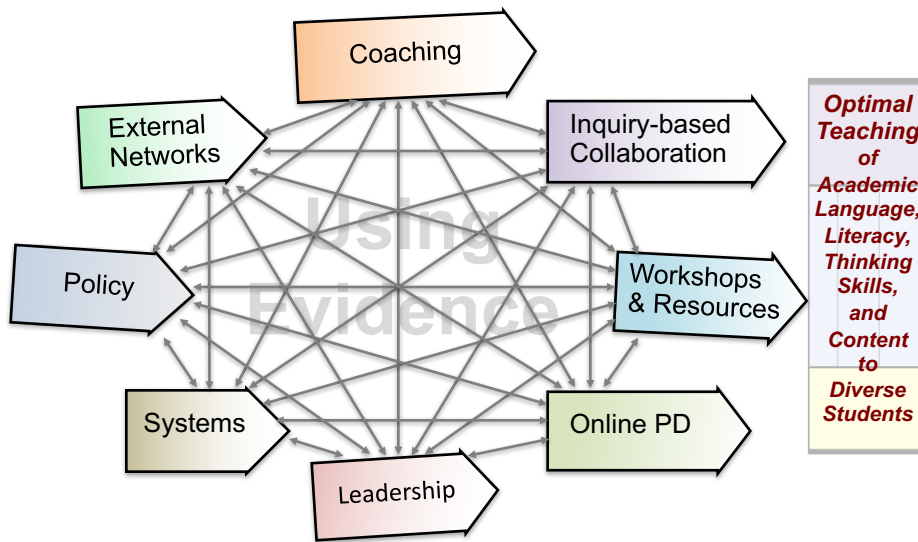


Supporting the Development of Academic Speaking and Conversation Skills in Every Lesson



Jeff Zwiers
Fairfield-Suisun
November 4, 2016
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Aligning & Connecting 8 Dimensions of PD



Tips for Supporting the Teaching of Conversation Skills

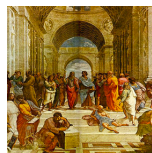
1. Know what academic language is across disciplines...and how it develops
2. Value speaking, listening, and conversation—and know what they look and sound like
3. Support inquiry cycles
4. Develop and redevelop observation tools & protocols
5. Model conversations with teachers in lessons
6. Get invited to observe and talk with teachers afterward
7. Reflect on and improve conversations with teachers about teaching
8. Be patient



Dimensions & Features of Academic Language

Clear & Strong

for given audience and purpose



Message

Organization (what's included or not and where)

Register

Sentence Cohesion and Flow



Sentence

Sentence structure (compound/complex) & length
 Transitions/Connectives (*therefore, yet, as, despite*)
 Pronouns and references
 Verb tenses and passive voice



Word/Phrase

General academic terms
 Figurative expressions & multiple meanings
 Hedges, qualifiers, and modals
 Content terms
 Affixes, roots, and transformations

In Order to Develop Language, Content, Thinking, & Conversation Skills:

LESS

Individual
accumulating of
right answers,
“paying” for points,
& playing school



MORE

**Collaborating,
understanding,
building, using, &
communicating
whole ideas**



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Understanding Language/SCALE

Essential Conditions (Features) for Language Development:

___ **Is there a useful & engaging purpose?** In the activity, do students use language to do something meaningful and engaging (beyond just to answer questions or get points)? Does it prepare students to use language for academic purposes?



___ **Is there an information gap?** In the activity, do students get or give information that they want, need, or don't have?





___ **Is there attention to language in service of communication?** In the activity, is there extra teaching and assessment focused on improving how language is used? This includes modeling, practicing, giving feedback, and/or scaffolds.



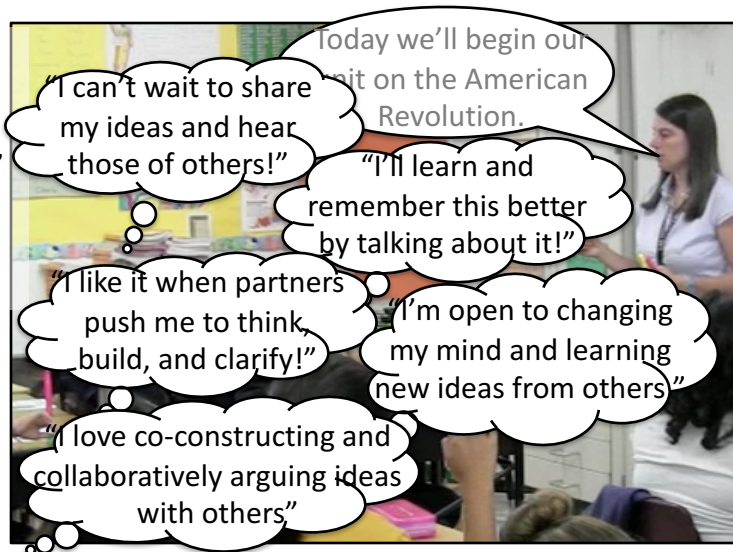
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And we must overcome 5 Challenges

	 ORAL OUTPUT	 CONVERSING
Increasing Quantity	C1 # of students # of minutes	C3 # of students in back-n-forth conversations
Increasing Quality	C2 Strength Clarity	C4 Co-Construction Collaborative Arguing Conversation Skills


C5. Cultivating a CULTURE of Conversation

Each time a topic is introduced, every student thinks,





Overlap & Differences: Speaking & Conversations




Speaking

is one-way, one-time, clear & strong communication of ideas & thinking.

