

Academic Conversations as a Gateway to Academic Literacy



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New York Teacher Webinar 1
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Goals for this Session

Overarching Goal: Learn ways to develop and assess academic conversation skills in order to promote sustained and effective academic conversations among students.

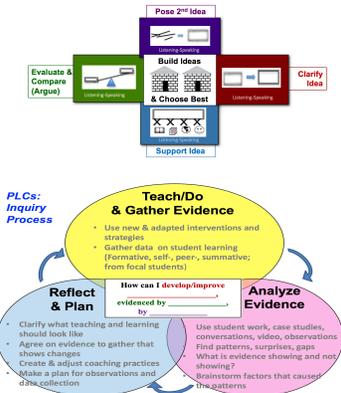
- 1. Check in on what we have done since January 10th.**
- 2. Review some key ideas related to classroom conversation development.**
- 3. Deepen understandings of several strategies**
- 4. Refine your plan for working on and with conversations this year.**



How are we doing with these?



Information Gaps



PLCs: Inquiry Process

Ask for an (another) example to support the idea	Paraphrase what your partner said	Ask your partner to clarify (Why...How...)
Show that you are listening with your eyes, nod, posture	Pose a compelling idea and start to build it up	Stay focused on the conversation prompt
Encourage your partner to talk more	Summarize the conversation up until now	Ask for criteria used to evaluate evidence

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...

"Stronger & Clearer Each Time" Grid

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

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

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

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

"When cultures meet each other, it helps us to learn how to live, like you can learn from other people."

They learn things from each other like new foods. But some cultures think they're best and should control it. They start religions...

What happens when cultures meet and why?

Argument Scale

Compare the evidence on both sides (use criteria)

Reason/Evidence/Exp Kids need to eat	Reason/Evidence/Exp Prevents dropouts	Reason/Evidence/Exp Gets kids to read	Reason/Evidence/Exp Expense	Reason/Evidence/Exp Not healthy food	Reason/Evidence/Exp Not good motivation
Claim/Position Yes	Claim/Position Should pizza be a reward for reading?	Claim/Position No			

Write Model Conversations

Prompt

Relevant & Engaging Purpose Need to talk (info apps)

Clear Expectations (language to use, thinking, content)

Quantity

of turns

Length of turns

Equity of voice

Quality

Use conversation skills to co-construct & argue ideas

- Turns build on previous turns
- Students pose or choose a relevant initial idea(s) that is focused on learning objective(s)
- Students clarify idea(s) by paraphrasing, defining, elaborating, asking questions, negotiating, etc.
- Students support ideas (using evidence, examples, explanations)

If there are two or more competing ideas (arguing/deciding):

- Students build up both ideas and
- (a) evaluate the strength/weight of the evidence of each idea
- (b) compare the strength/weight and choose the "strongest/heaviest" idea
- (c) explain and/or negotiate final decisions & conclusions

Effective listening

Clear speaking (+ use of language asked for in prompt)

Academic thinking (+ use of thinking asked for in prompt)

Academic content (+ talk about content asked for in prompt)

Nonverbal communication

Effective Language Development Features to Apply to Other Activities



Information Gaps



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Building ideas & visual support

Jigsaws

Gallery Walks

Four Corners

Discussion Groups

Socratic Seminars

Teacher "Lecture"

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Transition Improv Activity (Pro-Con)

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

Structured talking & listening with academic language

"Stronger & Clearer Each Time" Grid

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What happens when cultures meet and why?

Visual scaffolding of thinking

Compare the evidence on both sides (use criteria)

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Observing & supporting without talking

to talk more conversation up until now evaluate evidence

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Students support ideas (using evidence, examples, explanations)

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Effective listening

Clear speaking (+ use of language asked for in prompt)

Academic thinking (+ use of thinking asked for in prompt)

Academic content (+ talk about content asked for in prompt)

Teacher, peer, & self-assessment of conversation skills

Practicing and pushing for stronger/clearer

Modeling

Write Model Conversations

What have we done to support the things on the right?

What more can we do? How can we use our current lessons to develop these things?

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SAMPLE Conversation from Sarah Seliger
8th grade ELA/ENL Integrated

Teacher prompt: What are some negative character traits shown by the misfits in this text and what evidence do you have to support these traits?

Student A: I don't think the students had negative character traits. I think the teachers had negative character traits. Like manipulation.

Student B: No! How?

Student A: Because here where it says... (gives page and citation).

Student B: But this is about the students. Not the teachers.

