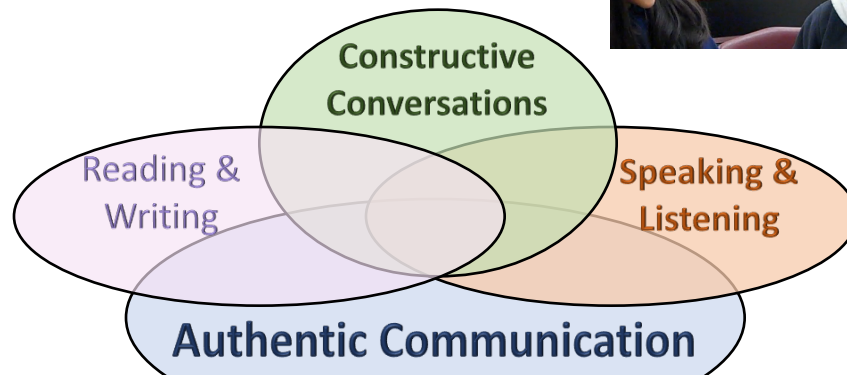


# Let's Stop Gluing Apples to the Tree: Authentic Communication as the Cornerstone for Enduring Learning



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## Overview



### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## Using Language

“Ladies and gentlemen, from the cockpit, this is your airplane mechanic. I was asked to fly the plane today. I have never flown a plane before, nor in this type of weather, but I do know all the names of all the engine parts and how they fit together. So sit back, relax, & enjoy your flight.”



## Types of Classroom Communication

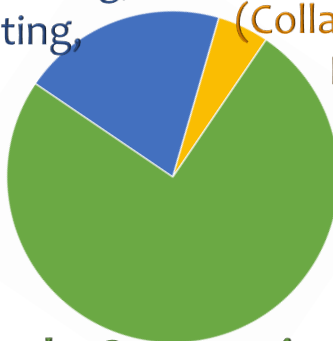
**One-way** (Productive Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing, Multimedia)

(e.g., 1. Tell your partner your opinion on this issue)

**Conversational**

(Collaborative Building, Exploring, Arguing)

(e.g., 2. With your partner, decide which is the best choice.)



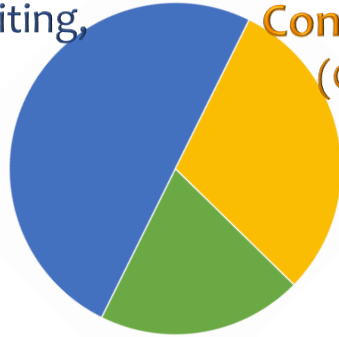
**Pseudo-Communication**

(Shiny, Fake, Indirect, Display, Drills, Games, IRE)

(e.g., Turn to tell your partner the meaning of irony. Can someone tell me when WWII started? Solve this math problem. What is photosynthesis?)

## More Authentic Communication

**One-way** (Productive  
Speaking, Listening,  
Reading, Writing,  
Multimedia)



**Conversational**  
(Collaborative  
Building,  
Exploring,  
Arguing)

**Pseudo-Communication**  
(Shiny, Fake, Indirect, Display, Drills, Games, IRE)

## Authentic Communication in School is

**the use of words**  
(and/or other meaning-carriers)  
**to share information**  
**for doing meaningful things** (creating,  
changing, deciding, clarifying, etc.)  
**that just one person can't do.**




**Why is it so  
important?**

## Build Communication-Rich Classroom Culture: Reduce these Obstacles

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- Our desire for “control” over learning (e.g., “I don’t know what they’re saying back there.”)
- Lack of seeing the long-term & learning value of classroom communication (curriculum)
- Teaching to assessments that don’t value or inspire communication
- Focusing on points and grades → “Tyranny of the bare minimum” + lack of consequences for unclear language
- Lack of academic conversation assessments, models, supports, and practice time (scrimmages)
- Over-structured “discourse” activities and over-use of sentence frames



### How can we reduce these?

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## Communicativeness “Test” for Activities (3 Essential Features for Language Development)

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\_\_\_ **Is there a useful & engaging purpose?** In the activity, do students *use* (and *need to use*) language to do something meaningful and engaging beyond just to answer questions or get points? (e.g., language, content, thinking...)  
*Are there consequences for lack of clarity?*

\_\_\_ **Is there an information gap?** In the activity, do students need to ask for or give information that they want, need, or want to know?