Think-pair-shares, Answering teacher questions, Jigsaws, Gallery walks, Oral presentations

Conversations

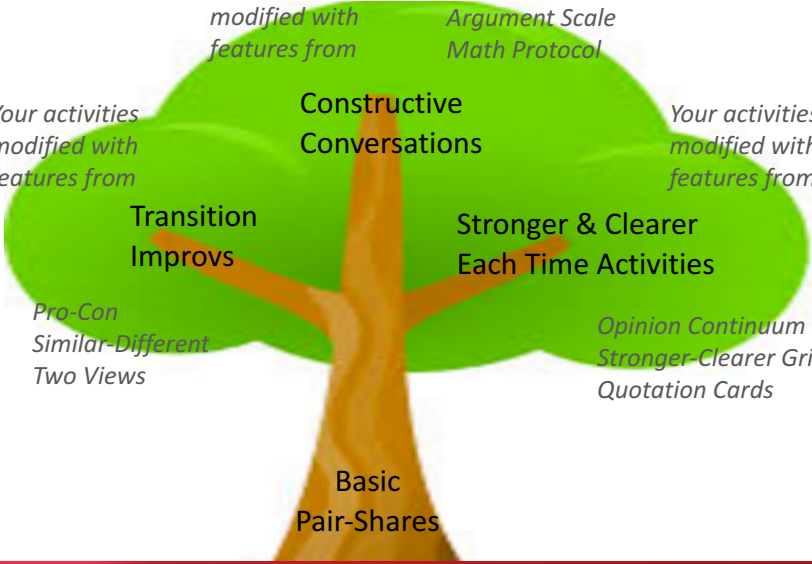
are back-and-forth interactions in which participants *build on* one another's ideas to *build up* ideas that weren't in their minds before talking.



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Understanding Language/SCALE

Strengthening Paired Interactions



Your activities modified with features from

Your activities modified with features from

Your activities modified with features from

Your activities modified with features from

Transition Improvs

*Pro-Con
Similar-Different
Two Views*

Constructive Conversations

Stronger & Clearer Each Time Activities

Basic Pair-Shares

*Skills Poster
Argument Scale
Math Protocol*

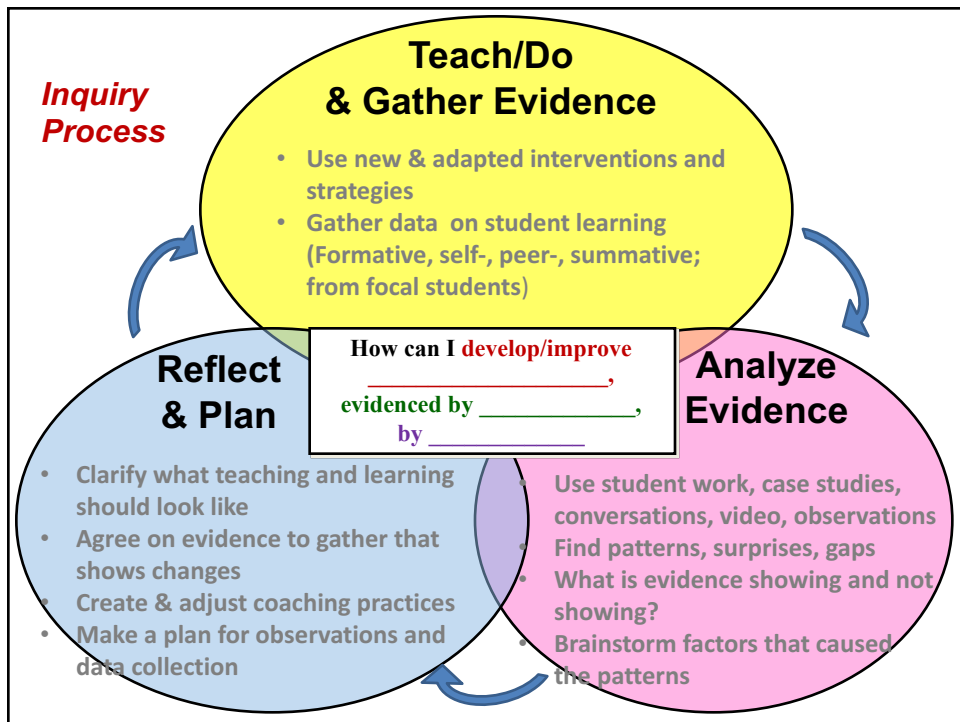
Your activities modified with features from

