

Think, Teach, Switch

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Where it started

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- calculating economic surplus from trade
- finding deadweight loss from externalities
- how to correct externalities
- determining who has a comparative advantage

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they knew these
were exam
questions

The tension

What they wanted

More practice on the topics that matter most

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What I had

Limited time to create as many practice problems as they wanted

The tension

What they wanted

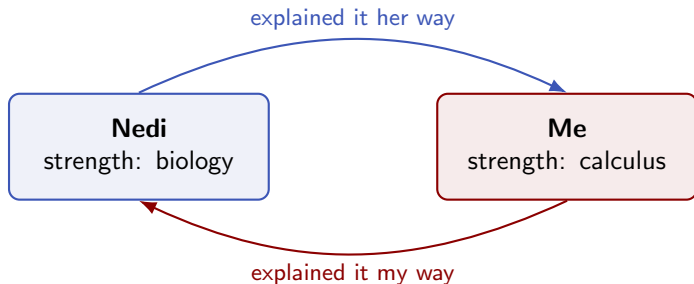
More practice on the topics that matter most

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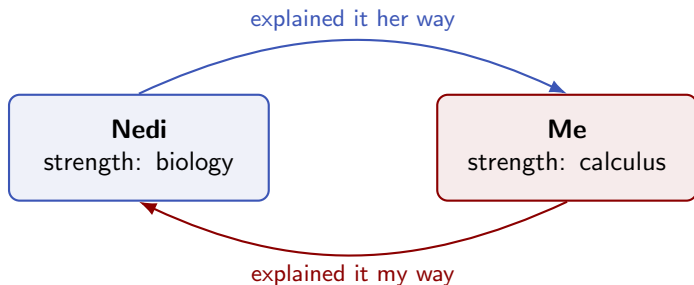
Limited time to create as many practice problems as they wanted

So instead of more practice, what if I found a better way to practice?

Where this idea came from



Where this idea came from



Explaining it to someone else was what made *me* understand it better

What I am here to talk about today

A structured peer teaching exercise, *Think, Teach, Switch*, and how it:

- moves students from passive review to active engagement
- reinforces understanding through explaining concepts to peers
- builds in self-assessment and discussion
- helps students grow more comfortable working with their peers

Importantly: it doesn't ask much of my time, only more of their thinking

Course context

- ECON 2106: Principles of Microeconomics
- 35 students, meeting three times a week for 55 minutes
- Requests for more practice picked up as their second midterm approached
- Centered on externalities and trade units:
 - Short answer
 - Graph-heavy
 - Multi-step
- Students claimed to follow concepts in lecture but struggled alone

The passive review problem

A Normal Class Day

- Lecture
- Clicker questions
- Collaborative worksheets
- Circulate and check in
- Whole-class recap

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Review Day

- Question and answer
- Kahoot quiz questions

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Back in the explaining seat, with students listening instead of practicing

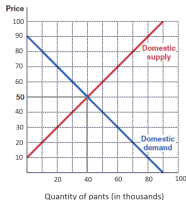
What is Think, Teach, Switch?

- Students are divided into small groups of 3–4
- Each group picks a worksheet they will teach their peers
- Every worksheet is a modified version of a prior in-class worksheet
 - Same structure
 - Different numbers/story
 - Generated with AI (I use Claude)
- I print enough copies for the whole class
 - To start, students only receive the worksheet they're assigned to teach
- Split into three parts: Think, Teach, Switch

Example Worksheet

Trade and Economic Surplus Worksheet

Scenario 1: Suppose the figure below depicts the domestic supply and domestic demand for pants in the United States. The U.S. can trade with the rest of the world at the given world price of \$70.

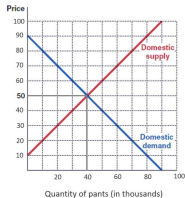


- This country will become an...
 - Importer
 - Exporter
- How many units imported/exported?
Quantity: _____ thousand
- Consumer surplus: \$ _____
- Producer surplus: \$ _____
- Total economic surplus: \$ _____
- Shade the areas on the graph depicting the surplus associated with question 3 & 4.

Original

Trade and Economic Surplus Worksheet

Scenario 1: Suppose the figure below depicts the domestic supply and domestic demand for pants in the United States. The U.S. can trade with the rest of the world at the given world price of \$30.



