

Teaching Tip: Setting up the Space

TASK:

1. Draw the space(s) where your lessons take place. You can use the letter S to represent the students and use a T to represent the teacher(s). Use arrows to indicate frequent avenues of conversation and interaction. For example, if students often discuss in pairs, draw an arrow between pairs of students.
2. Decide: Who is dominant? Can students see one another? Can they see you? Is it possible to move around and rearrange the room during the lesson? What message does the room send about your teaching? What message does it send to the students?
3. Draw five more possible arrangements that would work for your group. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each? Choose two that you could try this month.

TIPS: Have you thought of horseshoes, squares, two lines that face each other, sitting in pairs, two opposing teams in opposite corners, four groups in four corners, or a double wheels (a circle on the inside facing a circle on the outside)? These and other arrangements allow students to look at each other. Sitting in rows allows them only to look at you.