Strategies for Managing Large Classrooms

Managing large groups of students in one class can be challenging.

During this session, participants will learn:

- strategies for building community and using technology
- ways to structure group work and interactive discussions
- techniques for keeping large groups of students students engaged, interested, and on task

AE AMERICAN ENGLISH

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Chris has worked as an ESL/EFL educator for over 20 years and as a teacher educator for more than 10 years.

He has an MA in TESOL from Teachers College at Columbia University and an MA in education from the University of California, Irvine's School of Education. He will soon complete his PhD in education at UC Irvine with a dissertation focused on the needs of English language learners in large classes.

He has also served as an English Language Specialist in Cairo, Egypt, helping develop a TESOL certificate course and establishing a virtual exchange between Egyptian teachers and teachers in the U.S.

AE AMERICAN ENGLISH

Strategies for Managing Large Classes

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Online Discussion Questions

- Where do you teach, and how many students are in your classes?
- What makes managing large classes difficult?
- What teaching techniques work best for large classes?
- How can we maximize students' participation in a large class?

The Next Question

Do you have examples of ways to provide structure for your large classes?

Please share your ideas and strategies in the comments.

Two Principles of Managing Large Classes

- Provide structure

- Build community

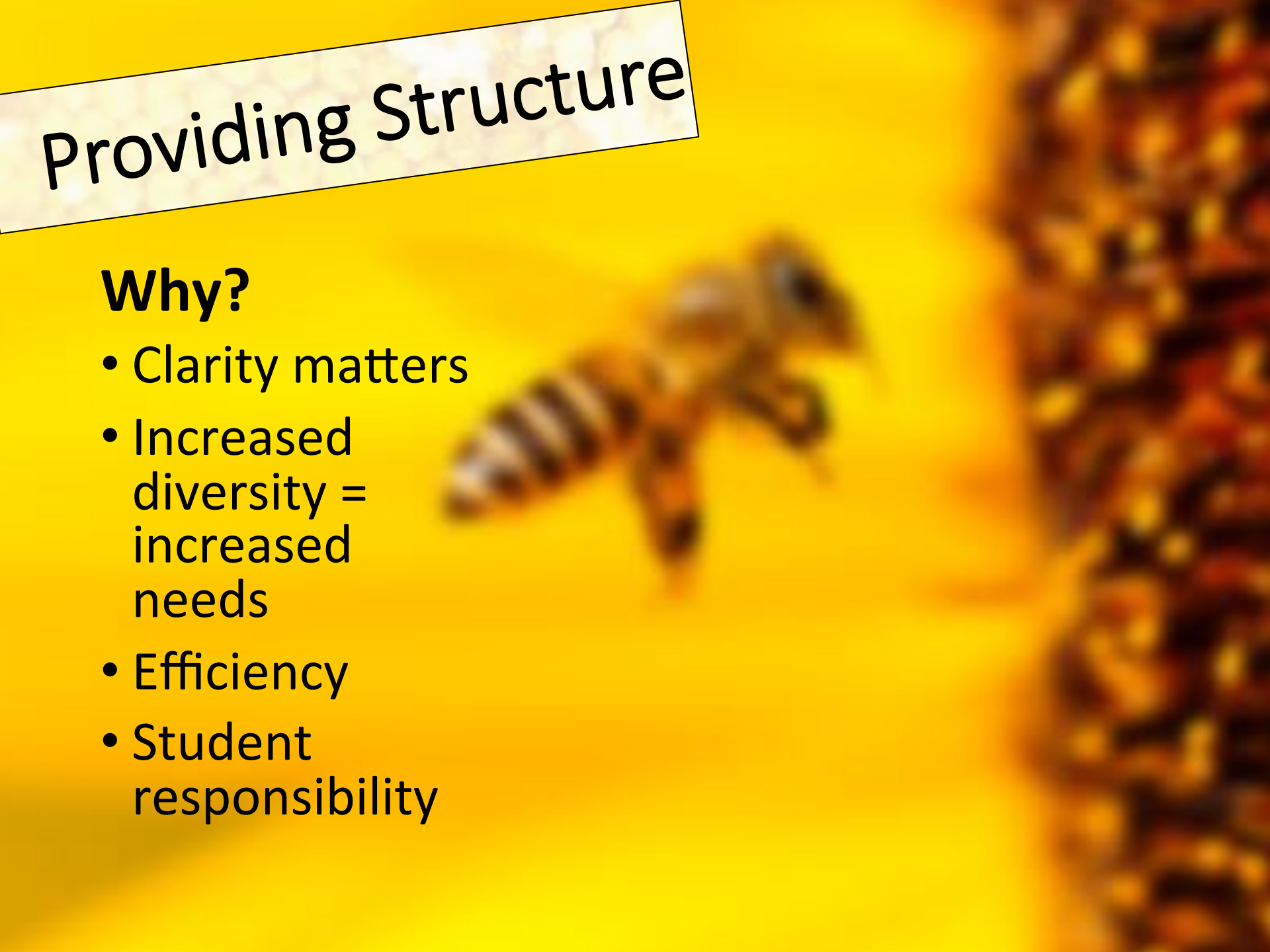
Providing Structure

Providing structure means defining the different parts of our classes, our activities, and our assessments

Providing Structure

Why?

- Clarity matters
- Increased diversity = increased needs
- Efficiency
- Student responsibility



Providing Structure

Example:
Giving instructions

Diversity:

- Use visual support through text and images

Telling students how to arrange the room

Sit in pairs
with one partner facing the screen

Make Groups of Three

Make Rows

Providing Structure

Example:
Giving instructions

Clarity:

- Plan instructions in advance
- Break big instructions into smaller steps
- Check students' comprehension of instructions before they begin a task

Providing Structure

Example:
Giving instructions

Efficiency:

- Give students opening and closing sentences for their work
- Tell students what the closing signal will be

Giving clear instructions

- Role play rules
- Opening sentence
- Closing sentence
- Directions – What did you understand?

Role Play Rules

- Don't stop talking
- End when the teacher turns off the light
- Use the opening and closing sentences

Opening Sentence:

Pat:

"How should we celebrate Tom's birthday?"

Closing Sentence:

Robin:

"I'm afraid I have to go now. Let's talk about this some more tomorrow."

Directions- What did you understand?

Who is Robin? Raise your hand if you are going to be Robin

Repeat the directions in your own words:

- What will you be trying to do during your conversation?
- Who talks first? What do you say?
- When do you stop talking?
- Who talks last? What do you say?

Providing Structure

Example: Grading with rubrics

Clarity:

- Rubrics show how assignments will be graded

Efficiency:

- Rubrics make grading easier

Student responsibility:

- Students can use rubrics to assess themselves

Paragraph Rubric

	POINTS	
	Yes	No
Paragraph has a topic sentence.	2	0
Topic sentence contains a topic.	1	0
Topic sentence contains a controlling idea.	1	0
Paragraph has a sentence that explains how example relates to topic.	2	0
Paragraph has one example of topic and controlling idea.	2	0
Paragraph has a concluding sentence that restates topic sentence.	2	0
TOTAL:		

Adapted from: https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/teachers-corner-making-meaningful-assessments#child-2140

Two Principles of Managing Large Classes

- Provide structure

- Build community

Building Community

Questions

What makes a strong classroom community?

How can we build community in large classes?

How can building community help us to manage large classes?

Building Community

Why?

- In a large class, students may feel like they don't matter
- Instead, we should help students feel like they are members of a valuable community