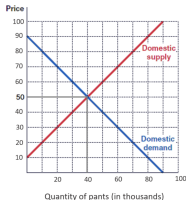
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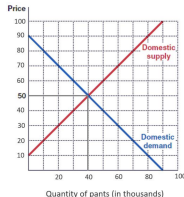


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Step 1: Think

- Students pick their own groups
- Groups pick which worksheet they want to work on
- 10–15 minutes to work together and prepare to teach the rest of the class
- Raise their hand when ready, and I confirm they're on track before they teach

Step 1: Think

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- Raise their hand when ready, and I confirm they're on track before they teach
 - "I just want to make sure that I know why this is correct"

Step 2: Teach

- Groups choose to present as a whole group or send representatives
- The rest of the class receives the teaching group's blank worksheet
- 5–10 minutes to teach through the worksheet and take questions
- Encouraged to teach step-by-step
- Students follow along, filling in the worksheet + asking questions

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- Students follow along, filling in the worksheet + asking questions
 - Multiple students raised their hands to ask clarifying questions or request a re-explanation

Step 3: Switch

- Switch to the next group, teaching a new worksheet to the class
- I sit to the side, available if needed, but students are the first line of defense
- At the end, students can ask any questions to the group that taught it
- Everyone leaves with 4–5 modified worksheets: the extra practice they wanted in the first place

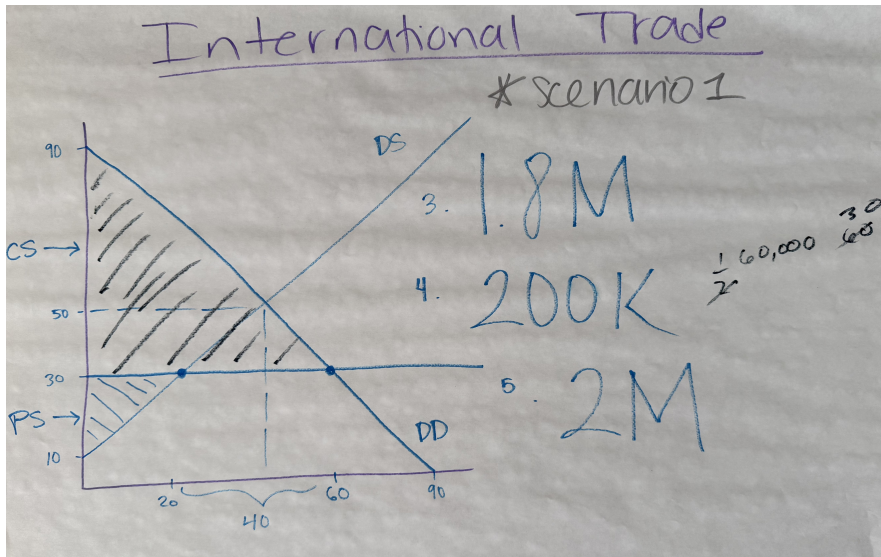
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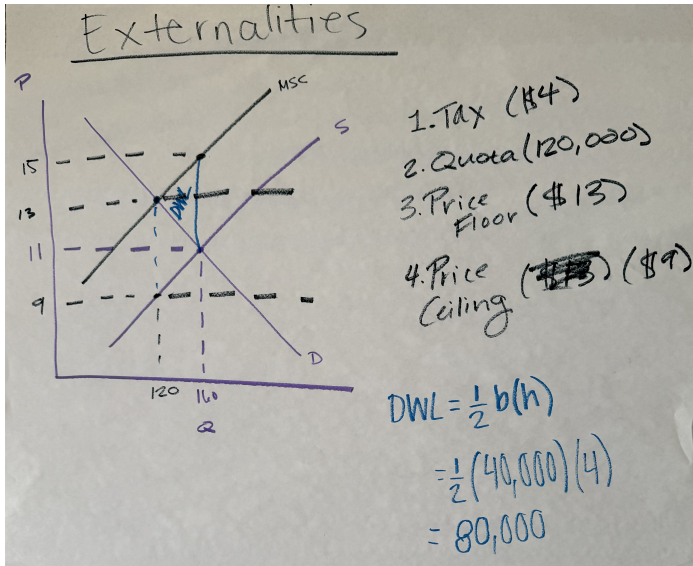
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- At the end, students can ask any questions to the group that taught it
 - This is when students asked a lot of “what if” questions, which they discussed as a group
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What it looked like on paper



What it looked like on paper pt. 2



What changed for students

- Students said they enjoyed the exercise and hadn't thought to study that way before
- Students were more talkative with each other for the rest of the semester
- Students who participated improved on the second exam, especially the short answer portion
- Several indicated they preferred *Think, Teach, Switch* instead of a Kahoot or Q&A review

Takeaways

- Think, Teach, Switch is an *interactive* peer teaching exercise
- An effective strategy for exam review of many different topics
- Gives students extra practice without asking you to reinvent the wheel

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Thank you!

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