**Carousel Writing**

While Carousel Writing, students will rotate topics in a small group, for a designated amount of time.  With each topic, students will activate their prior knowledge of different topics or different aspects of a single topic through jotting down ideas, until eventually the original topic is back to the original owner, who will summarize the thinking into 1-2 sentences. Prior knowledge will be activated, providing scaffolding for new information to be learned in the proceeding lesson activity.

1. Students will be arranged into groups of 3-5.
2. Each student will receive a handout to read, reflect, and respond over.
   1. They can either have identical handouts, or different handouts on the same topic, depending on the overall learning objective.
   2. For a broader overview of a topic, different handouts can each focus on one aspect. This will require students to think critically over multiple facets of a topic in one strategy.
3. The student reads over the prompt on their individual paper (this can be a provocative statement, a reflective question, an overarching topic, etc.).
4. The student then responds by activating prior knowledge, brainstorming, reflective writing, etc. based on what is required in the prompt.
5. When time is up for the first round, students rotate papers in a clockwise fashion. Time is given to read the prompt and the prior student’s critical thinking and then additional time is given to respond.
6. The students will continue the process until the original paper is back to its original owner. Time is given to read all responses and then the original owner summarizes the thinking in 1-3 sentences.

\*Each round should be timed appropriate to the reading and writing level of the students. Typically, students need at least 1.5 minutes for the first round and then up to an additional minute for each subsequent round to read the new responses, or more as appropriate.

Carousel Writing is a great launch for a Socratic Seminar, Philosophical Chairs or an informal class discussion. It is also a great pre-assessment (since it activates prior knowledge) or formative assessment, depending on how it is structured.