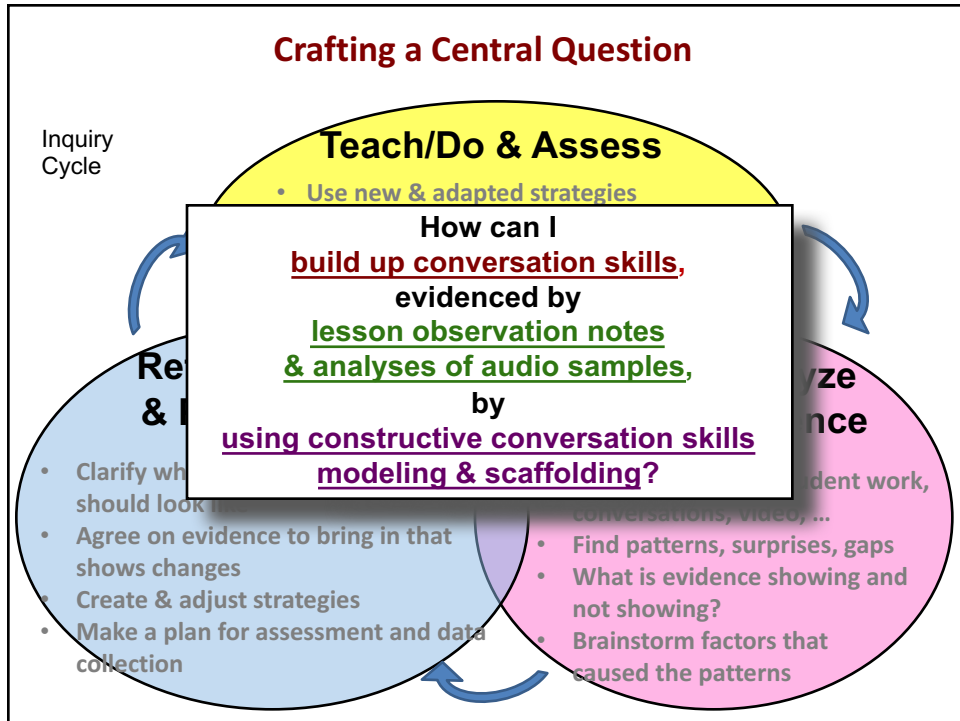
*Opinion Continuum
Stronger-Clearer Grid
Quotation Cards*

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Sample Observation Tool: WEOPT Organizer

	What (to be learned)	Evidence (of student learning)	Observed (teacher practice)	Push (teacher practice)	Target (teacher practice)
Academic Speaking					
Constructive Conversations					
Disciplinary Literacy					
Content Concepts					





Warming up speaking skills
with

TRANSITION IMPROV Activities

OUTPUT: Transition Improv Activity (Pro-Con)

Topics: Camping, Shopping, TV, Uniforms, Computers, Superheroes, Cars, Conferences, Testing, Internet, Cell phones, Video games, Social Media

Transitions: **However,**
On the other hand,
Then again,

~~but~~

PC Frames: One advantage is ... For example, ...
Another positive of ... is... because...
A negative aspect of ___ is ...
In spite of the positives of _____,

A & B, Lean?

Transition Improv (For-Against)

Topics: Fracking, adding lime to soil to lower pH, genetic engineering, nuclear energy, stem cell research, human-caused climate change, wolf reintroduction, de-extinction, zoos, preserving wetlands, corn as fuel, extraterrestrial life, desalination, ...

Transitions: **However,**
On the other hand,
Then again,

~~but~~

PC Frames: One reason for ... is ... For example, ...
Evidence that supports ... is... because...
A reason against ... is ... For example, ...
Evidence that does not support ... is ... because ...

*A & B,
Lean?*

OUTPUT: Transition Improv (Similar-Different)

Animal cells

Lysosomes
(digest food and break down waste)

Centrioles
(pull chromosomes from nucleus during mitosis)

No cell wall

Plant Cells

Cell wall
(gives plant its shape)

Large vacuole (store nutrients and waste)

Chloroplasts
(produce carbohydrates using photosynthesis)

Ribosomes
(make protein)

Mitochondria
(turns nutrients into energy)

Cytoplasm

One turn with; next turn without

However,
On the other hand,
Then again,

Unlike animal cells, plant cells have ____, which ...

Plant & animal cells both have ____, which serve to...

... are similar to ____ in that they both ____


Animal cells differ from plant cells in that ____

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Transition Improv (Two Views)

Views: Patriots
Loyalists

Transitions: **However,**
On the other hand,
Then again,



but

Frames: The ____ thought that ...

Many ____ believed that...

A different perspective held by ____ was that...

In the eyes of ____...

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9

The “Communicativeness Test” for an Activity’s Power for Developing Language

___ **Is there a useful & engaging purpose?** In the activity, do students use language to do something meaningful and engaging (beyond just to answer questions or get points)? Does it prepare students to use language for academic purposes?



___ **Is there an information gap?** In the activity, do students get or give information that they want, need, or don’t have?



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Tool: Assessing Clear and Strong Speaking (Teacher, Peer, Self)

- I included information needed and *expected by listeners (not too much and not too little), in order to be as clear as possible*
- I started with a clear main idea
- I clarified and/or supported the main idea (w/ evidence, details)
- I used two or more connected sentences
- I pushed myself to use academic words & long sentences
- I used nonverbal cues and stressed important words & ideas



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Understanding Language/SCALE

Working on Listening, Speaking, & Clarifying
with

“STRONGER Y CLEARER EACH TIME”

Activities:

- Stronger-Clearer Grid



Designing “Stronger & Clearer Each Time” Activities



1. Prompt for an **original response**
2. Successive partners: **borrow and use the language, ideas, and evidence** each time-->
 - **Stronger** (often longer) with better supporting evidence and examples, and
 - **Clearer** with more precise terms and linked, organized, complete sentences.
3. Scaffolds **are reduced during** the activity.

"Stronger & Clearer Each Time" Grid

I think bad things happen when cultures meet, like wars.

Switch partners!
Don't forget to use examples.

I think it's both good and bad. Like you learn from each other, but also you can fight.

