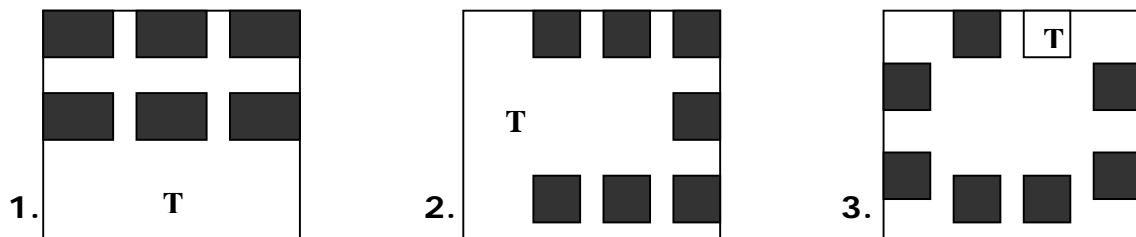


Classroom Layouts

Don't be afraid to get Ss to move the chairs and make that part of the lesson. Different seating arrangements make a big difference to the dynamics of a classroom.

Similarly, don't be shy about asking your students to stand up and move around the classroom. Take a look at the following seating arrangements:

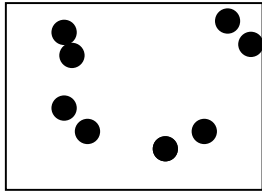


1. This is a traditional, school classroom layout. It states quite clearly that the teacher, at the front of the room, is the most important character. The students are there to learn from the teacher. While this layout has some useful formal applications (e.g. for taking tests), it pretty much rules out any interesting communicative activity. Students would tend to sit with the same partner in every lesson, so wouldn't benefit from working with other students.

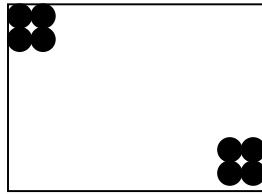
2. This is a far more useful layout. At times the teacher can stand in front of the class and use the whiteboard, where everyone can see. At other times the teacher can move around, either in front or behind of the students to monitor, and give everyone equal attention. This layout makes it easier to get students to swap seats and work with different partners. It also provides an open central floor space for standing / walking activities.

3. Sitting in a circle takes the attention away from the teacher, and creates a feeling of equality in the group. The teacher sitting in the circle can still act as a facilitator, but with a lessened sense of authority. The teacher can move around the room to monitor, and this layout also provides open floor space for activities.

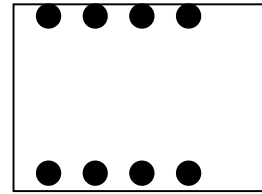
Have a think about what you can do with these patterns ...



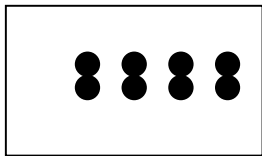
pairs



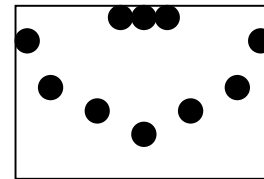
enemy corners



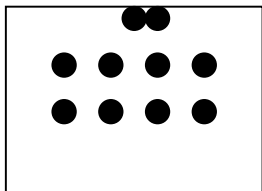
opposing teams



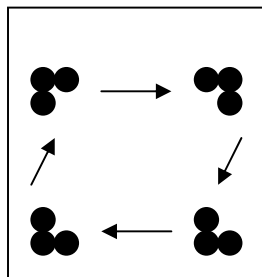
face-to-face
or back-to-back



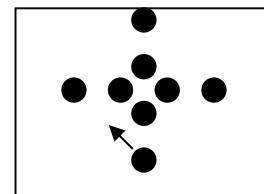
panel



public meeting



buzz groups – Ss change
groups occasionally



wheels – outer wheel moves
round to change pairs