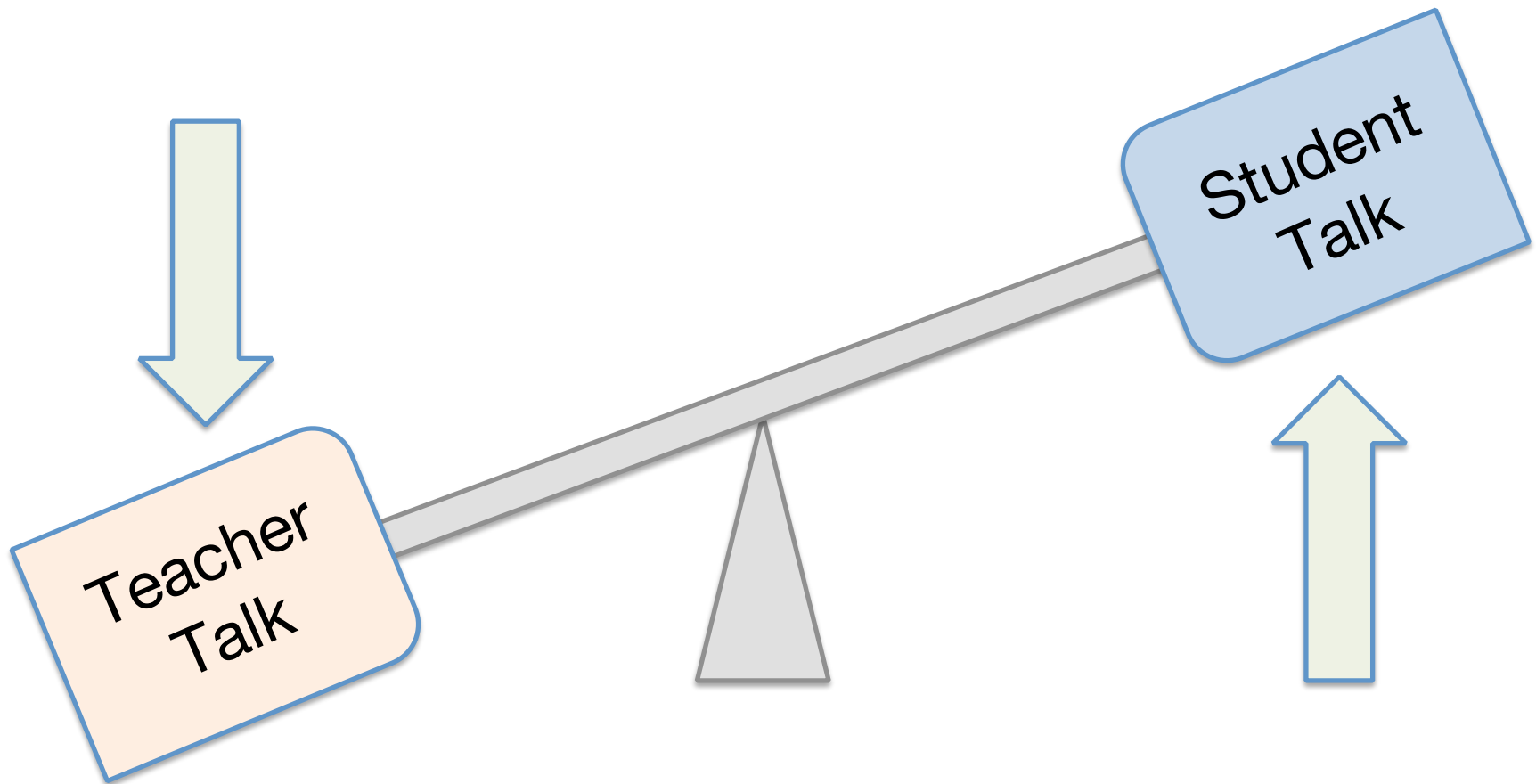
# TTT and STT

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# TTT and STT

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# Then there's TWT...

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**Chat:** What does the abbreviation  
**TWT** mean?

# Teacher Wait Time

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The amount of time a teacher waits  
after asking students a question



# Teacher Wait Time

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How long do **you** wait?

**Take Poll 4**

# Teacher Wait Time

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The typical teacher waits  
less than one second!

— Mary Budd Rowe (1986)

“Wait Time: Slowing Down May Be a Way of Speeding Up”

— William W. Wilen (1991)

*Questioning Skills for Teachers. What Research Says to the Teacher*

## Part 2

# 8 Unfortunate Teacher Talk Types

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This teacher is guilty on all counts!

Sentence Finisher

**Self-Answerer**

Pause Eater

Over-Explainer

Commentator

Interrupter

Excuse Maker



Speed Talker

# #1 The Sentence Finisher

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*Teacher engaging student in conversation:*

Teacher: What did you do yesterday?

Student: It was nice day, so with my friends went to... uh...