(PRE)
Bad things happen when they meet.
Wars start.

Lisa

1st Partner

What happens when cultures meet and why?

"Stronger & Clearer Each Time" Grid

I think bad things happen when cultures meet, like wars.

Switch partners!
Don't forget to use examples.

I think it's both good and bad. Like you learn from each other, but also you can fight.

Cultures meet and bad things happen like war. But good things, too, like you can learn other language.

Lisa

2nd Partner

1. Mario	both, learn
2. Juan	religion, Aztecs, Spain
3.	
Me	

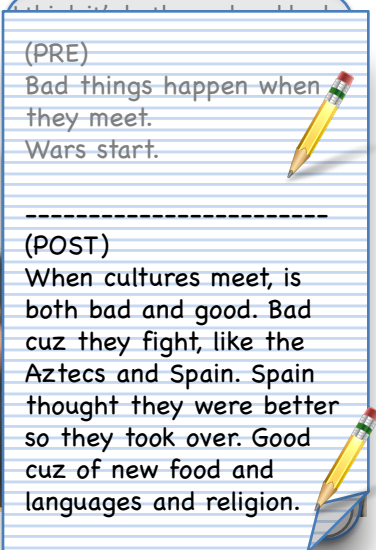
What happens when cultures meet and why?

“Stronger & Clearer Each Time” Grid

I think bad things happen when cultures meet, like wars.

Cultures meet and bad things happen like war. But good things, too, like you can learn other language.

When cultures meet, is bad and good. Bad cuz they fight wars, like they're different. Spain thought they were better than the Aztecs. And good cuz you can learn languages, like Spanish, and new religion.




(PRE)
Bad things happen when they meet.
Wars start.

(POST)
When cultures meet, is both bad and good. Bad cuz they fight, like the Aztecs and Spain. Spain thought they were better so they took over. Good cuz of new food and languages and religion.

What happens when cultures meet and why?

Key Ideas

- **Push students to push themselves and peers to to be as clear as possible every time they say something.**
- **Encourage students to be “mini-teachers” who draw language out of peers.**
- **Set up situations in which students want to be clear and want to listen to others.**



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Looking at Student Work (Before & After Grid Partners)

PRE

INTERVIEW TIME!
(Listen in, Share out, Create together)

QUESTION: Why should I care about biodiversity?

MY ANSWER: Because the food chain

POST

I should care about biodiversity because without the variety of living things there wouldn't be anything to provide for us for example(s) the rosy periwinkle provides a medicine that treats certain cancers including leukemia.

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Stronger & Clearer Activity

Context

- 4th grade Science class
- Early Advanced speakers.
- Have read and discussed energy conversion
- Focus on stronger and clearer messages using examples.

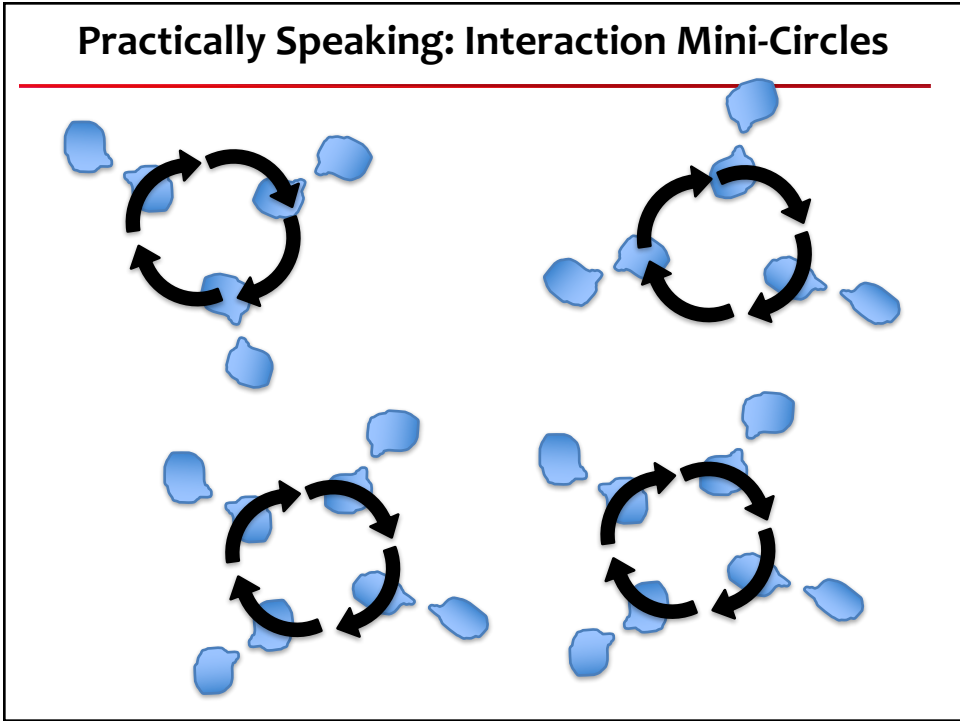


This Clip

- Prompt is: What is energy conversion?
- Daniel talks to three different partners
- Look for if and how his response becomes stronger (idea-wise) and clearer (language-wise)
- *Reflect on ways to improve his response and/or the activity.*

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“Stronger & Clearer Each Time” Grid

Name	How can administrators and other support providers support teachers in developing their practices for growing language and conversation skills in every lesson?
Me	(just two or three key words, if any)
1.	
2.	
3.	
Me	