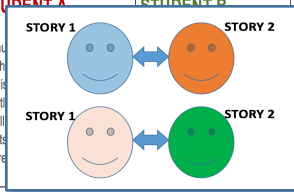
\_\_\_ **Is there attention to language in service of communication?** In the activity, is there extra assessment focused on improving how language is used?

Discuss how authors use language to describe the setting in *Decision of Columbus*.

Co-design an experiment that helps you know how to best grow beans.

**STUDENT A**      **STUDENT B**

STORY 1      STORY 2      STORY 1      STORY 2



- Sentence Frames
- Language modeling & scaffolding
- Practice
- Formative feedback

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## Fostering Constructive Conversations

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Conversation is a meeting of minds with different memories and habits. When minds meet, they don't just exchange facts: they transform them, reshape them, draw different implications from them, engage in new trains of thought. Conversation doesn't just reshuffle the cards-- it creates new ones.

--Theodore Zeldin

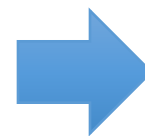
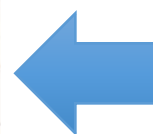
## Conversations Develop LANGUAGE w/ Loads of...

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**INPUT**

**OUTPUT**

**MINI-CHALLENGES**



## What to Look For in Conversations: Conversation Observation & Analysis Tool (COAT)

Prompt
<input type="checkbox"/> Relevant & Engaging Purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Need to Talk (Info gaps, BK) <input type="checkbox"/> Clear Expectations (language to use, thinking, content)
Quantity
<input type="checkbox"/> # of turns <input type="checkbox"/> Length of turns <input type="checkbox"/> Equity of voice
Quality
<input type="checkbox"/> Use conversation skills to co-construct & argue ideas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Turns build on previous turns</li> <li>— Students pose or choose a relevant initial idea(s) that is focused on learning objective(s)</li> <li>— Students clarify idea(s) (by paraphrasing, defining, elaborating, asking questions, negotiating, etc.)</li> <li>— Students support ideas (using evidence, examples, explanations)</li> <li>— <i>If there are two or more competing ideas (argue/decide):</i> students build up both ideas and                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) evaluate the strength/weight of the evidence of each idea</li> <li>(b) compare the strengths/weights and choose the "strongest/heaviest" idea</li> <li>(c) explain and/or negotiate final decisions &amp; conclusions</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> Effective listening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Clear speaking (+ use of language asked for in prompt)</li> <li>— Academic thinking (+ use of thinking asked for in prompt)</li> <li>— Academic content (+ talk about content asked for in prompt)</li> <li>— Nonverbal communication (posture, nods, eye contact)</li> <li>— Value one another's ideas, thinking, and feelings</li> </ul>

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## Improving Conversation Prompts

- There is an engaging purpose** for conversing that (a) connects to lesson objectives, and (b) requires thinking & doing something with ideas (e.g., create, clarify, argue (=>consensus), decide, rank, solve, evaluate, combine, compare, choose, fortify, build, & transform) (+ Agency)
- There is a need to talk** (info gaps; bring unique ideas)
- There are clear directions** for how to converse (language use thinking, content concepts...)