Teacher: To the park?

Student: Uhh... yes.

# #1 The Sentence Finisher

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*Or just reading aloud:*

Teacher: Carlos, please read sentence 5.

Carlos: “The young man goes to bed...”

Teacher: “at midnight.” Marike, read the next sentence.

# #1 The Sentence Finisher

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**Take Poll 5**

## #2 The Interrupter

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Is it okay to interrupt a student  
who is speaking?

When?

**Take Poll 6**



# #3 The \_\_\_\_\_

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Video clip from *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*  
Paramount Pictures (1987)

Can you identify the  
Unfortunate Talk Type?

# #3 The Self-Answerer!

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# Thinking Back...

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**Take Poll 7**

# #4 The Speed Talker

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Do you talk too fast?

If so, why do you  
think you do?

Share your ideas in the chat box.

# #5 The Pause Eater

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*Compare:*

“It was the best of times it was the  
worst of times.”

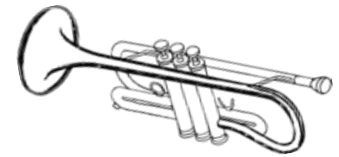
“It was the best of times,  
(1 second pause)  
it was the worst of times.”

— Charles Dickens  
*A Tale of Two Cities*

# That's a shame because a pause...

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- allows you to vary pace, like any good piece of writing, music, or film does



- allows you to assess the level of comprehension or the mood in a room

# Take the Pause Challenge

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Experiment next time you're in class.

Pause between your thoughts or sentences.



Try one second.

Try three seconds.

Try five seconds!

Can you do 10?

## #6 The Commentator (a.k.a. The Filler)

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**Teacher:** So, I would like to write a question on the board, asking you what you did over the weekend. I'm just going to grab the chalk, which is on my desk. There it is. I've got it. And... give me just a moment while I write this on the board for you. "What... did... you..."



# #7 The Over-Explainer

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# Sample Dialogue

Teacher begins class by telling about what's happening at his home.

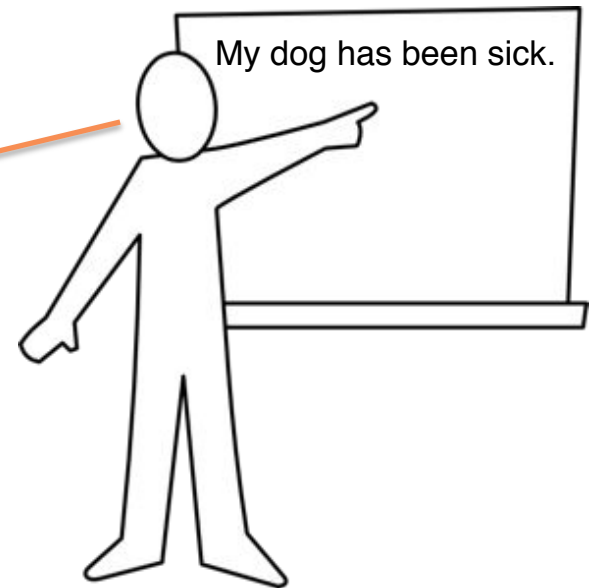


Is that the present perfect in that sentence?

As a matter of fact, yes. Because my dog was sick yesterday and the day before, and he was still sick this morning.

Remember, we use the present perfect, among other things, to show that an action started at some point in the past and continues until now.

Or we use the present perfect to show something that has just happened. For instance, "The Prime Minister has just given a speech."



# A Good Explanation?

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Type why or why not in the chat box.

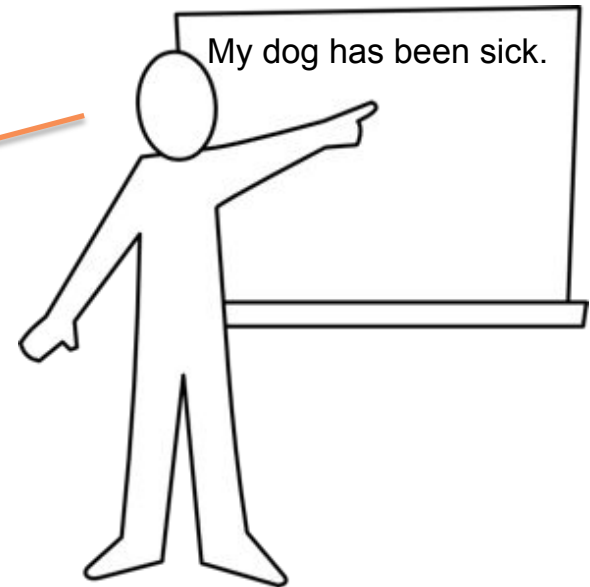
# Kevin's response

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Is that the present perfect in that sentence?