Support providers can
 A major challenge is...and to overcome it, we can...
 Because students learn language best through..., we need to...
(Teacher can have listeners ask clarifying and supporting questions)

The “Communicativeness Test” for an Activity’s Power for Developing Language

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Fostering Constructive Conversations


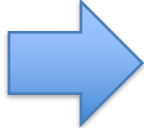

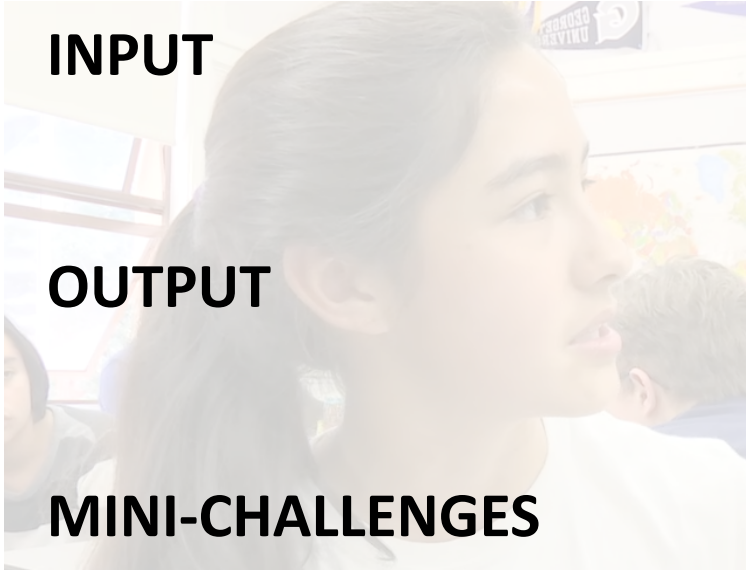


Conversations Develop LANGUAGE w/ Loads of...

INPUT

OUTPUT

MINI-CHALLENGES






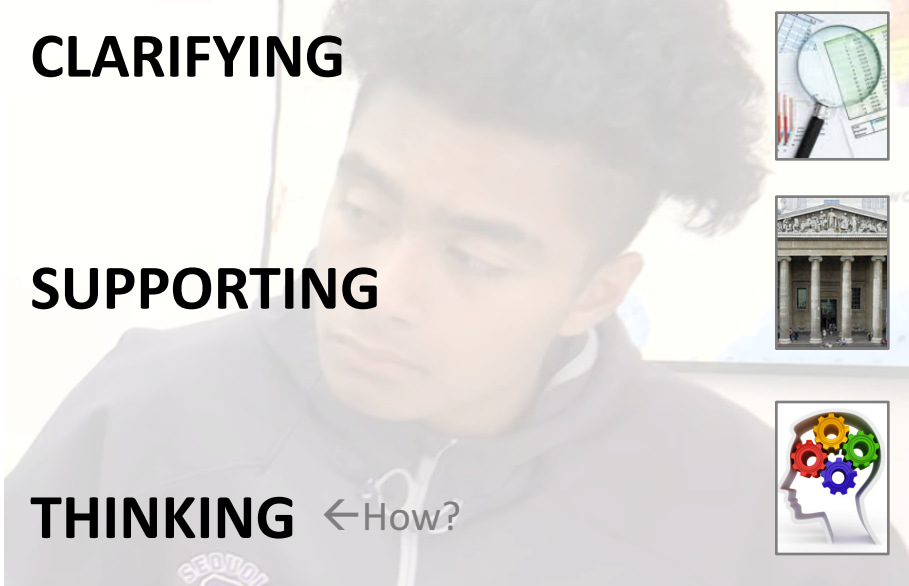
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Conversation Develops CONTENT w/ Loads of...

CLARIFYING

SUPPORTING

THINKING ←How?



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Feedback

Laura: I think air has weight. Remember the balloon?

Eli: I disagree because I can't feel it.

Laura: I respectfully disagree with you.

Eli: Then we just agree to disagree, right?



Lisa: I think the dog was his best friend in the story.

Edgar: I would like to add to your idea. My dog ran away last year and we found him in the park.

Lisa: Which park?

Edgar: The one by the train station.

Lisa: I took a train to San Jose last week.



Feedback

Alex: What caused the fall?

Carlos: The book said disease and war.

Alex: It also said crops and politics.

Carlos: All of them, I guess.



Mansur: I think there are different ways to solve it.

Lynn: So? Just do what the teacher did.

Mansur: But why did she turn the fraction over?

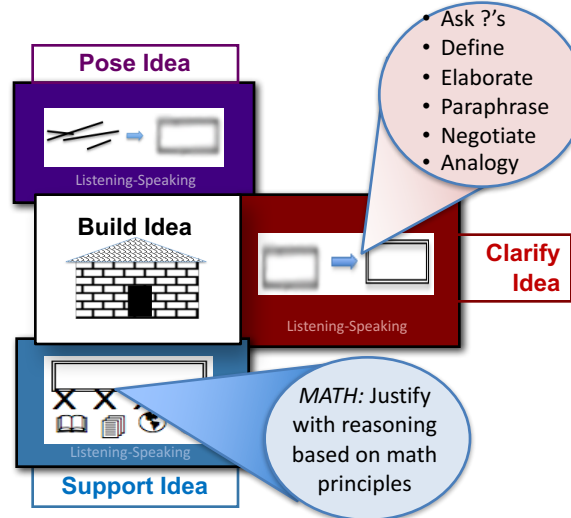
Lynn: Who cares? Just turn it over.

