

Conversation Circles

This activity is adapted from a Pinterest pin to meet specific ACTFL and NCSSFL Can-Do statements. See the full document here:

<http://www.actfl.org/publications/guidelines-and-manuals/ncssfl-actfl-can-do-statements>

- Intermediate Mid Interpersonal Communication: I can start, maintain, and end a conversation on a variety of topics.
- Intermediate Mid Interpersonal Communication: I can exchange information about subjects of personal interest to me.
- Intermediate Low Presentational Writing: I can write about something I've learned.

The purpose of this activity is to make connections between students and text. In the novel, *Vida y Muerte en la Mara Salvatrucha* (available on www.tprstorytelling.com), the anonymous author goes through many trials as he grows up in gang territory in Los Angeles.

In this activity, students will show their skills in interpersonal communication as they discuss the novel in 3 minute timed increments. One of the keys to increasing proficiency is to continue to add detail to conversations. A 3 minute timer encourages students to milk the story for all of the details they can think of! I give a 5 point grade for this activity, if they participate the entire time and use only TL, they earn the full 5 points. The note sheet helps me look back and see what they said. I will give feedback on the note sheet about what I observed during the conversation.

Make half as many copies as you have students in class. Divide students into groups of 4. If you have an uneven number, you can always create a group of 5.

A	B
C	D

Round one: Student A talks to student B, Student C to student D. If there is a 5th group member, that person can join A and B in their discussion. Set a 3 minute timer. Topic: What do you know about the anonymous author's mother and father. When the timer sounds, set a 2 minute timer and have groups write notes in the first

conversation circle on their handout. This will be a nice reference for you as you are giving speaking grades.

Round two: Student A works with student C, Student B with student D. If there is a 5th student, s/he will work with the A/C group. This time their topic is: What do you know about the anonymous author's initiation and first mission? Follow the 3 minute timer up with a 2 minute note session.

Round 3: Student A works with student D, Student B with student C. If there is a 5th, s/he will work with A/D. The final topic is: What do you know about Gustavo and Pedro? Follow the 3 minute timer with a 2 minute note session.

Have students hand in note sheets for your reference. The grade should be based on their participation in the conversation.

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¿Qué saben de la vida del autor anónimo de Vida y muerte en la Mara Salvatrucha? En un grupo de 4, van a hablar de 3 temas diferentes y van a hablar de cada tema durante 3 minutos. ¡Piensen bien los detalles de la novela!

3 minutes: Talk to your partner about the narrator's parents. Speak only Spanish and try to extend your discussion the whole 3 minutes.

¿Qué saben de los padres del narrador anónimo?

¿Qué saben de su iniciación y primera misión?

3 minutes: Change partners and discuss the narrator's initiation and first mission. How much detail can you give?

3 minutes: Change partners and discuss Gustavo and Pedro. Who are they? What do you know about them? What kind of an influence are they on the narrator?

¿Qué saben de Gustavo y Pedro?