

Peer instruction

Many instructors notice that students feel they understand a concept while listening, but struggle when asked to apply it. Peer Instruction is an active learning method that uses **conceptual questions** and **peer discussion** to **deepen understanding**.

Complexity: ☕☕☕

Group size: large classroom

Format: in-person or online

Learning objectives / benefits

- **Identify and correct misconceptions** through peer explanations
- Increase **active participation and engagement**
- **Improve reasoning skills** and the ability to articulate explanations

Implementation

Teacher prepares **conceptual questions** and provides resources

Teacher gives a **brief introduction to concept** or some information

Teacher asks a **question**

Teacher **publishes the answers**

Teacher **polls again** after discussion

Teacher **explains the correct answer** and clarify misunderstandings

Students **work on the subject**

Students **vote individually**

Students **discuss and justify their answers** in small groups

Challenges and recommendations

- This method is **time-consuming**: keep an eye on the clock for each stage
- Designing **strong conceptual questions** in the first stage of the process is crucial and challenging – not all questions work equally
- Some students are **reluctant to participate**: try to create an atmosphere of trust and the right to make mistakes

Further reading

- Eric Mazur, *Peer Instruction: A User's Manual* (1997).
- Crouch & Mazur (2001), "*Peer Instruction: Ten years of experience and results.*"
- Mazur Group – Harvard resources on Peer Instruction.

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