Mansur: OK.

$$\frac{3a}{3c-6} \div \frac{9ab}{c^2-4} =$$

Constructive Conversation Skills for “Build Up 1” Mode

Goal: Students collaboratively (but w/o teacher) build an idea (e.g., claim, answer, solution, interpretation), **using the following skills:**



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Assessing Conversation Skills: Conversation Analysis Tool

Turns build on previous turns to build up a relevant idea(s)

_____ Students create or choose a relevant initial idea(s) that is focused on learning objective(s)

_____ Students clarify idea(s) (by paraphrasing, defining, elaborating)

_____ Students support ideas (using evidence, examples, explanations)

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Constructive Conversations in 9th ELA

Context

- Sheltered 9th grade English class (taught by Patrick Hurley)
- Intermediate and early advanced speakers.
- Have read *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Of Mice and Men*
- Focal conversation skill: supporting your ideas with examples from a text.
- Prompts on the board



This Clip

- Discuss the main theme: "what do you think an important theme in this book is?" *"An important theme of this book is real courage"*
- They prompt each other: "What does courage mean?"
"Can you elaborate on that?" "Can you give an example from another book?" "How does this apply to our life?"

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Conversation Sample - Science

Elia: So, how do animals evolve? (*prompt on the board*)

Alex: To live.

Elia: What's an example? (*prompt on board*)

Alex: Sharks.

Elia: What's another example?

Alex: Turtles.

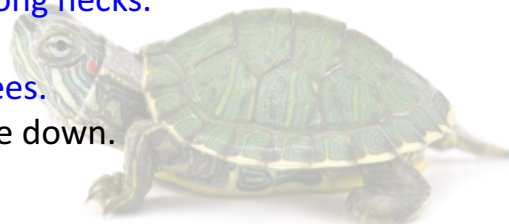
Elia: What's another example?

Alex: Giraffes. They got long necks.

Elia: Why?

Alex: To reach up into trees.

Elia: OK, let's write these down.



Understanding Language

Constructive Conversation Excerpt - History

B: The article's about the Boston Massacre.
But I don't think it was a massacre.

A: What do you mean? Look at the picture.

B: I don't think it happened like that, and like
only five people were killed. That's not a
massacre. A massacre means lots of people die.

A: Maybe they wanted to make it sound really bad. Like in the
painting.

B: But why?

A: Maybe get people mad to fight against the British. They didn't all
want to fight. Like rich people, maybe.

B: They might lose their money or die.

A: So was it a lie to call it a massacre?

B: I don't know. Probably, but it worked, right? It got the war going.

A: But it was lying. I don't think people should lie, even if it helped
us get free from England.



Conversation Prompts

- There is a purpose for conversing that connects to lesson objectives** (info gap)

Decide which theme in the story is most relevant for 7th graders today.

Rank the most significant effects of the Industrial Revolution

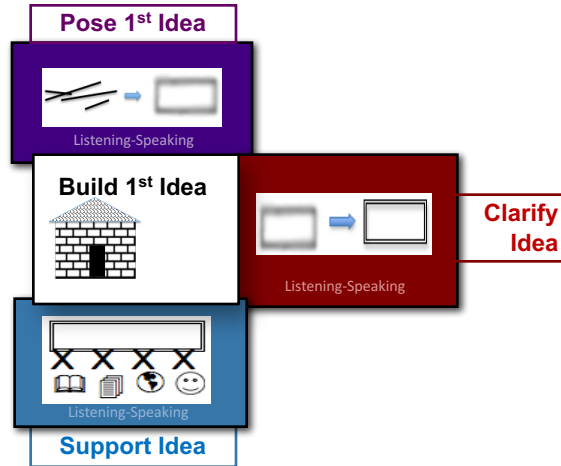
- Require thinking and doing something with ideas:** create, clarify, argue (=>consensus), decide, rank, solve, evaluate, combine, compare, choose, fortify, build, & transform

Come to an agreement on how you would measure the speed of sound.

Co-create a clear way to describe to younger students how geography influences culture

Constructive Conversation Skills for “Argue” Mode

Goal: Students collaboratively (but w/o teacher) build claims & ideas and then choose one of them, using the following skills:

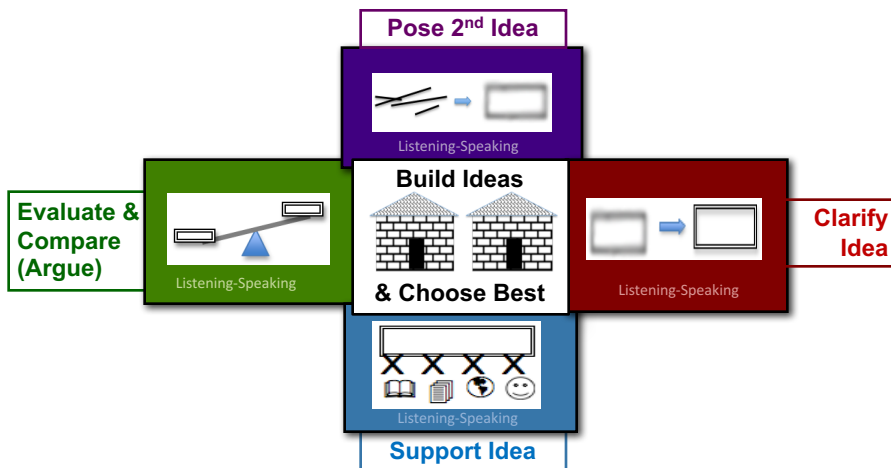


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Conversation Skills for “Build >1 & Choose (Argue)” Mode