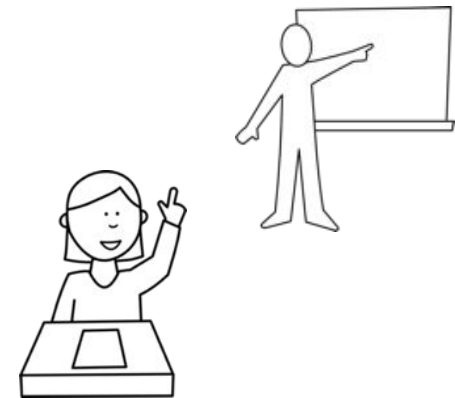
Yes, it is.



# Why I keep it short

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- I try to answer ***precisely*** what a student asks
- The topic may be of vital interest to the student asking the question, but of **no interest** to the rest of the class
- I can **pause** after the short answer to see if the class is satisfied or has another question



# Why I keep it short

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- I **don't want to dominate** the class with my words
- I'm aware that **sometimes I try to look smart** in front of students, but that doesn't benefit them, so I avoid that
- I know I can **later design an activity where students may explore**, say, the present perfect



# Pause and think:

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Can you explain when to use *in*, *on*, and *at* for certain places?

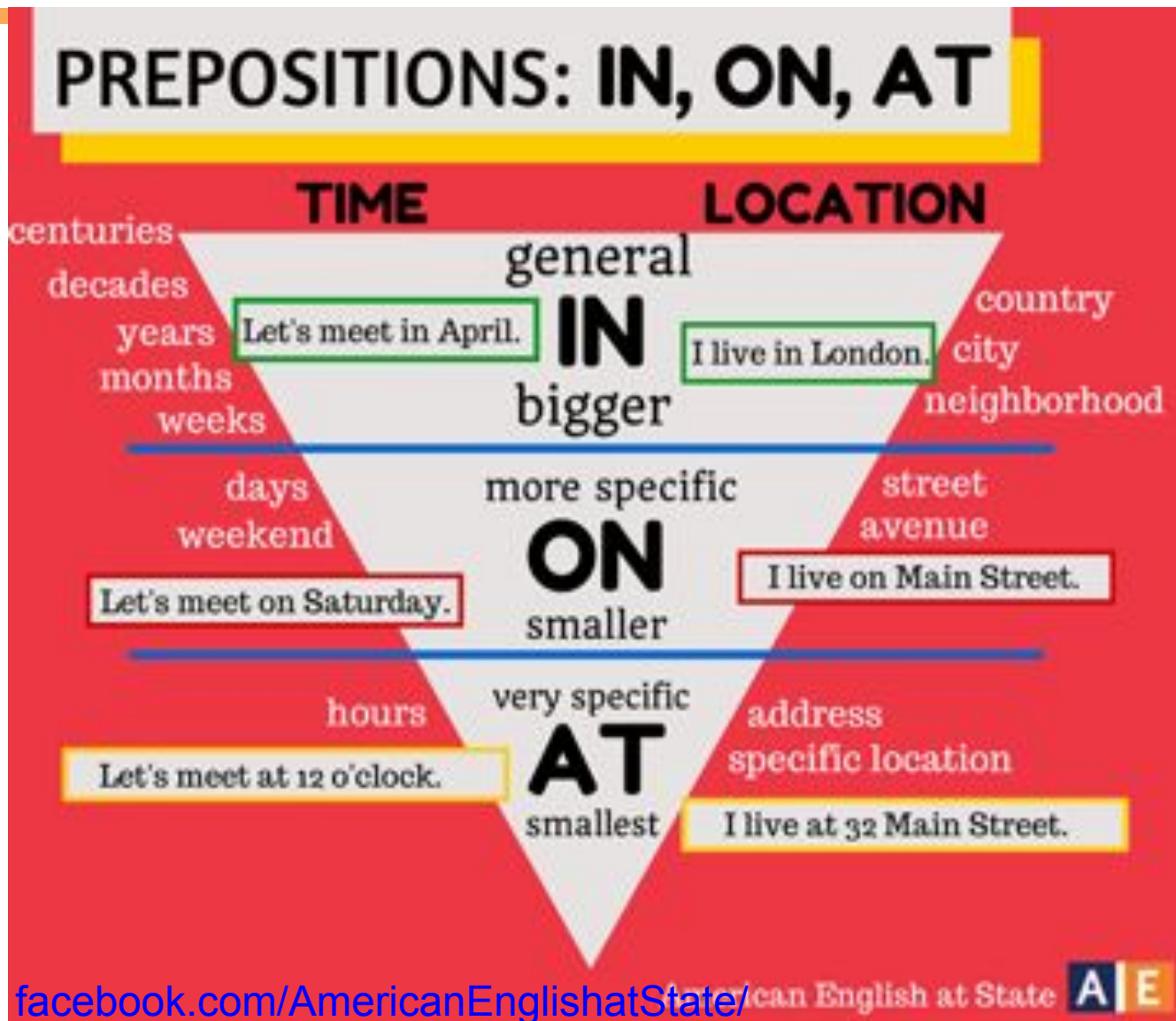


**What can you do  
instead of explain?**

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Ask groups of students to make 5-10 sample sentences



# #8 The Excuse Maker

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# ENGLISH

*JAVVY JAVELINA*

*EFL TEACHER*



ENGLISH

MR TANNY

MORNING,  
CLASS




1938 7

GOOD MORNING,  
MR. JAVELINA

A black and white photograph of a large classroom full of students sitting at their desks. A speech bubble is overlaid on the image with the text 'GOOD MORNING, MR. JAVELINA'. The year '1938' and the number '7' are written in the top left corner of the photo.

