Fishbowl:
Depending on the size of the class, 3-8 students sit in a small circle with 1-3 empty chairs just outside the circle. The rest of the class sits in a larger circle around the inside circle. The instructor poses a controversial claim or position for the “insiders” to discuss, while the “outsiders” listen. Outsiders may become insiders by indicating their desire to join the discussion by sitting in one of the empty chairs just outside the inner circle.

1. **What does the tool do?**
   - a specific way of getting students talking and generating discussion
   - provides a clear structure for getting into the discussion
   - models civil discourse

2. **What makes it work well?**
   - A topic that people have experience with; controversial; claim is short and sweet with multiple positions available
   - clear instructions at the beginning (emphasizing quick points, for example)
   - clear signals at the end
   - teacher has to respect the exercise (if you want to add something, take your turn)

3. **What are the limitations?**
   - doesn’t work for all topics
   - works better for a larger class
   - room configuration (seats attached to the floor, for example)

4. **Extensions and modifications of the exercise:**
   - have students take notes on points raised in the debate
   - require all students to get in
   - appoint a student referee