



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

Small Group Teaching



Learning objectives

By the end of this session you should be able to:

- Recognise advantages and disadvantages of small group teaching and identify how to maximise learning
- Select and use appropriate teaching techniques, resources and aids

Who are you teaching?



So what do we need to think about?



Teacher or student centred?



Over to you...

- Discuss the aims and challenges of small group teaching

Over to you...

- Select the 3 most important of each in ranked order
- You have 3 minutes to complete this task

Facilitator Skills

Planning

Consider the aims and objectives, structure and adult learning principles

Is it a “one-off” or a series?

Remember... small group work hinges on preparation



Facilitator Skills

- Set some ground rules
- Plan seating and room set up
- Outline the roles of facilitator and learners
- Prepare audio-visual aids or handouts



Asking questions

Differentiation

consider stage, experience & ability of learners

Closed questions

facilitate recall

Open questions

allow reflection and require higher cognitive functioning

Asking questions

Clarifying questions

check understanding of underlying principles

Justifying questions

to access the reasoning behind a response

Probing/hypothetical questions

extend thinking, explore options

(e.g. to develop differential diagnosis)

Final thoughts on questioning

Make sure you allow thinking time, alone or in groups
It's easier to be stupid in pairs

Provide prompts

Rephrase the question

Listen to response



Methods to try

- Brainstorming
- Buzz groups
- Snowballing
- Rounds
- Circular interviewing
- Line-ups
- Role play



A word cloud featuring the word 'brainstorm' in a large, bold, dark green font. To its left, the words 'thoughts' and 'ideas' are stacked vertically in an orange font. Above 'brainstorm' is the word 'eureka' in a red font. Below 'brainstorm' is the word 'experiences' in a green font. To the left of 'brainstorm' is the word 'opinions' in a green font.

