

Think, Do, Create

Facilitator guide for the two workshop sheets

The sheets take one topic from a course you already teach and turn it into a unit where students ask a question, do something with it, and make something that shows what they learned. This guide says how to run them, alone or with a room.

What the sheets are for

Think, Do, Create is the structure SFBU uses to turn an idea into a unit. Students generate questions (Think), act on one of them (Do), and make something that carries the answer (Create). The sheets apply that structure to one real topic in about forty minutes. A faculty member leaves with a unit plan and one commitment for the first two weeks of term.

TIME

About 40 minutes of work,
60 with a talk and a break.

MATERIALS

Both sheets printed at A3,
one set per person. Pencils.
A course you teach next
term.

FORMAT

Solo with a partner for
three steps. Works alone
with the adjustments on
page 2.

GOES WITH

The on-screen guide, which
shows one course worked
all the way through.

Before you start

Ask each person to pick one course they are teaching next term and one topic inside it they already teach well. Familiar ground works better than a topic that is giving them trouble. Put the on-screen guide up if you have a screen. Its right-hand column follows one business course, BUS 310, Markets and Pricing, through every step, so people see the shape of a finished box before they write in their own.

The ten steps

STEP	WHO, HOW LONG	WHAT TO SAY
1 Your course, your topic	Solo, 4 min	One course, one topic, and roughly which week it lands. Pick the topic you are comfortable with.
2 Write the questions	Solo, 12 min	Questions you would say out loud in that class. Two kinds count: about the discipline, and about what the discipline does in the world. Leave the right-hand column empty.
3 Share with the person next to you	Paired, 6 min each	Read your questions. Watch their face. Then hand over the sheet and let them rank your questions and say why. Write what they said, not what you meant.
4 Keep what you can act on	Solo, 5 min	Cross out anything students could not act on inside the course, and anything one search settles. Three to five survive and travel to sheet two.
5 Skills your course gives them	Solo, 5 min	What students will have by this topic, and what comes later. Only what the course teaches.
6 Choose the doing	Solo then paired, 12 min	Circle the actions students could take with those skills. Write the sentence: students will ____ so that they can _____. Read it to a partner. If they can picture the class, it is ready.
7 Audit the making	Solo, 8 min	Across the whole course as it stands, how often do students make something, how much time does it take, and who sees it? Most courses land on once.
8 The authenticity test	Solo, 8 min	Where could this be handed in without the thinking? Then name the incentive beyond the grade. If there is none, change the design.
9 Defend it	Paired, 5 min each	Explain the whole plan. The partner finds the weak joint, specifically. Write their strongest objection and your change.
10 Into week one	Solo, 4 min	The question you will ask students first, and the week. A date beats a season.

Running it with a room

Call each step from the front and keep the clock. Say who is working (solo or paired) and how long, then stop talking. The on-screen guide has one slide per step with the instructions on the left and the worked sample on the right. Hold the sample up as a shape to copy, not an answer to agree with. When a step ends, say where to go next, since the sheets are dense and people lose their place.

Steps 3, 6 and 9 need a partner. Pair people across departments where you can. A partner from another field asks the questions students will ask.

Running it alone

The sheets work without a room. For step 3, ask a colleague to rank your questions over coffee, or use the AI prompt card and treat the ranking with the same suspicion you would show a colleague. For step 6, read the sentence aloud to anyone who is not in your field. For step 9, write the three hardest objections yourself, or run the card's last prompt.

What a finished sheet looks like

The on-screen guide carries a complete sample. By step 6 the BUS 310 instructor has a sentence: students will trace one month of a real household bill back to the wholesale market and compare it against local data center growth, so that they can say which part of the price is generation and which part is policy. By step 8 the design has changed so that the work needs local numbers only students can go and get. By step 10 there is a question on the board in week one and a date attached. Aim for that level of specificity. A finished sheet names a course, a week, an action, an audience and a date.

The AI prompt card

The card offers five prompts to run in any AI tool beside the sheets. It was written for an earlier edition of the sheets, so use this mapping. Widen the storm belongs to step 2. Find the testable core belongs to step 4. Design the Do, three ways belongs to step 6. Shape the Create belongs to steps 7 and 8. Rehearse the table test belongs to step 9. Everything goes on the sheet by hand, and only what you would say out loud in class is copied over. Keep student names and grades out of anything pasted into an AI tool.

The rule that makes it work. Write in pencil and cross things out freely. A crossed-out question is a question waiting for a different course. The sheet is a unit plan, so it should leave the room looking used.

Afterward

At SFBU the sheets are photographed into a shared CEPI collection and returned, and the commitments are followed up in one-to-one consultations. If you run this elsewhere, photograph the sheets and put a date in the calendar to ask each person about their week-one question. The unit plan is on sheet two. It is meant to be used, not filed.

Related reading: the Think, Do, Create and Course Design pages on the CEPI site, and the Faculty Guidebook, section 3.