Student A: Yes, but the teachers (goes on with example from text)

Teacher: That is a valid point. But what other negative traits can we write about?

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REVIEW: Argument Balance Scale

Structuring Collaborative Argument Conversations: *Argument Scale*

Claim

vs.

**Opposite or
Different Claim**

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

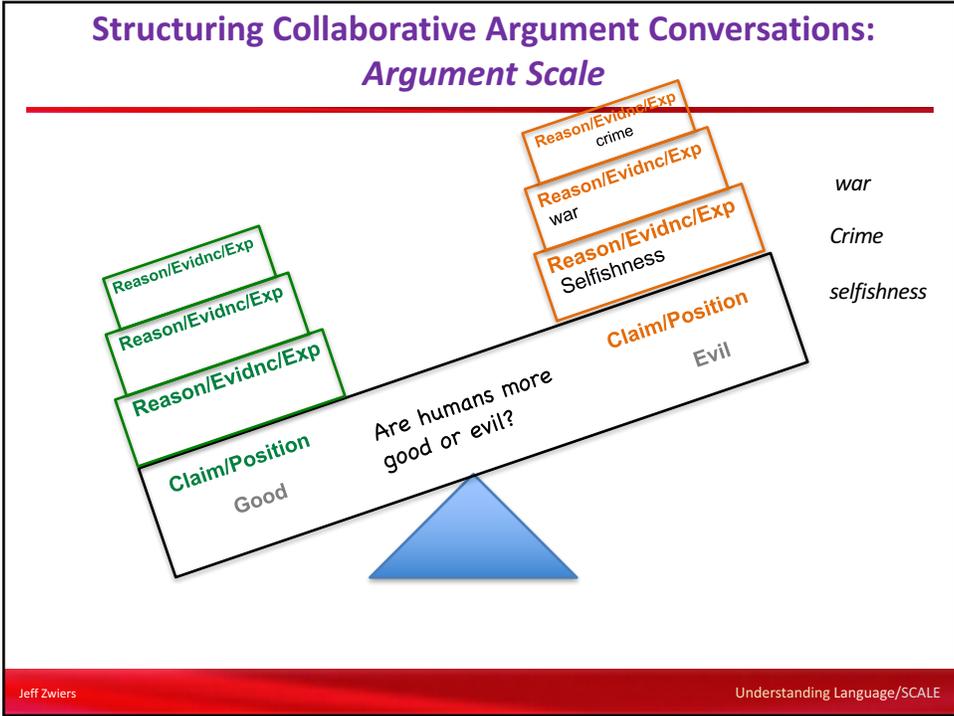
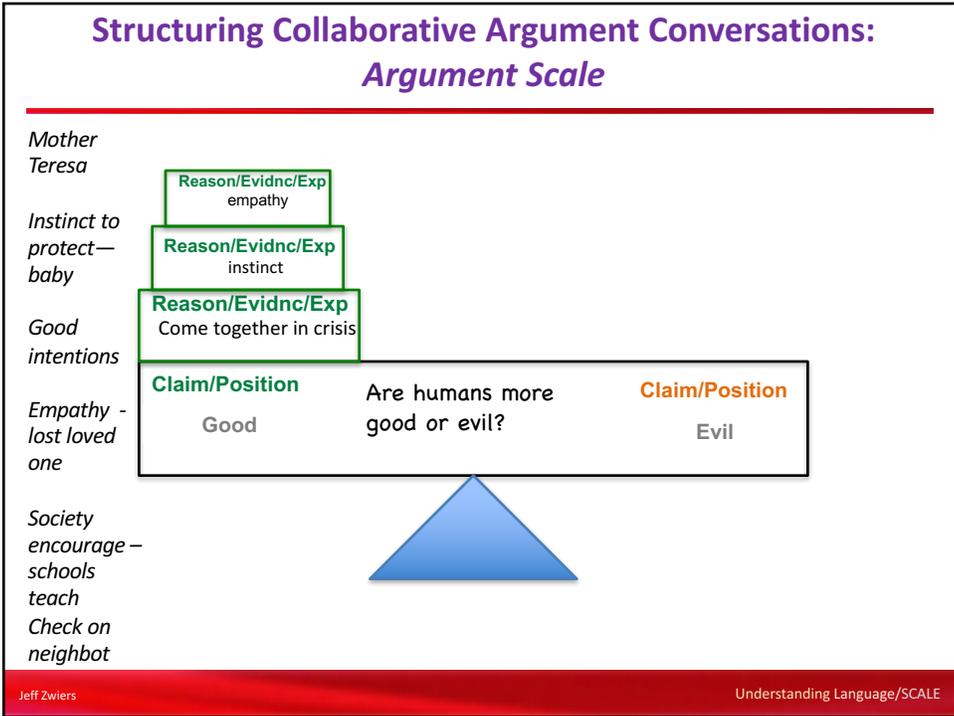
Claim/Position