Photo: Library of Congress, Public Domain



A photograph of a brown, shaggy stuffed animal, possibly a bear or dog, positioned in front of a dark chalkboard. The animal's head is turned slightly to the right. A large, white, oval-shaped speech bubble is superimposed over the right side of the image, containing text. The chalkboard in the background has the word 'ENGLISH' written in yellow chalk. At the bottom of the chalkboard, there are some colorful chalk sticks (purple, yellow, and orange) lying horizontally.

WELL, CLASS. I SPENT A  
LONG TIME PREPARING A  
REALLY GREAT HANDOUT  
FOR YOU...

# SCAFFOLDING -



**AMAZING  
GREAT  
HANDOUT!**



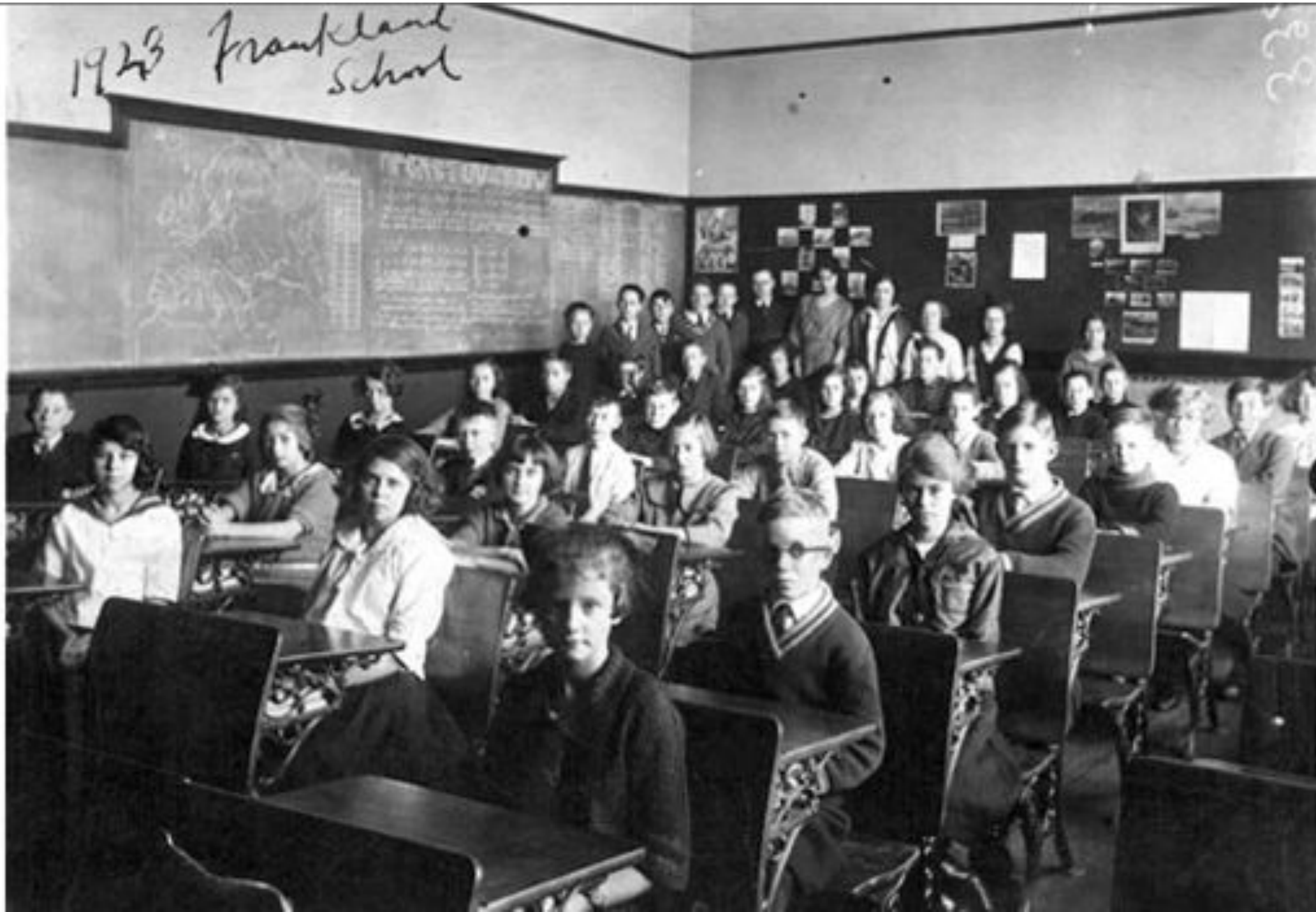
# ENGLISH

...FOR A REALLY  
COOL ACTIVITY.