**ELA Literature:** Collaboratively

**ELA Expository:** Decide whether or

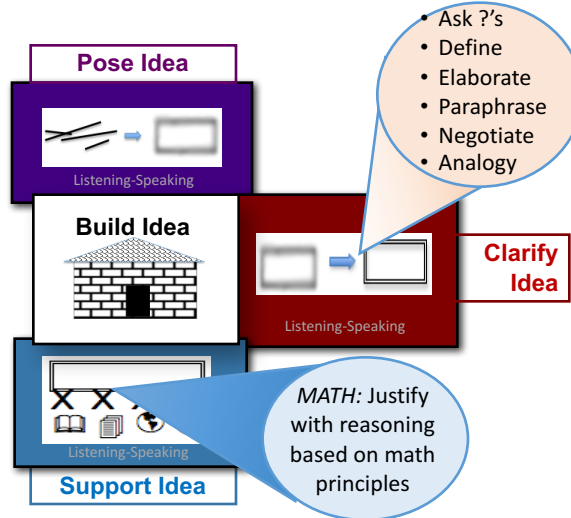
**Math:** Work with your partner to

**Science:** In your conversation,

**History:** With your partner, decide if Lincoln was more interested in abolishing slavery or more interested in preserving the Union. Use evidence to support the claims on each side and evaluate the value of the evidence, along with any bias that might exist in the sources. Use historian language such as "This is strong evidence because..."

## Constructive Conversation Skills for “Build Up 1 Idea” Mode

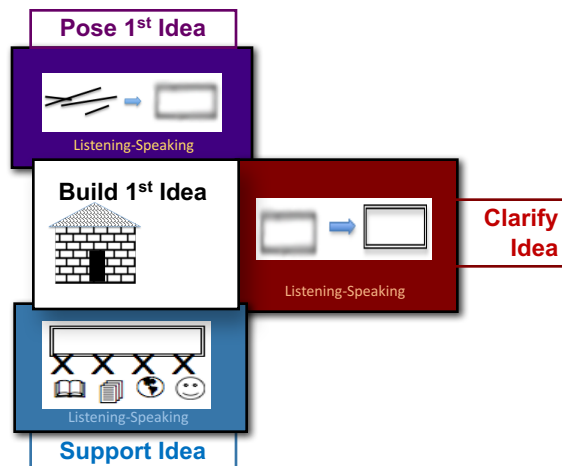
**Goal: Students collaboratively (but w/o teacher) build an idea** (e.g., claim, answer, solution, interpretation), **using the following skills (not natural...and eventually need to be “automatic”):**



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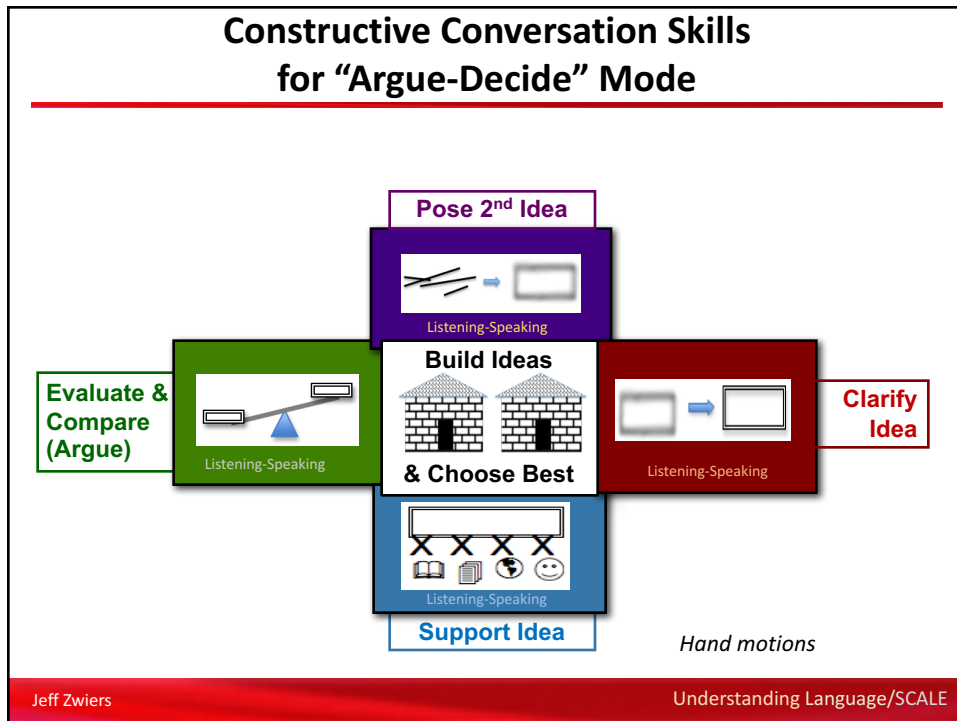
## Constructive Conversation Skills for “Argue-Decide” Mode



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## Constructive Conversation Skills for “Argue-Decide” Mode



## Conversation – 2<sup>nd</sup> gr. SS

A: What do firefighters need most? (*prompt*)

B: Air.

