

Studying for Success in Dr. Roblyer's POLS

How to Make the Most of Quizzing Partners

How to get a quizzing partner

- Practice your Aggie networking skills
 - Ask students sitting around you in class
- Use the “*Seeking a Quizzing Partner?*” link on *eCampus*
 - Discussion board format
 - Start a thread to make a request
 - Respond to a thread started by someone else
- Work with a friend you already know who is also taking me this semester
- Get creative!

To get a good quizzing partner, be one!

- A good quizzing partner IS someone who...
 - Is **serious** about both of you understanding the course material
 - Has a semi-**compatible** schedule, and **communicates** with you when adjustments are necessary
 - Is **not afraid to ask fair questions** that you probably can't answer easily
 - Is helpful and **supportive**
- A good quizzing partner IS NOT someone who...
 - **Knows all** of the material already (...and won't let you forget that fact)
 - **Comes to your "rescue"** whenever you get stuck answering a question
 - Needs to use your quizzing time to **chat about other things**

Quizzing partners quiz—they don't study!

- Quizzing is...
 - Creating **new neural pathways**—you don't just learn, you remember!
 - **Verifying understanding AND exposing blind spots** in the knowledge of both partners
 - 1) **Asking** short-essay questions
2) **Waiting and listening** to answers
3) **Checking** those answers against the course material and your own understanding
 - Making yourself & your partner very **uncomfortable** sometimes, and somewhat **uncomfortable** much of the time (at least early on)
- Quizzing is not...
 - Asking **simple** questions (and stopping there)
 - Asking a question, then **jointly discussing** the answer
 - **Mastering** the material yourself **beforehand**

How to quiz like a whiz!

- **Step 1:** Set aside time (at least 20-30 mins at a setting, but can be more)
 - **Location** should be somewhere that you may talk freely. Be creative, but convenience is a must.
 - **Bring** the lecture slides and your notes along, **as well as all reading assignments**
 - Make a pact with your partner to **silence phones** or at least ringtones
- **Step 2:** Decide who starts as “Quizzer.” That person then...
 - Uses the **slides/pages as a guide** (without the partner being able to see them)
 - Poses a **question** that invites the partner to **explain the concepts** on one slide/page or a related group of slides/pages
- **Step 3:** The “Quizzee,” responds with the best answer she/he can
 - If she/he **gets stuck**, it is okay to ask for a hint, if that is all that is needed
 - It is also OK to **admit that they don't know** any more of the answer
 - The “Quizzer” **listens and checks** their partner's work

An example: *Good quizzing questions about the Scientific Method*

- What is its objective?
- What are its distinctive characteristics?
 - How do each of these contribute to its objectives?
- What is this method distinctive from?
- Is the scientific method used to find the final answer to a question?
 - Why or why not?
 - How does the nature of causality tie into this reality?

How to quiz like a whiz!

- **Step 4: Be interactive**: when the *Quizzee* runs out of information they understand, or makes a mistake, the Quizzer should hand his/her notes over, switch roles, and answer her/his own question
 - If **neither partner** has sufficient understanding to complete the answer, then more study is necessary
 - Beware of shifting into a **traditional “study group” process**—if you do this, it should be brief and you should return quickly to the quizzing format
 - The best solution to discovered gaps in understanding may be to agree to **study the topic individually** before the next partner meeting, but then quiz that same question later!
- **Step 5: Quizzing is give and take**: regularly switch roles as *Quizzer* and *Quizzee*
 - You each can **learn a lot in both roles**
 - **Be specific in your feedback** about omissions and errors, or appreciation for the things you learned from their answer

No "pain," no gain!

- If you and your study partner are **not making each other uncomfortable** with your level of knowledge of the material in the lectures, you **are probably not achieving the understanding** you will need to excel on my exams
 - However, no need to go beyond the material contained in the course
- If needed, **turn up the heat!**
 - You are each other's **POLS personal trainer**, so don't set cushy goals and don't accept sloppy results!
- *If you and your partner are not clear on what you should do in certain situations, see me or call me, and I'll provide additional assistance*
 - **"Couples therapy"** is sometimes the best way for me to diagnose the problem and prescribe a remedy!

Push through, then enjoy the *synergy!*

- Working together, study partners can accomplish more than they could individually
 - **Accountability**
 - Transforming good intentions into actual accomplishments
 - Allowing someone else to “referee” your answers
 - **Efficiency**
 - You’ll learn while both quizzing and being quizzed
 - You’ll have fewer blind spots
 - **Achievement**
 - The quality of, and pleasure from, the academic “product” of your concerted efforts will surprise you!