1923 Frankland  
School



ENGLISH

THE COPY MACHINE  
WASN'T WORKING.

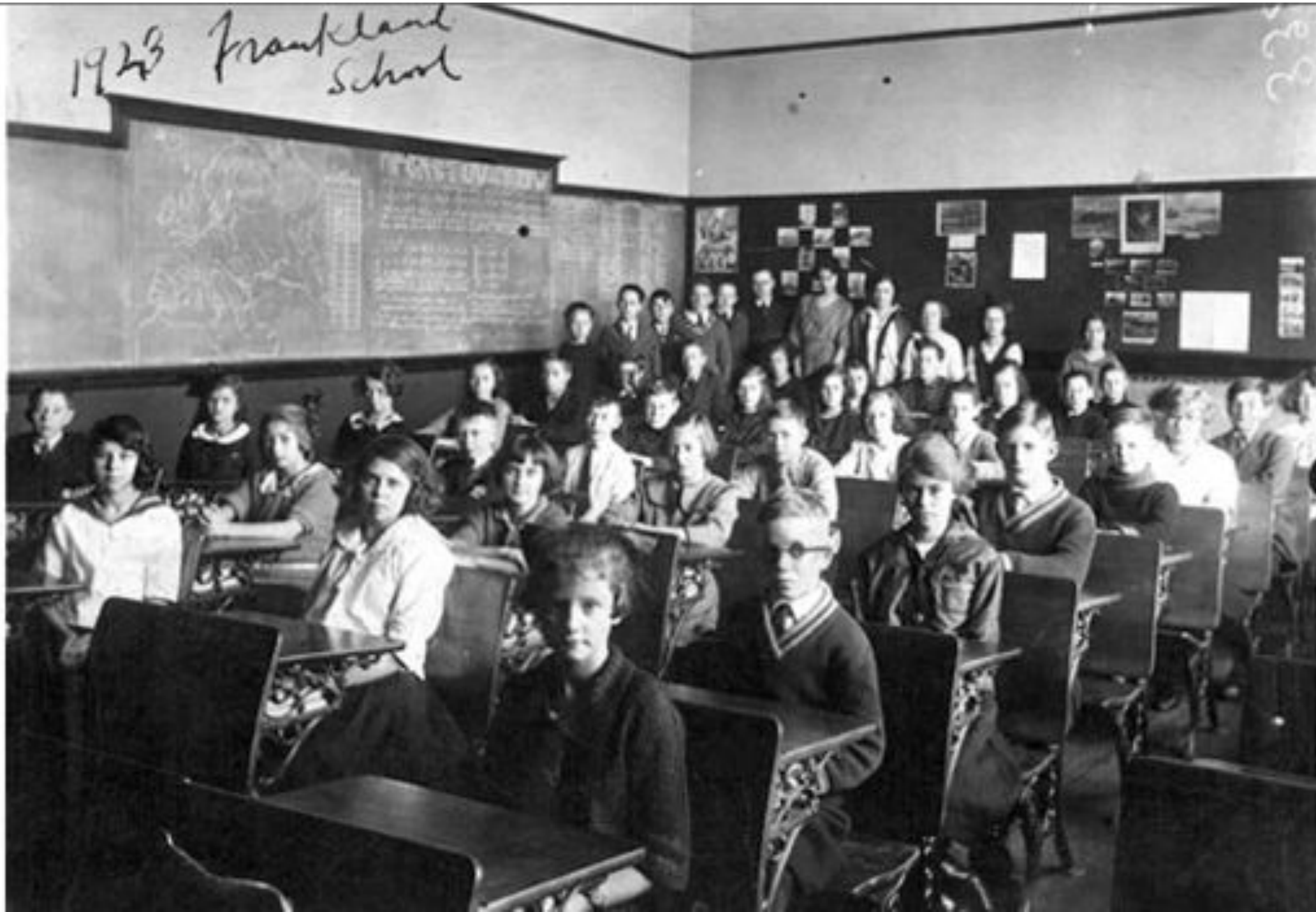


*EARLIER...*





1923 Frankland  
School



# ENGLISH

SO I GUESS WE  
CAN'T DO THAT  
ACTIVITY...



