

Bias-Free Brainstorming

A Teacher's Cheat Sheet

Brainstorming shouldn't belong to just the loudest students. Too often, great ideas get lost because some voices dominate while others stay quiet. These simple formats give every student a fair shot at sharing - and help you uncover the creativity that's hiding in plain sight.

Silent Storming

- Students jot down ideas quietly on sticky notes or slips of paper.
- Collect and cluster them on the board or wall.
- Helps quieter voices contribute without pressure.

Think-Pair-Share

- Students think individually about a question, then pair up to share ideas with a partner.
- Pairs then share highlights with the class.
- Builds confidence before sharing with the whole group.

Round Robin

- Students sit in small groups.
- Each person takes a turn sharing one idea before moving on.
- Keeps louder voices from dominating and ensures equal airtime.

Gallery Walk

- Post prompts or problems on chart paper around the room.
- Students walk in groups, adding ideas or comments at each station.
- Encourages movement, collaboration, and idea-building.

Idea Carousel

- Students start in groups and brainstorm on one question.
- After a few minutes, groups rotate to a new question and build on what's already there.
- Promotes layering of ideas and cross-pollination.

Anonymous Submission

- Use slips of paper, a digital tool, or a "classroom idea box."
- Read responses aloud without names attached.
- Creates safety for students to take creative risks.

Pro Tip!

Mix and match! Switching formats keeps brainstorming fresh and gives students multiple ways to shine.