

Pairs Share Voice

What is it?

Pairs Shared Voice is a collaborative writing and performance strategy in which partners jointly create an answer, observation, story, song, or poem and then recite or sing their piece together. The goal is for students to synthesize what they have learned in an expressive format that promotes shared ownership, creativity, and communication. This strategy is especially effective after reading, research, or concept learning when students need to summarize, extend, or reinterpret information in a new form. It works well when lessons integrate content with the arts, reinforce concepts through storytelling, or build classroom community through shared expression.

Purpose

Pairs Shared Voice encourages students to move beyond recall into creative synthesis. By constructing a shared piece of writing, partners negotiate meaning, identify important ideas, and express content through narrative, poetic, or musical forms. The strategy supports differentiated learning, allowing students to contribute through writing, performance, or idea generation. It strengthens comprehension, communication, author's craft awareness, and collaboration.

Steps in the Process

1. Give partners a few minutes to brainstorm, first alone, then together, focusing on the topic's most important information or features, including an appropriate tone and themes.
2. Partners write their answer, observation, story, song, or poem together. This can involve:
 - Taking turns writing sentences or phrases.
 - Discussing word choice, imagery, or plot development for a story.
 - Ensuring a clear flow and cohesion in their writing.
 - Utilizing peer review to offer edits and revisions before finalizing.
3. Depending on the activity, partners can take a few minutes to practice their creation together, before performing.
4. Partners present to the class or small groups. Reinforce norms of respectful listening and positive community-building. Model and support constructive feedback if used.

Example 1: Social Studies Example

Create a “Two Voices, One History” Poem

Have students browse a list of historical figures, landmarks, or events from the current social studies unit (e.g., Harriet Tubman, the Pony Express, the Statue of Liberty, Sacagawea, the first moon landing). Encourage them to select a topic that interests them or one they want to understand more deeply. Partners then choose two perspectives connected to the topic.

1. Partners begin by brainstorming ideas before writing their poem. Information should include:

- Key facts about the figure/event
- Roles or perspectives of the two voices
- Important actions, challenges, or contributions
- Feelings, hopes, or experiences those voices could express

2. Partners write their “Two Voices, One History” poem. They can:

- Write alternating lines from each voice.
- Add shared lines read together.
- Use simple descriptive language that reflects accurate historical information.
- Take turns writing or draft separate parts and merge into a cohesive poem.

3. Craft a meaningful closing. Partners may:

- End with a shared theme or message.
- Add a repeated line.
- Sign with a creative pseudonym (e.g., “The History Duo”).

4. Partners meet with another pair for revision prior to performing.

Teacher Model:

Harriet Tubman:

I guided people toward freedom under the stars.

Traveler:

I followed your courage through the dark woods.

Together:

We walked the path to freedom.

Example 2: Secondary Science

Create a “Dear Element” Letter

Have students browse the periodic table and select an element connected to current learning (e.g., atomic structure, bonding, electron configuration, reactivity, or periodic trends).

1. Partners brainstorm scientific information including:
 - Atomic number and structure
 - Group/period characteristics
 - Chemical properties and bonding behavior
 - Real-world applications
 - Historical facts or discoveries
2. Partners write their “Dear Element” letter. They can:
 - Address the element directly.
 - Introduce its scientific importance.
 - Use precise vocabulary (valence electrons, isotopes, oxidation state).
 - Explain how atomic structure relates to properties.
 - Divide writing tasks and merge sections.
3. Craft a creative closing summarizing the element’s significance. Partners may sign with a pseudonym (e.g., “Team Chemical Bond”).
4. Partners revise with another group for accuracy and presentation quality before performing.

Teacher Model:

Dear Oxygen,

You are one of the most important elements on our planet.

Your eight protons and reactive nature make you a key part of water, air, and combustion.

We depend on your ability to bond with other elements, especially during respiration. Your role in chemical reactions helps fuels burn and living things survive.

Thank you for being such an essential part of both technology and life.

Sincerely,

Team Chemical Bond

Example 3: Secondary Math

Create a “Dear Pi” Letter

Have students explore π (pi) as a mathematical constant, selecting an angle, formula, or geometric relationship where π is essential.

1. Partners brainstorm ideas such as:

- Pi in circumference and area formulas
- Radian measure and the unit circle
- Pi as an irrational number
- Real-world applications
- Historical origins of pi

2. Partners write their “Dear Pi” letter. They can:

- Begin with an engaging hook.
- Explain how pi functions in formulas and concepts studied.
- Use vocabulary such as radius, radian, irrational, periodic.
- Collaborate on different sections before merging.

3. Craft a meaningful closing emphasizing pi’s importance in mathematics. Partners may sign with names like “The Algebraic Duo.”

4. Peer review ensures mathematical accuracy prior to performance.

Teacher Model:

Dear Pi,

You never end, yet you are always the same value in every circle.

Your digits help us calculate circumference, area, and even model waves and rotations.

Because of you, we can measure arcs, angles, and curves using radians.

Your irrational nature makes you mysterious, but your consistency makes geometry work.

Thank you for shaping so many formulas we rely on in math and science.

Sincerely,

The Algebraic Duo

Digital Adaptations for Pairs Shared Voice

Digital Brainstorming & Organizer Creation

- Teachers can share a collaborative Google Slides, Padlet, or Canva brainstorming template for partners to collect and organize ideas together in real time.

Collaborative Digital Writing

- Partners can co-write in a shared Google Doc, Microsoft Word Online, or Canva Doc, using comments or suggestion mode to refine language, tone, and structure.

Digital Rehearsal & Practice

- Students can rehearse in Google Meet breakout rooms or record practice clips using Flipgrid, Seesaw, or Loom to review and adjust pacing, expression, and timing.

Digital Performance Options

- Partners can record and submit their final performance using Flipgrid, Seesaw, or Nearpod Video, then share it in Google Classroom or on a class Padlet board for peer viewing.

Digital Feedback & Revision

- Students can exchange feedback through Google Classroom comments, Microsoft Teams reactions, or Nearpod Collaborate boards before revising their shared writing.

Digital Creative Enhancements

- Students may enhance their performance with simple visuals using Google Slides, Canva, or Adobe Express to create title cards, illustrations, or background elements.