1923 Frankland  
School



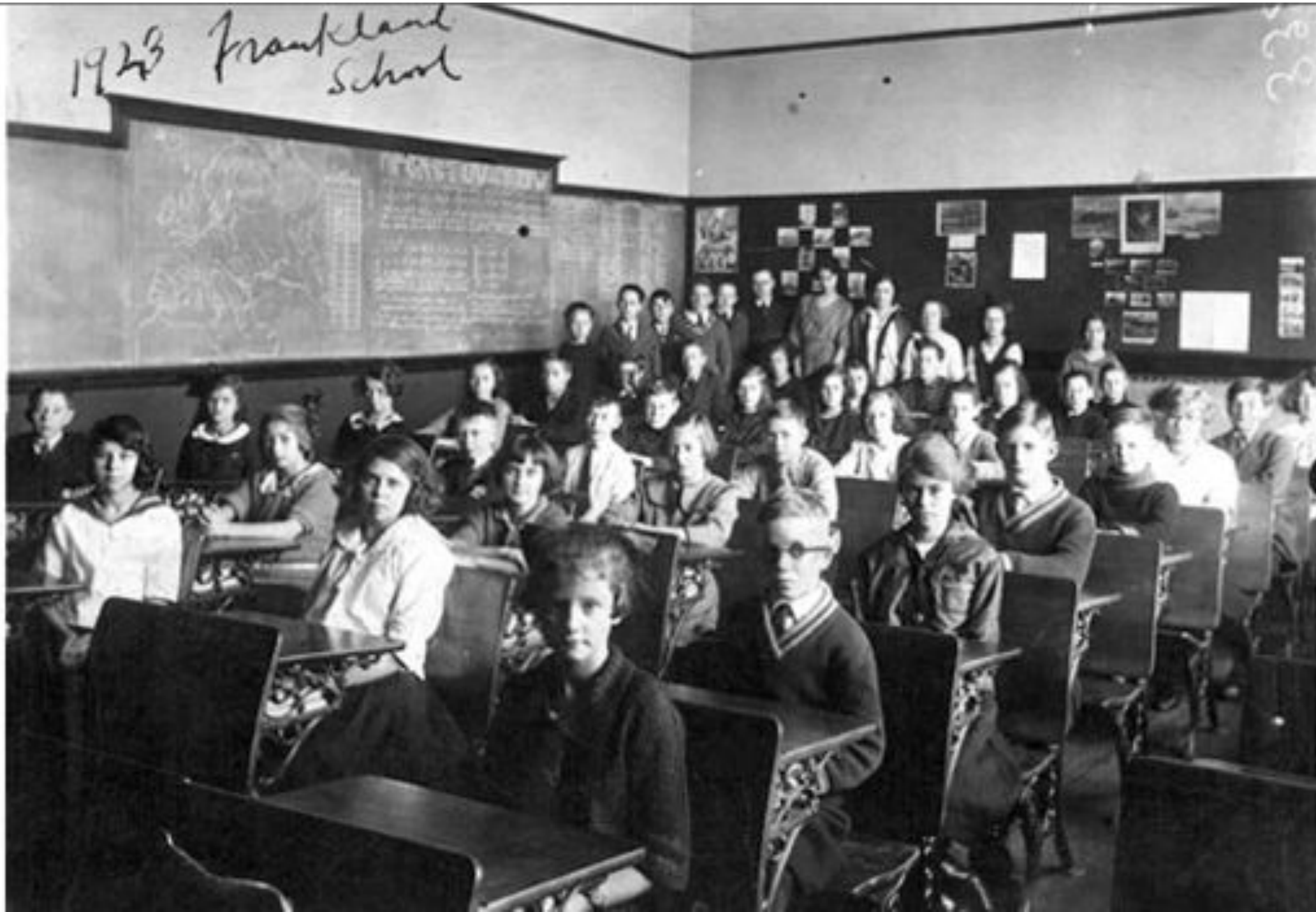


ENGLISH


...THAT I REALLY  
WANTED TO DO.



1923 Frankland  
School







THAT STINKS.

*TRANSLATION = THAT'S BAD*

*LATER, JAVVY REFLECTS...*








I SHOULDN'T MAKE EXCUSES  
TO THE CLASS...

EVEN IF I WANT THEM TO  
KNOW WHAT  
TOUGH LUCK I'M HAVING...


A piece of brown, fibrous material, possibly a sponge or a piece of wood, is shown in the bottom left corner. A thought bubble originates from this material, containing the text "...AND HOW HARD I WORK." The background is a solid dark grey.

...AND HOW HARD  
I WORK.





BECAUSE EXPLAINING  
MY PROBLEMS, WELL,  
HOW DOES THAT HELP  
THEM LEARN?

A small, textured, brown object, possibly a piece of wood or bark, is positioned in the lower-left corner of the image. A thought bubble originates from this object, consisting of three small circles leading into a larger, cloud-like shape.

I GUESS WE TEACHERS  
SHOULD ALWAYS ASK  
OURSELVES IF WHAT  
WE'RE SAYING BENEFITS  
OUR STUDENTS.  
AND HOW.