A: Can you give an example?

B: Like a tank of air like the picture.

A: Why do they need it most?

B: So they won't die.

A: Why?

B: When they go in burned buildings. Smoke kills so they need air. Air is most important.

A: I think they need water most.

B: Why?

A: They need it to put out the fire. That's what they do.

B: But they can't use the water if they die from smoke.

A: OK, yeah. Air is most important.





## Conversations

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

Eli: I disagree.

Laura: Why?

Eli: Cuz I can't feel it. Can you?



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.



## Conversation Support Cards (Triads)

*Which cards might be given to the students in the following video?  
Are there others you might use?*

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, nods, posture	Pose a competing 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

## 5<sup>th</sup> Gr. Language Arts/ELD



### Context

- 5<sup>th</sup> 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

## Role-Based Improv Conversations

(Sample Text: 'The Two Brothers' by Tolstoy)

1. Pick a text that has characters with different things to share with one another (different perspectives, opinions, stories, motivations, etc.)
2. Tell students the prompt (e.g., You will converse with your partner about which one of you brothers was more right. You will come to an agreement.) (Model this with a different text, if this is new to students.)
3. Assign roles for each pair (e.g., younger brother & older brother)
4. Have students read the text with the prompt in mind, taking notes on what they will say, based on their role.
5. Have them review their notes and put them onto one note card, with key words and not in complete sentences
6. Students converse with their roles in mind. (Using conversation skills [e.g., both build up both ideas] and any language that you want to hear)



Developing 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


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

**Switch partners!**  
Don't forget to use examples.

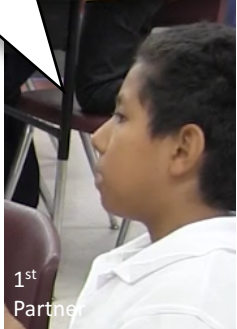
I think it's both good and bad. Like you learn from each other, but also you can fight.

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





Manuel



1<sup>st</sup> Partner

What happens when cultures meet and why?

### “Stronger & Clearer Each Time” Grid

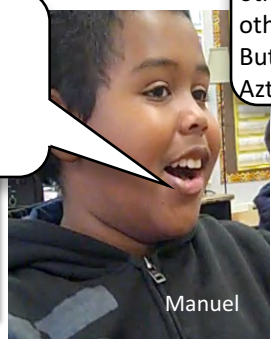
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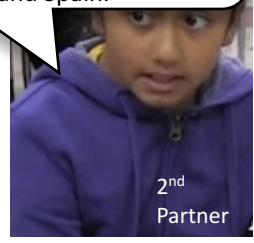
Cultures meet and bad things happen like war. But good things, too, like you can learn other language.



Manuel

When cultures meet each other, it helps us to learn how others live, like their religion. But wars can happen, like the Aztecs and Spain.

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



2<sup>nd</sup> Partner

What happens when cultures meet and why?

### “Stronger & Clearer Each Time” Grid

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

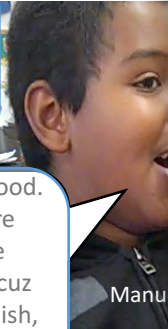
Cultures meet and bad things happen like war. But good things, too, like you can learn other language.

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.