Goal: Students collaboratively (but w/o teacher) build claims & ideas and then choose one of them, using the following skills:



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Assessing Conversation Skills: **Conversation Analysis Tool**

Turns build on previous turns to build up a relevant idea(s)

_____ Students create or choose a relevant initial idea(s) that is focused on learning objective(s)

_____ Students clarify idea(s) (by paraphrasing, defining, elaborating)

_____ Students support ideas (using evidence, examples, explanations)

If there are two or more competing ideas (i.e., an argument),

_____ Students evaluate the strength/weight of the evidence of each idea

_____ Students compare the strengths/weights and choose the “strongest/heaviest” idea

_____ Students explain (and/or negotiate) final decisions

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Conversations in 5th Gr. Language Arts/ELD



Context

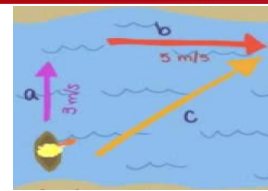
- 5th grade Language Arts/ELD class in San Francisco
- Advanced and early intermediate partners.

This Clip

- After reading an allegory for the Holocaust, students discuss what could have happened if the animals had stood together.
- They practice stating opinions, paraphrasing, and clarifying

Conversation Sample - Math

- A: What do we need to find?
 B: How far the boat goes down the river.
 A: So, how?
 B: Maybe figure out the time to cross it, like straight, like this (a).
 A: I think we should just add the speeds together.
 B: OK, that's 5 plus 3 equals 8. Then what?
 A: We need to use the other number, 30. So divide?
 B: Why not. OK, so 30 divided by 8 is 3.75.
 A: 3.75 what?
 B: Meters, I think, but that doesn't look right.
 A: No, so what do we do?
 B: I don't know.



Constructive Conversation Excerpt - ELA

- Sandeep: In my opinion, I think *The Giver* is about we need to know our past, even bad stuff.
 Tasha: Can you elaborate on the part about the bad stuff?
 Sandeep: In the book one person keeps the bad memories of of war and death; no one else knows. but it's what happened. Everyone has rights to know. And they had problems maybe cuz they didn't know the past.
 Tasha: Like what?
 Sandeep: Like killing people who didn't fit in, or twins. That's messed up.
 Tasha: But should children know all of the bad things?
 Sandeep: It's better to know our past, even if it's bad, so it teaches us.
 Tasha: Everything? There's lots of terrible things that even we don't know about; maybe give us nightmares and, I don't know, maybe teach kids to do them, too? I think///
 Sandeep: ///
 Tasha: OK, but which bad things to know? What will help us learn and not do bad things?
 Sandeep: I don't know, maybe things like nuclear bombs, you know, and war.
 Tasha: OK, but not the scary details.

Fostering Conversations & Their Skills
with
Argument Balance Scale



**Scaffold for Collaborative Argument Conversations:
*Argument Balance Scale***

Claim

vs.

**Opposite or
Different Claim**

Which claim's reasons, evidence, and
explanations weigh the most?

Claim/Position Good	Are humans good or evil?	Claim/Position Evil
-------------------------------	-----------------------------	-------------------------------



“Constructive Conversations” Activity for All 4 Skills: Argument Balance Scale

Prevent dropouts & jail costs

Gets them to read

Kids need to eat

Stay after school

Pizza tastes good

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Kids need to eat

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Prevents dropouts, crime, jail costs

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Gets kids to read

Claim/Position	Should pizza be a reward for reading?	Claim/Position
Yes		No

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“Constructive Conversations” Activity for All 4 Skills: Argument Balance Scale

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Kids need to eat

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Prevents dropouts, crime, jail costs

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Gets kids to read

Claim/Position
Yes

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Expensive

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Not healthy food

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Not good motivation

Claim/Position	Should pizza be a reward for reading?	Claim/Position
Yes		No

Not healthy food

Expensive to run

Need to exercise

Not good motivation for reading

Some kids don't like pizza

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“Constructive Conversations” Activity for All 4 Skills: Argument Scale

Compare the evidence on both sides (use criteria)

Should pizza be a reward for reading?

Yes No

Claim/Position

Reason/Evidnc/Exp

Kids need to eat

Prevents dropouts, crime, jail costs

Gets kids to read

Expensive

Not healthy food

Not good motivation

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“Constructive Conversations” Activity for All 4 Skills: Argument Scale

Choose a side and argue why it “weighs more”

Should pizza be a reward for reading?

Yes No

Claim/Position

Reason/Evidnc/Exp

Kids need to eat

Prevents dropouts, crime, jail costs

Gets kids to read

Expensive

Not healthy food

Not good motivation

2D-Scale

3-D Version

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Conversation Analysis Tool

Turns build on previous turns to build up a relevant idea(s)

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If there are two or more competing ideas (i.e., an argument),

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_____ Students compare the strengths/weights and choose the “strongest/heaviest” idea

_____ Students explain (and/or negotiate) final decisions

Video Example to Assess

CONTEXT

5th grade
Language
Arts/ELD class
Advanced and
early advanced
partners.