# The End



## **Part 3**

# **Student Talk and Presentations**

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## Speaking Task

Students talk in groups **without advance preparation**

## Presentation

Students are asked to **prepare** to speak on a topic

# Should students give presentations in English?

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**Take Poll 8**

# What are advantages and disadvantages of student presentations?

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# Advantages of Student Presentations

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Preparing involves multiple skills:

- Thinking
- Organization
- Research
- Reading
- Writing and note-taking
- Speaking practice

# Disadvantages of Student Presentations

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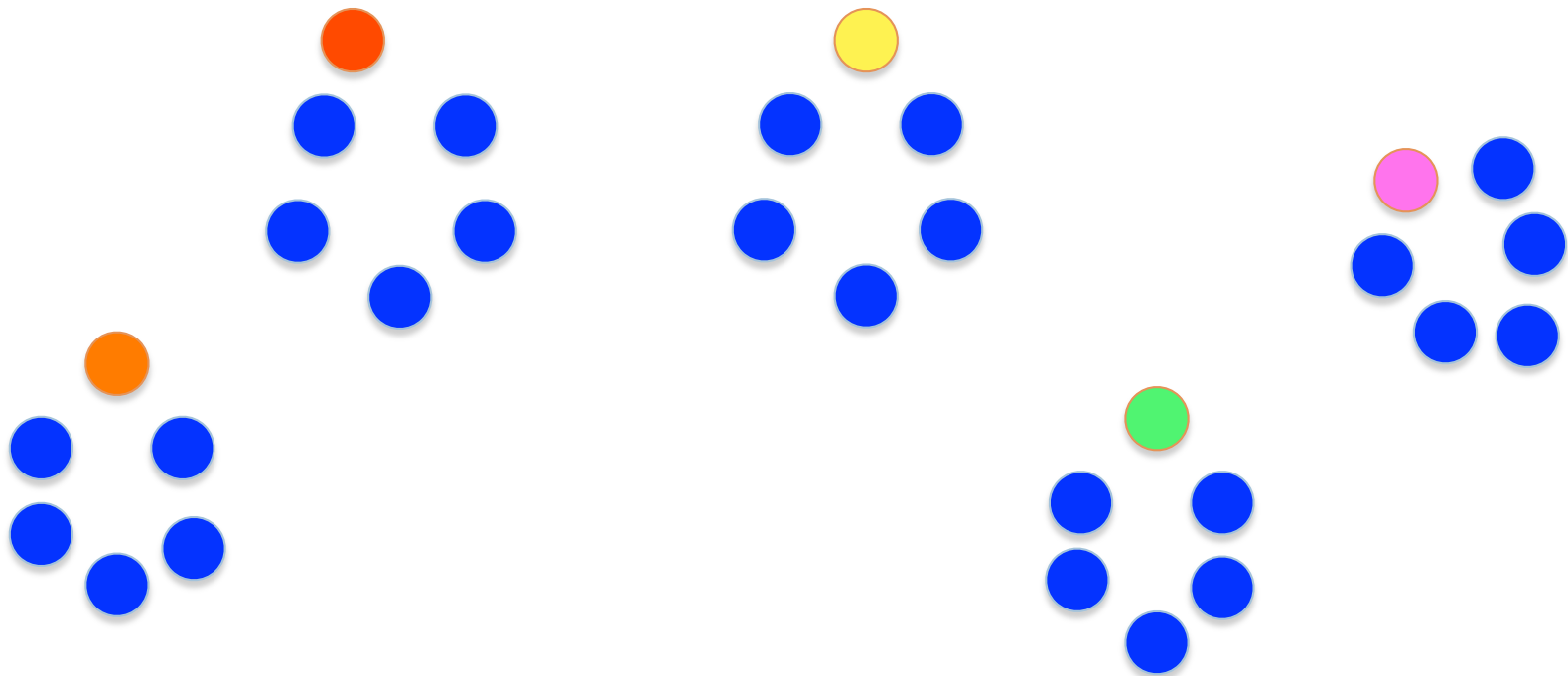
- Can cause students stress
- Does not reflect how students will often use their speaking skills in life
- If one student presents and the rest of class listens, we are not increasing STT
- Often students just read their presentation
- Poor use of class time: e.g., 30 students with 5-minute presentations = 2.5 hours

