

Important Tips for Pairing Students for Buddy Writing



Directions: Refer to the table below to learn how to best pair your students for Buddy Writing tasks. The second page of this resource contains a survey you can have your students complete to help you pair them by similar interests.

Buddy Writing Pairing	✔ Benefits	✘ Negatives	Tips or Tricks
Pair by Interest Students are paired based on things they are interested in writing about.	- Both students can write on similar topics that they both enjoy - Students can learn new skills from each other while writing.	- Since students are not paired by ability, students who are higher may get frustrated with lower ability students. - They may end up doing all the work themselves and the lower ability student would not learn anything.	- Give students a survey to determine their interests. - Pair students based off common interests or answers on the survey. - Try pairing students by both ability and interests.
Pair by Ability Students are paired so that they are matched up with a student of similar ability, or students are paired so that a higher student is with a medium-level student, and a medium student is paired with a lower-level student.	- Students who are paired by similar ability can share ideas and write something together that is on par with their abilities. - Students who are paired by differing abilities can work together. This can help to improve the writing of some of the lower-level students.	- Students may not be able to agree on the topic they are writing on, especially if they don't have similar interests or ideas. - Some higher-level students may get frustrated or do most of the work.	- Pair students after determining what their different levels or abilities are. - Pair students who are high with medium leveled students and medium leveled students with lower-level students to avoid frustration.
Pair by Skill Determine a skill that students need to work on and then pair students together. You can pair one student who hasn't mastered the skill with a student who has mastered the skill, or pair two students who haven't mastered a skill together and meet with them to teach them the skill.	- Students who haven't mastered a skill can learn from a peer who has mastered that skill. - You can meet with students in pairs and teach them the same skills and watch them apply those skills to their writing.	- Students who have mastered the skill could get frustrated with the other student who hasn't mastered the skill. - Two students who are paired together may have difficulty applying the skill without help.	- Pair students who need to work on a skill after you have determined what skills could be improved. - Plan to meet with students to teach them a mini lesson on the skill.
Pair by English Language Ability Pair students who are native speakers with non-native speakers.	- Native speakers can encourage language use in non-native English speakers. - English Language Learners can acquire new vocabulary from their peers through conversation and writing.	Students can get frustrated if not paired well. (Ex: Native English speakers could get frustrated if paired with an English Language Learner who is a beginning speaker and writer.)	- Be mindful about the way that you pair students. - Pair students who are Advanced English speakers with Native English speakers. - If pairing different levels, use flexible grouping often so students work with students of varying proficiency levels.

Sample Student Interest Surveys

Elementary Interest Survey

Name: _____

1. What do you like to do for fun?

2. What is your favorite animal?

3. What is your favorite sport?

4. What types of books do you like to read? OR What is your favorite book?

5. What do you want to be when you grow-up?

6. What is your favorite school subject?

7. What is your favorite food?

8. What is your favorite color?

9. Tell me about your family. How many brothers and sisters do you have? Who do you live with?

10. Is there anything else you would like for me to know about you?

Secondary Interest Survey

Name: _____

1. What do you like to do in your spare time?

2. What kind of music do you enjoy?

3. Do you play any sports or like to watch a particular sport?

4. What types of books do you like to read? OR What is your favorite book?

5. Where do you see yourself 5 years from now? 10 years from now?

6. What is your favorite school subject?

7. What is your least favorite school subject?

8. What electives do you take in school?

9. Tell me about your family. How many brothers and sisters do you have? Who do you live with?

10. Is there anything else you would like for me to know about you?