After reading an article on a program that gives pizza as reward for reading, students discuss their opinions on the issue.



THIS CLIP

- Watch for supporting opinions, building on ideas, and clarifying
- Notice if and how the balance scale helps students to extend talk
- Consider next steps based on this conversation

Activity:
Math Paired Conversation Protocol



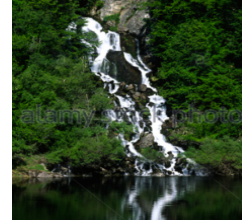
Suppose it takes the Almond River 6 months to fill a reservoir, by itself, and it takes Belfair River 12 months to fill it, on its own. If both are flowing into the reservoir, how long will it take to fill it?

PROBLEM:

Paraphrase and clarify problem for one another (in pairs) <i>(Talk about what is asked; what is given; what happens; what the units are, etc.)</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> TALK			
Estimate the answer <i>(Each partner generate and justify your own estimate; then compare them)</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> TALK			
METHOD_A <i>(name it)</i>		METHOD_B <i>(name it)</i>	
Justify method <input type="checkbox"/> TALK		Justify method <input type="checkbox"/> TALK	
Visuals, Drawings, Charts, Symbols, Calculations, Solution		Visuals, Drawings, Charts, Symbols, Calculations, Solution	
Justify what you do 		Justify what you do 	
<input type="checkbox"/> TALK		<input type="checkbox"/> TALK	

Sample Based on the Paired Protocol

A: What do we gotta find?
 B: How long they take to fill the reserve.
 A: I say less than 6.
 B: Why?
 A: The Almond takes 6 months itself.
 So with extra water from this other one, less time, right?
 B: Maybe. So, I think we draw it for one way to solve.
 A: So like two rivers into a tank?
 B: Yeah, and it fills up. After 3 months it's half full from Almond, right? But Belfair only fills up like, what?
 A: 3 out of 12 is, a... quarter of it full.
 B: So, a quarter's not full. So let's just guess it. Like I say/
 A: /We can't do that. I think there's a right answer.
 B: OK, let's try the other way, like a graph or a table.



If-When Chart for Helping Conversations

If... or When...	You can
The conversation doesn't start well or at all,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say, "Let's understand (clarify, define) this... What we need to do is ..." • Ask, "What does... mean in this case/context/situation?" • Say, "Let's scan through the text again and look for..." • Say, "Let's take two different sides; which one do you want?"
Your partner offers a short response,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask for specific clarification or elaboration • Ask a question (I wonder why/how...) • Ask what a word or expression means • Ask for example that supports it • Give an example and ask if your partner agrees
Your partner offers a long and confusing response,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paraphrase it and relate it to the conversation purpose • Ask to clarify the most relevant part of the response • Ask for additional evidence or examples

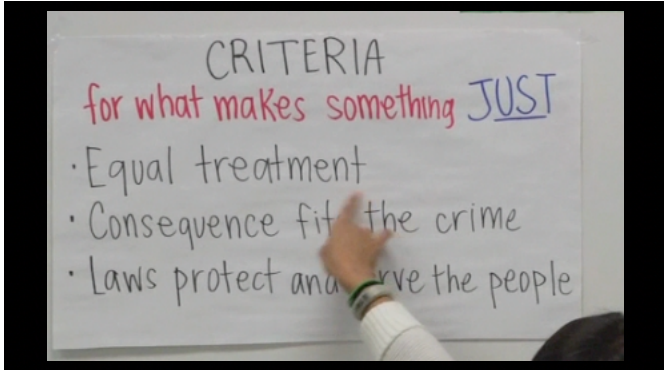
Video Observation with the WEOPT Organizer

	What (to be learned)	Evidence (of student learning)	Observed (teacher practice)	Push (teacher practice)	Target (teacher practice)
Academic Speaking					
Constructive Conversations					
Disciplinary Literacy					
Content Concepts					

Scaffolding Conversations

CONTEXT

- 6th grade
History class
- Range of EL levels
- Have analyzed
some of
Hammurabi's
laws and
considered how
just they are.
- Teacher models
use of criteria to
decide and argue



THIS CLIP

Prompt: Are Hammurabi's laws just or not?

- What does the teacher do to model and scaffold skills?
- Which conversation skills do you notice students using?

Jeff Zwiers

Understanding Language/SCALE

Analyzing Teacher-Coach Transcripts

Coach: So, Alex, I noticed that you used think-pair-shares in the lesson today. How did you feel they worked?

Teacher: Well, there was lots of talk, and the students that I observed got the answers right. They seem to like to talk and get their voices heard by each other.

Coach: Yeah, it often helps a student to say what he or she is thinking to organize thoughts. It also helps them practice saying a topic sentence and supporting it with other sentences. Would you like to improve how they talk in any way?

Teacher: Well, you and I have talked about negotiating meaning and I still am not sure how to get them to do that; they each seem to share what they think and then the conversation stops. They don't really know what to do with their ideas.

Tips for Supporting the Teaching of Conversation Skills

- Know what academic language is across disciplines...and how it develops
- Value speaking, listening, and conversation—and know what they look and sound like
- Support inquiry cycles
- Develop and redevelop observation cycles
- Model conversations with teachers in lessons
- Get invited to observe and talk with teachers afterward
- Reflect on and improve conversations with teachers about teaching
- Be patient



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