# Use Group Format for Presentations

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class of 30 students

3-minute presentations

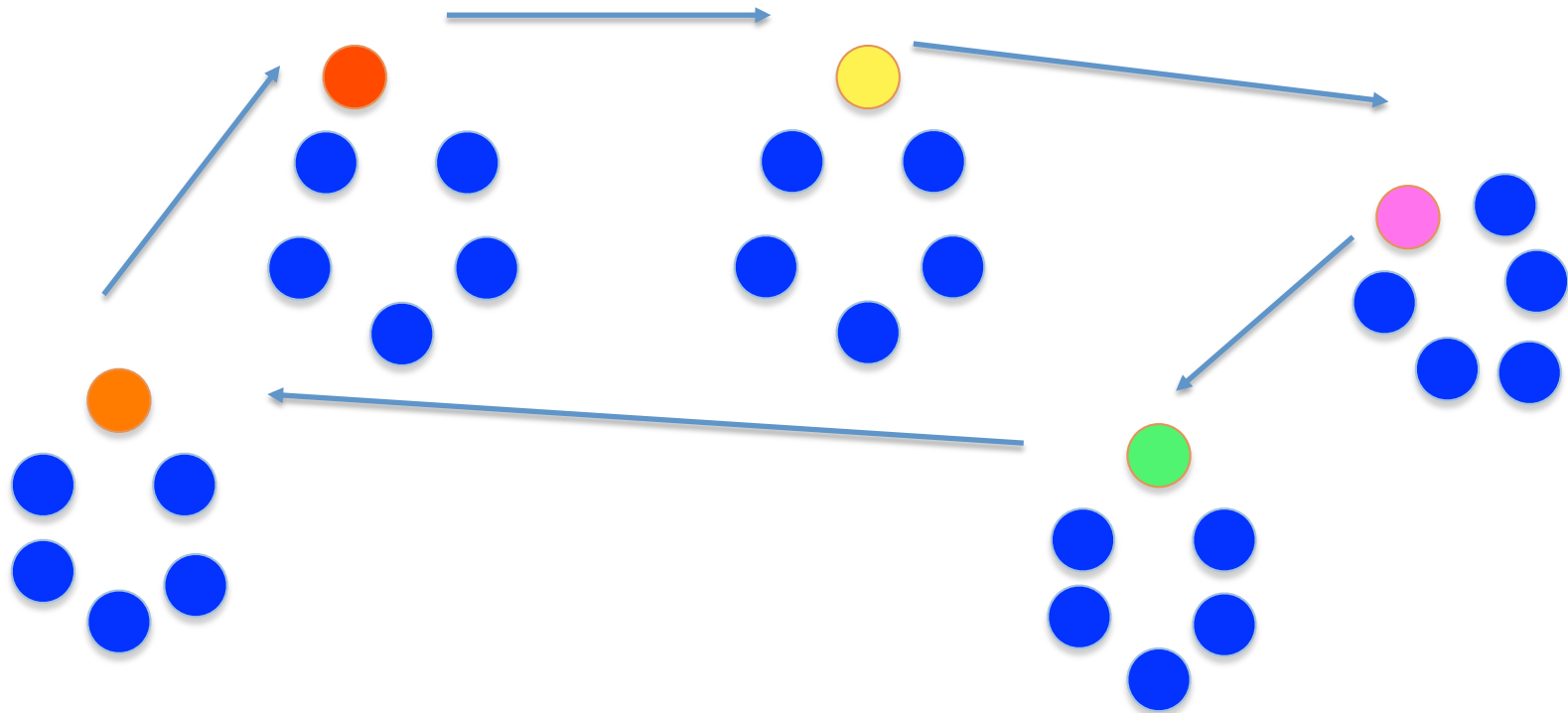


     = presenters

# Use Group Format for Presentations

class of 30 students

3-minute presentations



● ● ● ● ● = presenters

presenters rotate, repeating presentation

# Consider Video Presentations

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- Students record a 1-minute presentation using a phone's video camera
- Upload it to internet
- Other students watch *at home*
- Audience students write a brief response or record a brief audio/video response





# Take the Teacher Talk Type Video Challenge

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- Enlist a teacher friend
- Your friend films your lesson
- Do you see any Unfortunate Teacher Talk Types?
- What is good? What can you improve on?
- Are you taking advantage of pauses?



# Take the Stopwatch Challenge

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- Record one lesson (audio or video)
- Later, use a stopwatch to precisely time:
  - How much you talk
  - How much students talk
  - How long it takes to explain things
  - ...and more!



# Albina's Stopwatch Challenge

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“While analyzing my taped lessons many questions arose. First, I could not account for 12 minutes of my lesson. They got wasted. Where do I waste my lesson time and how can I use my lesson time more efficiently?”



— Albina Krasnova, 2011

“Establishing Rapport with Your Students”

<http://www.hltmag.co.uk/aug11/sart08.htm>

# The Unexamined Life

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We spend a lot of time examining our students'  
English skills and progress

It's so easy to forget about ourselves!

"The unexamined life is not worth living."

— Plato

It's Webinar Wednesday!

# Awareness Outcomes?

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## 1 Teacher Talk Time

- Do you have new insight into how much you talk in class, when, and why?

Take Poll 9

## 2 Unfortunate Teacher Talk Types

- Have you increased awareness of these habits in a useful way?

## 3 Student Talk and Presentations

- Will you try presentations in small groups?

# Teacher Talk: Presentation Skills for Teachers

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I look forward to seeing you on the Ning!

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