ideas
thoughts

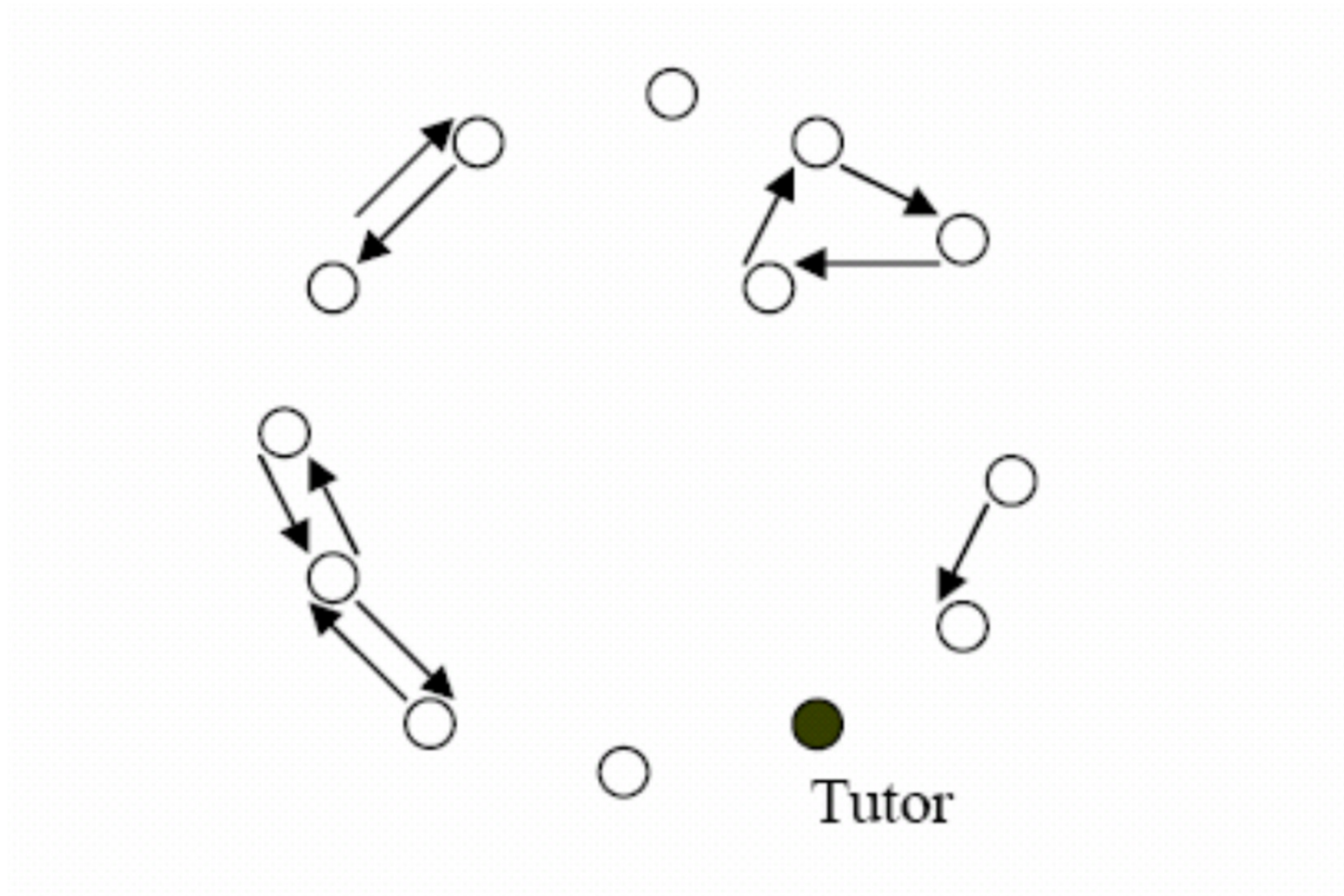
eureka

opinions

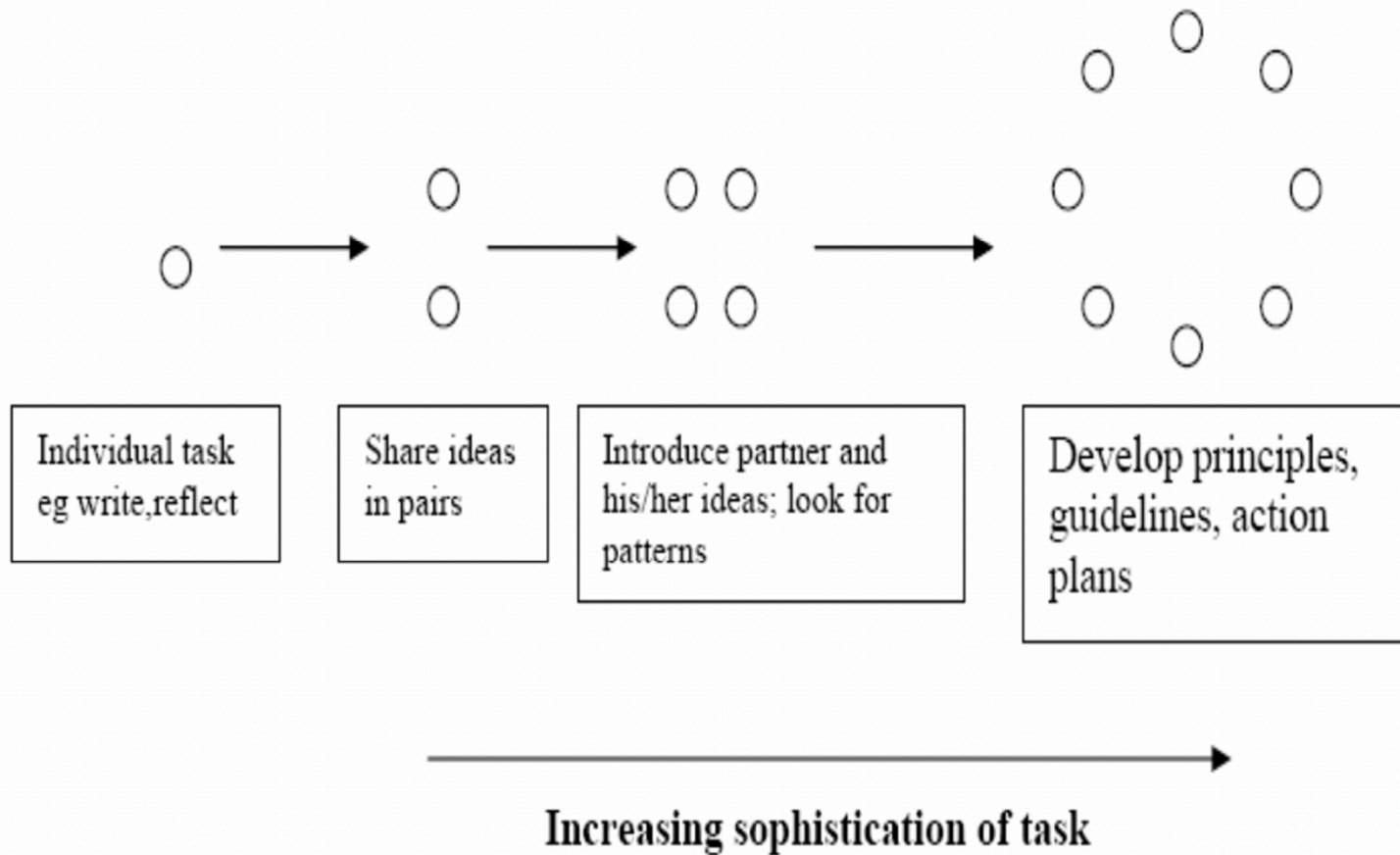
brainstorm

experiences

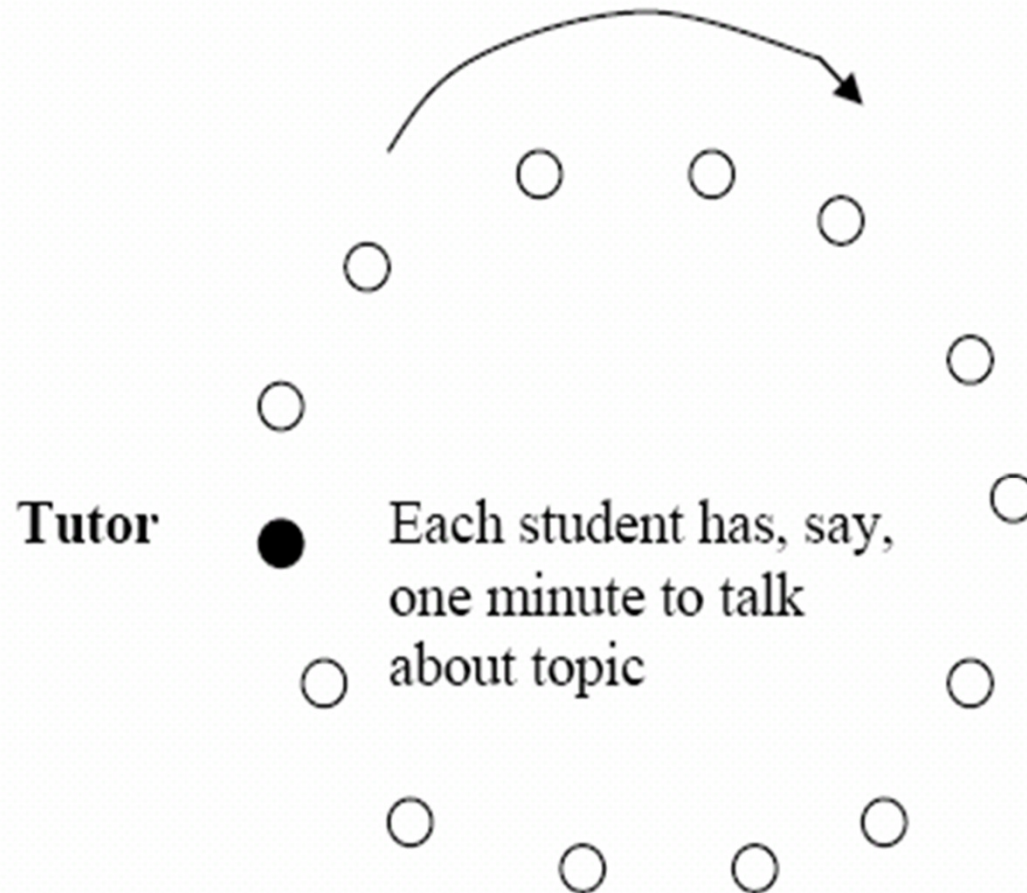
Buzz Groups



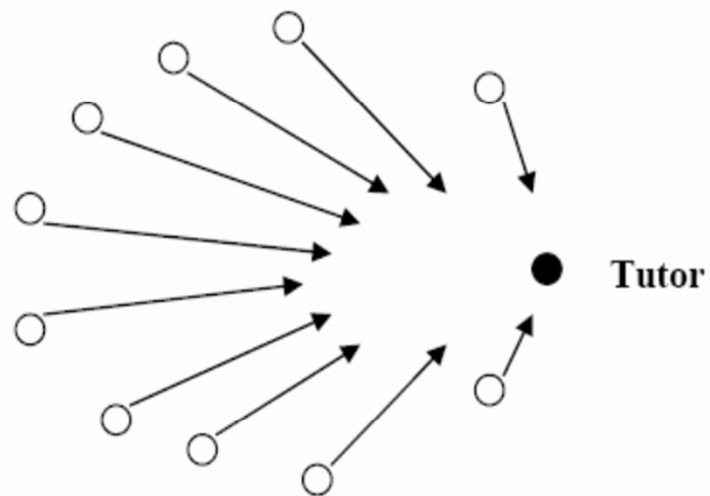
Snowballing



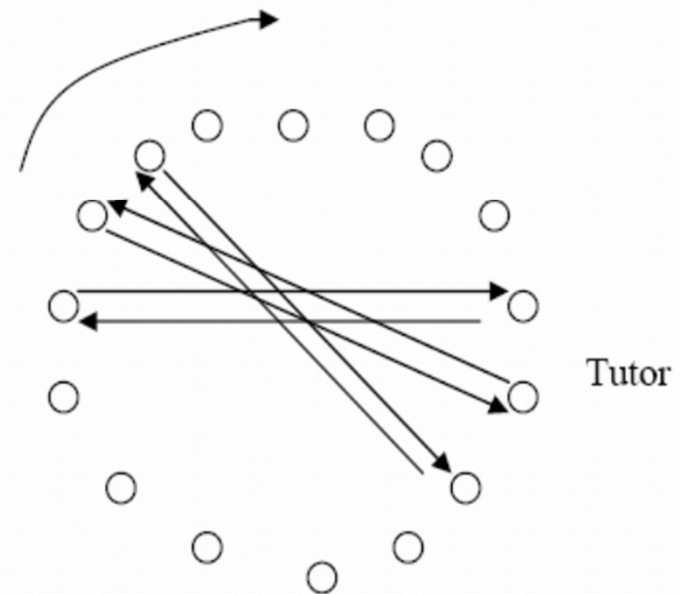
Rounds



Circular interviewing



Traditional interaction



Students ask questions of each other (prepared on cards?)

Line-Ups



Role play



Over to you...

- Plan a 1 hour session to teach your students/trainees on a topic of your choice
- Base your session on the achievement of one or two objectives
- Draft a session plan including 1 or 2 of the small group teaching techniques which we have just discussed

You have **10 minutes** to complete this activity

So where do we go from here?



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