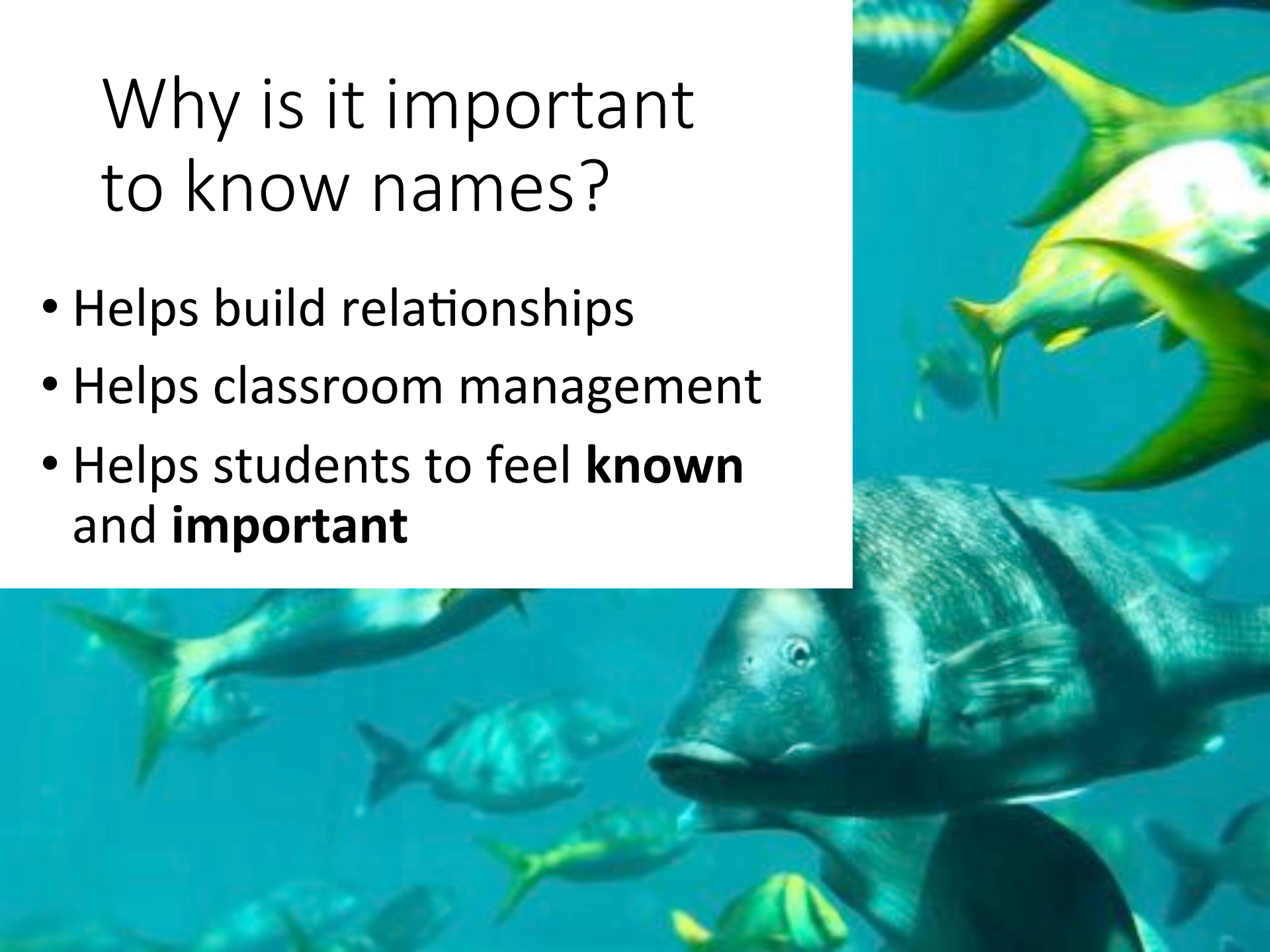
Building Community

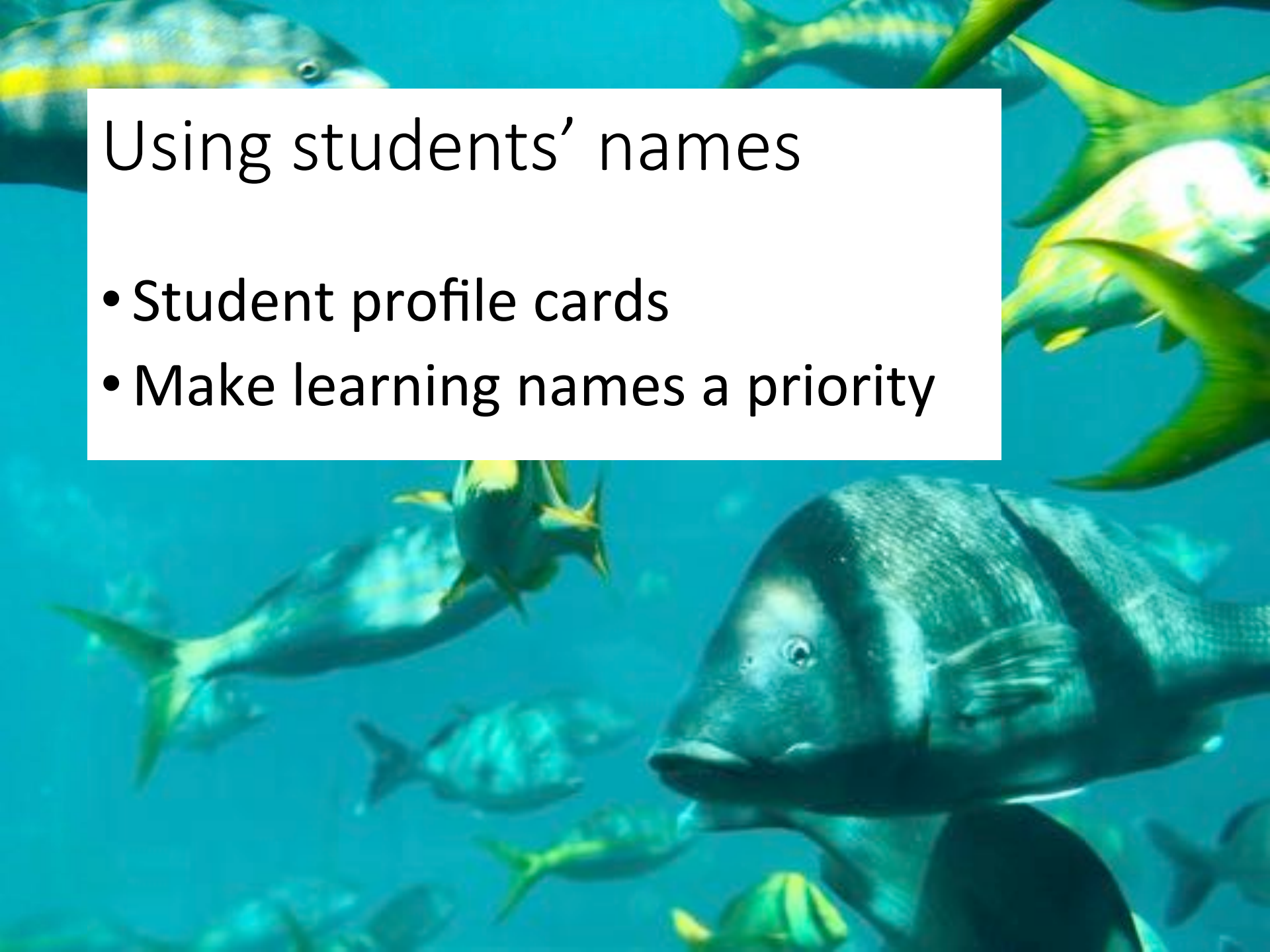
How?

- Use students' names
- Be inclusive
- Form fixed groups

Why is it important to know names?

- Helps build relationships
- Helps classroom management
- Helps students to feel **known** and **important**





Using students' names

- Student profile cards
- Make learning names a priority

Noah
Samantha

Secrets of learning students' names

- Remember: Students appreciate it
- Dedicate class time to it
- Class photo

Name: _____ **Idioms and Vocabulary Quiz: September 16, 2014**

Messi ___	Miki ___	Bruce ___	Masa ___
Turki ___	Rika ___	Shiori ___	Mohammed ___
Mossab ___	Takaya ___	Sofiah ___	Yuya ___

Building Community

Be inclusive

- Embrace the diversity of a large class
  - Teachers can make students feel like they belong
  - Make your activities accessible for everyone
  - For example, avoid making the colors red and green important, because some people cannot see the difference