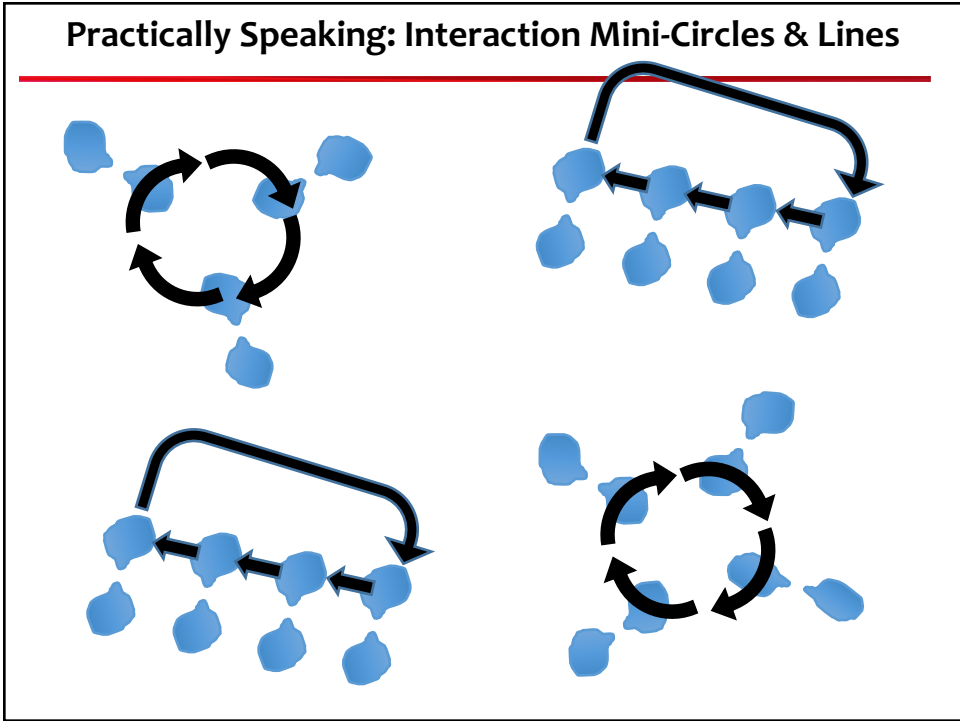
(PRE)  
Bad things happen when they meet.  
Wars start.

---

(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?**



### “Stronger & Clearer Each Time” Grid

<b>Name</b>	Designing lesson activities to have more authentic communication takes time and energy—and many activities are loud and “messy.” So, is it worth it to have students authentically communicate during lessons?
<b>Me</b>	(just two or three key words, if any)
1.	
2.	
3.	
<b>Me</b>	

*(You will present to your school on the value of having more communication in every lesson)*

One powerful way in which communication can help students is...  
 I think educators need to know that authentic communication means...  
 Teachers can adapt their lessons in several ways, such as...  
~~I disagree with you...~~  
*(Listeners can and should ask clarifying and supporting questions)*

### Communicativeness “Test” (Essential Features for Language Development)

\_\_\_ **Is there a useful & engaging purpose?** In the activity, do students *use* (and *need to use*) language to do something meaningful and engaging beyond just to answer questions or get points? (e.g., language, content, thinking...)  
*Are there consequences for lack of clarity?*



\_\_\_ **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?



Building proficiencies  
in **speaking and listening**  
with:

## TRANSITION IMPROV Activities



### *Transition Improv Activity: Pro-Con*

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**Topics:** Social media's influence on language development

*(You will make recommendations to teachers and students about the uses of social media)*

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

**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?*

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## Communicativeness “Test” (Essential Features for Language Development)

---

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## Transition Improv: **For-Against**

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*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~~

<i>Frames:</i>	<p>One reason for ... is ... For example, ...  Evidence that supports ... is... because...  A reason against ... is ... For example, ...  Evidence that does not support ... is ... because ...</p>
----------------	---

*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)  
*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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**NEXT STEPS for Cultivating Proficiencies in Speaking, Listening, & Conversing**

	 <b style="color: green;">SPEAKING &amp; LISTENING</b>	 <b style="color: blue;">CONVERSING</b>
<b>Increase Quantity</b>	# of students # of minutes	# of students conversing # of turns Length of turns
<b>Increase Quality</b>	Strength Clarity	Co-Construction Collaborative Arguing Conversation Skills

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