Good

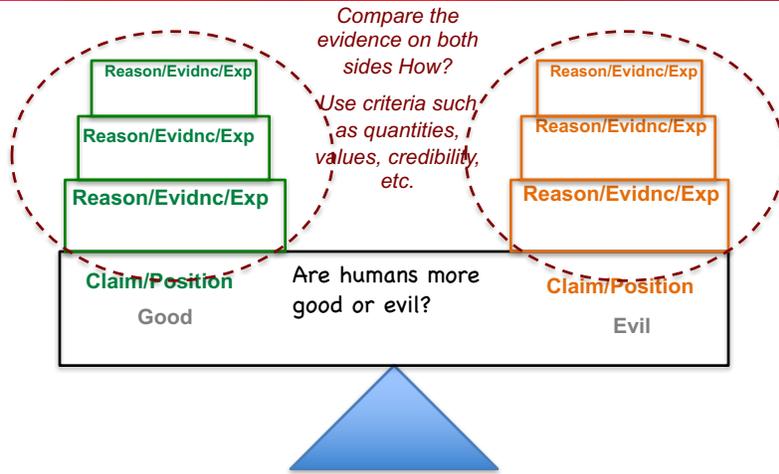
Are humans more
good or evil?

Claim/Position

Evil



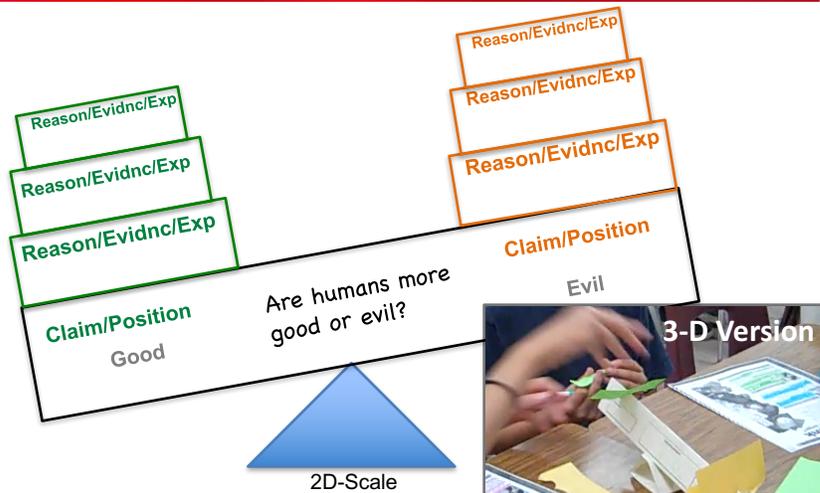
Structuring Collaborative Argument Conversations: Argument Scale



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Understanding Language/SCALE

Structuring Collaborative Argument Conversations: Argument Scale



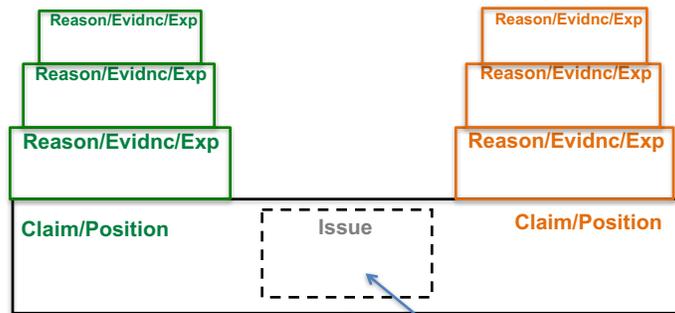
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Understanding Language/SCALE

Conversation Support Cards (Triads)

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Your Turn with the Argument Balance Scale



Should yearly standardized tests be eliminated?

Next Steps

- Design a lesson with 2 or more language development activities, teach it, and take notes.
- Fortify 2 activities that you often do with language development features like the ones we covered today. Teach with them and take notes on how they go.
- With the help of your students, develop student-friendly versions of the tool for peer and self-assessment.
- Update your Inquiry Cycle focus, evidence, and progress



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