Building Community

Be inclusive

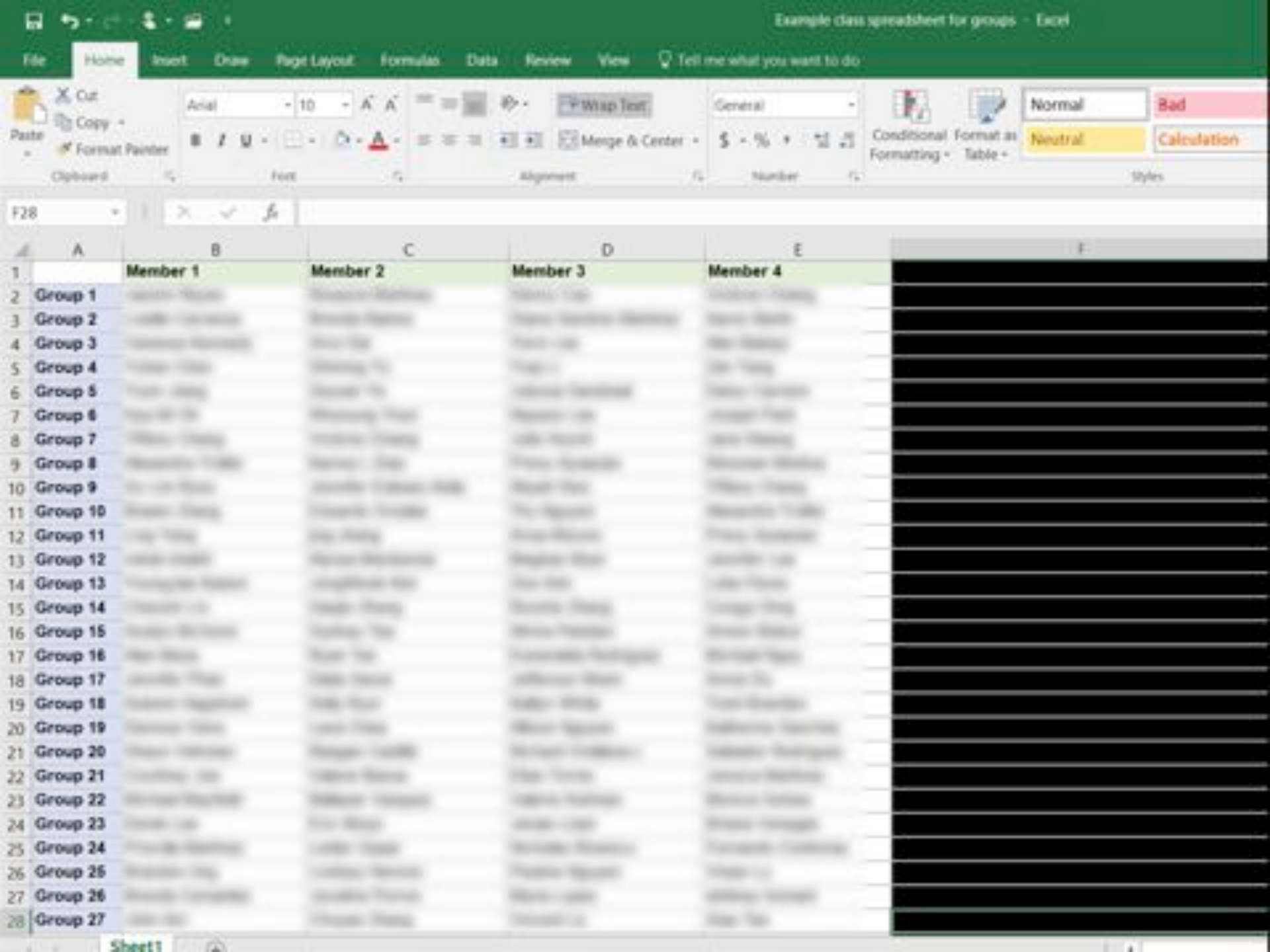
- Hear from a variety of students in every class
  - Don’t lecture too much – interact
  - Don’t call on the first person to raise their hand
    - Give students thinking time
  - Use *think-pair-share*
  - Call on students in their groups

Building Community

Building Community

Question:

How do you help students be productive in groups?


Example class spreadsheet for groups - Excel
File
Home
Insert
Draw
Page Layout
Formulas
Data
Review
View
Tell me what you want to do
Cut
Copy
Format Painter
Paste
Arial
10
Wrap Text
General
Merge & Center
Conditional Formatting
Format as Table
Normal
Bad
Neutral
Calculation
Clipboard
Font
Alignment
Number
Styles
F28
A
B
C
D
E
F
Member 1
Member 2
Member 3
Member 4
Group 1
Group 2
Group 3
Group 4
Group 5
Group 6
Group 7
Group 8
Group 9
Group 10
Group 11
Group 12
Group 13
Group 14
Group 15
Group 16
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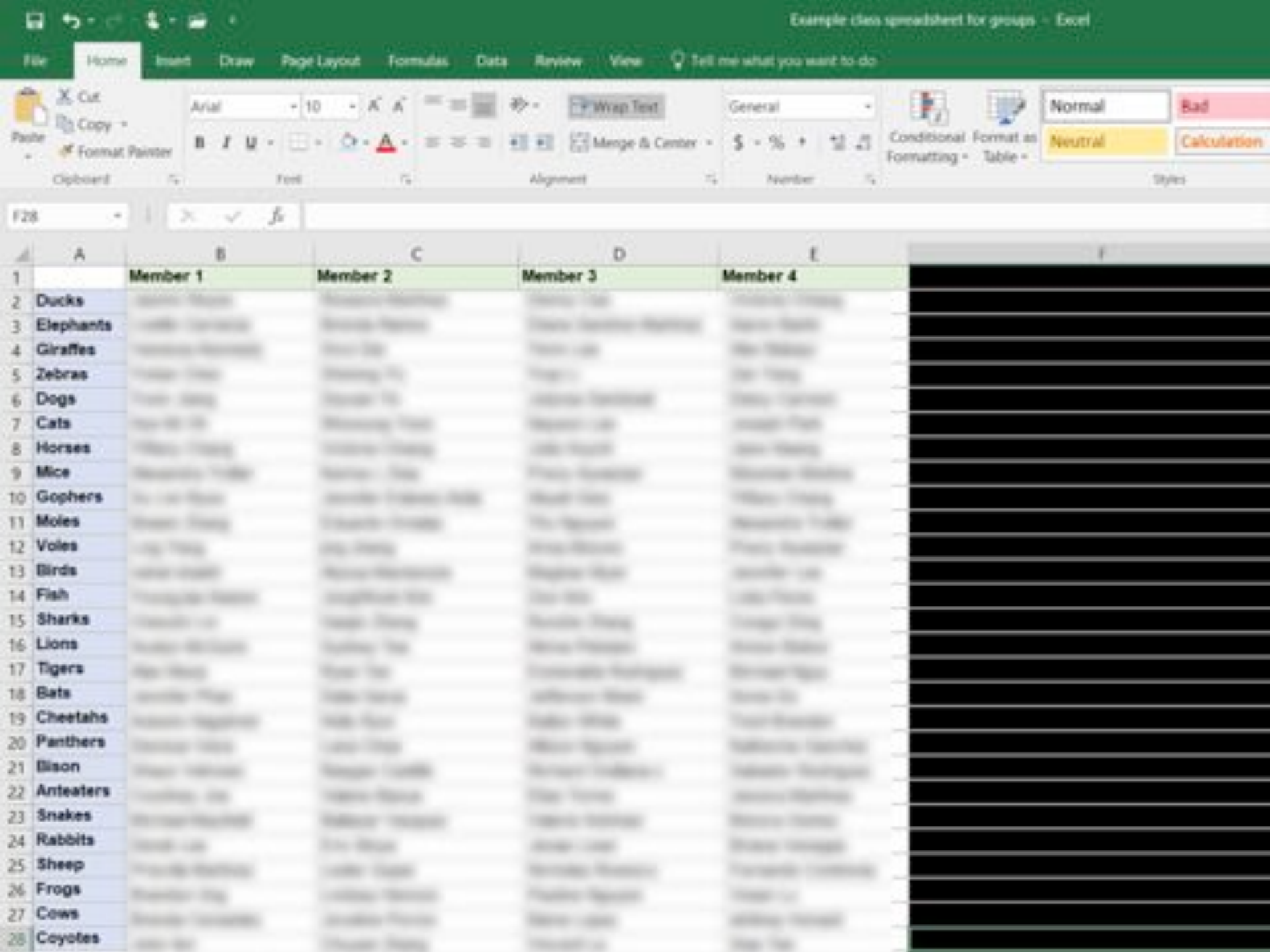
Group 18
Group 19
Group 20
Group 21
Group 22
Group 23
Group 24
Group 25
Group 26
Group 27
Sheet1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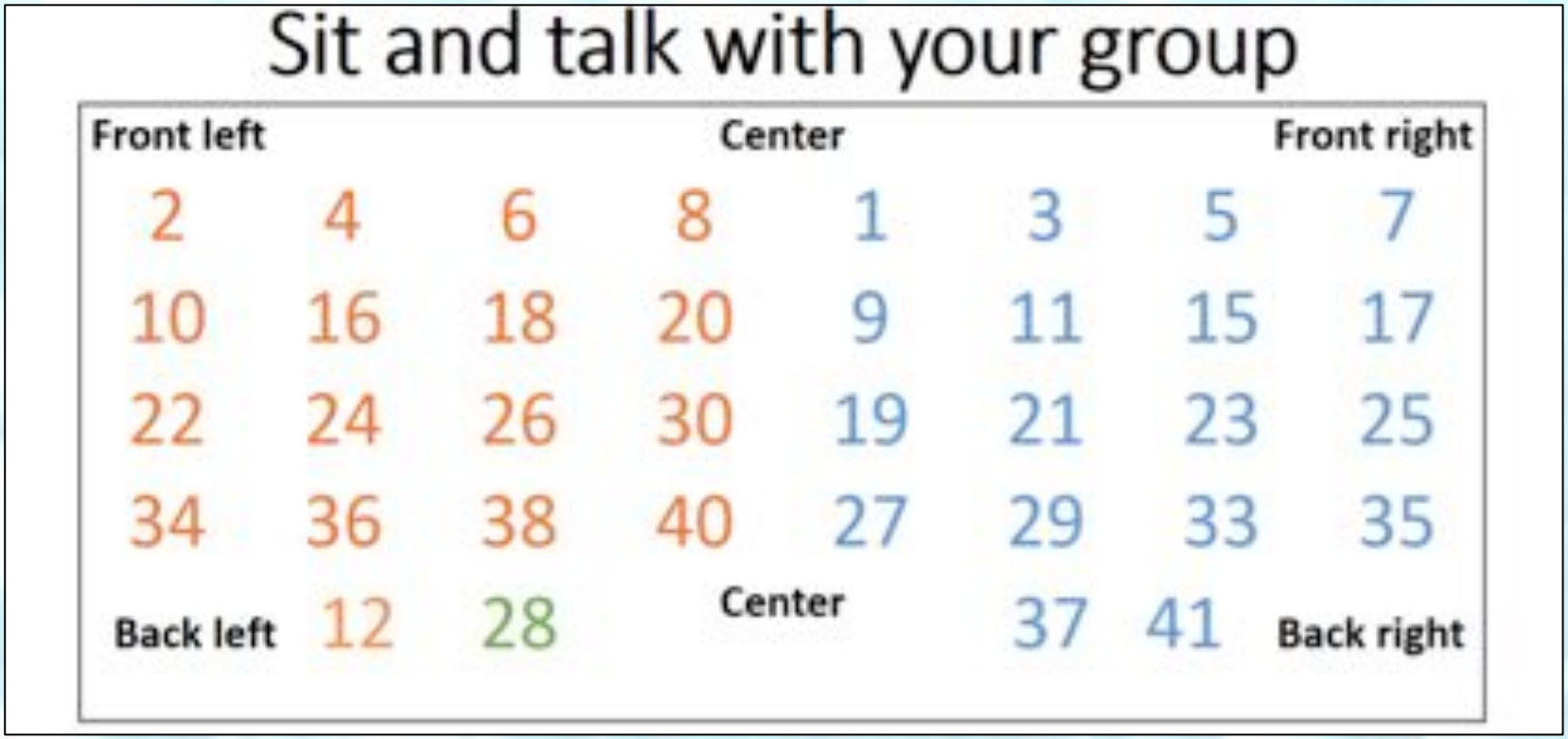
Format as Table
Normal
Bad
Neutral
Calculation
Styles
F28
A
B
C
D
E
F
Member 1
Member 2
Member 3
Member 4
1
2 Ducks
3 Elephants
4 Giraffes
5 Zebras
6 Dogs
7 Cats
8 Horses
9 Mice
10 Gophers
11 Moles
12 Voles
13 Birds
14 Fish
15 Sharks
16 Lions
17 Tigers
18 Bats
19 Cheetahs
20 Panthers
21 Bison
22 Anteaters
23 Snakes
24 Rabbits
25 Sheep
26 Frogs
27 Cows
28 Coyotes

Next: Make a seating chart to show at start of class

Front left			Center			Front right	
1	3	5	7	9	11	13	15	17
19	21	23	25	27	29	31	33	35
2	4	6	8	12	16	18	20	22
	24	26	28	30	34	36		
Back left			Center			Back right	

Give groups 2-5 minutes to work together as part of the opening routine



1. Discuss the three sources you brought to class today
2. Decide how to work together in the next stages of making an outline
3. Thursday HW – Finish the outline, on a shared document in the cloud

Support group work

- Design activities so students need each other to complete them
- Make students individually accountable
- Don’t assume that students have the necessary social skills

Summary

Provide structure

- Be clear
- Support diverse learners
- Use efficient assessments
- Help students take responsibility for their own learning

Build community

- Use students' names
- Be inclusive
- Form fixed groups

Thank you!

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