

The Power of Communication to Help Students Learn in School and Succeed in Life

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Portland, Maine
Jeffzwiers.org/October19

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If you don't truly use language, you won't truly learn it.

"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."




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SHIFT from...


LESS to MORE

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



How does language use differ between these two?

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



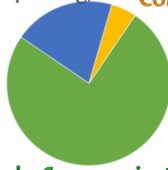
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Types of Classroom Communication

One-way (Productive Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing, Multimedia)
Tell your partner what you think motivates students to learn. Write an article for the school paper. Read a chapter to prepare you for the expert panel we will have...

Conversational (Collaborative Building, Exploring, Arguing)
With your partner, decide whether or not to move west. Co-create an experiment... Jointly come up with several ways to solve this problem...

Pseudo-Communication (Shiny, Fake, Indirect, Display, Drills, Games)
Turn and tell your partner the shift described in the previous slide (without looking). Turn to tell your partner the meaning of irony. Can someone tell me when WWII started? Solve this math problem. Write a response to literature essay (55). Read and answer the questions. Make a poster about photosynthesis




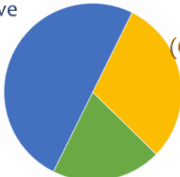
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More Authentic Communication

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

Conversational (Collaborative Building, Exploring, Arguing)

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

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How Might These Differ With Respect to Learning?

I think the best route was over land. Even though it had dangers, they were smaller than going by ship. And it was less expensive, too.

(Prompt: "After deciding what you think is the best route west, pair up with a person from another corner & try to convince him or her.")

I think the best route was over land. Even though it had dangers, they were smaller than going by ship. And it was less expensive, too.

(Whole class prompt: "What do you think was the best route to California? Use evidence from the text to support your idea.")




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Authentic Communication: Features for Accelerating Language Development

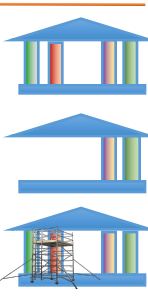
___ **Useful & engaging purpose.** Students use language to do/build/change something beyond just answering questions for praise or points. Clarity matters. Agency.

+

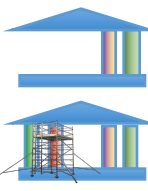
___ **Information gap(s).** Students get or give information that they want, need, or don't have. (natural or created) (students need one another)

___ **Attention to language in service of communication?** There is extra work on language used.

Decide how Columbus
Co-design an experiment that helps you measure gravity



STORY 1: (blue circle) → (orange circle) STORY 2
STORY 1: (pink circle) → (green circle) STORY 2




- Language modeling & scaffolding (e.g., sentence frames)
- Practice
- Formative feedback

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Warming up
speaking and listening
with:

TRANSITION IMPROV Activities



Transition Improv Activity (Pro-Con)

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 ...

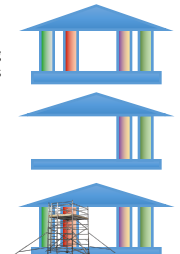
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Does this Activity Accelerate Language Development?

___ **Is there a useful & engaging purpose?** Students use language to do/build/change something beyond just answering questions for praise or points. Does clarity matter? Do students feel a sense of agency?

___ **Are there information gaps?** Students get or give information that they want, need, or don't have. (interdependence)

___ **Is there attention to language in service of communication?** There is extra work (modeling, practicing, giving feedback, scaffolds) on language used.



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Transition Improv (Similar-Different)

Animal cells

Lysosomes (digest food and break down waste)

Ribosomes (make protein)

Mitochondria (turns nutrients into energy)

Centrioles (pull chromosomes from nucleus during mitosis)

Cytoplasm

No cell wall

Plant Cells

Cell wall (gives plant its shape)

Large vacuole (store nutrients and waste)

Chloroplasts (produce carbohydrates using photosynthesis)

SD Frames: 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 ____

However, On the other hand, Then again,

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Transition Improv: Two Views w/ Evidence

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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Transition Improv Activity: Math Situations

Topics: Addition-Subtraction, Area-Perimeter, mm-km
Multiplication-Division, Volume-Surface Area
Fractions-Decimals, Integral-Derivative

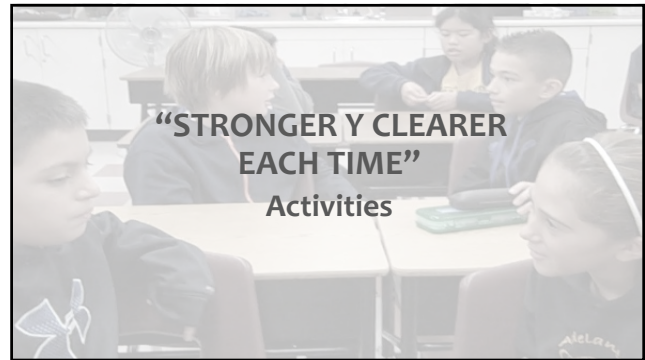
Transitions: However,
On the other hand,
Then again,

~~but~~

Frames: You need to add when ... because...
When you ... you need to subtract because...
You need to calculate volume when... because...
When you ... you need to use decimals because...

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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.

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“Stronger & Clearer Each Time” Grid

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

Switch partners!
Don't forget to use examples; Stronger + clearer!

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.



What happens when cultures meet and why?

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“Stronger & Clearer Each Time” Grid

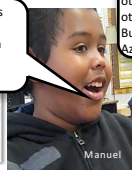
I think bad things happen when cultures meet, like wars.

Switch partners!
Don't forget to use examples; Stronger + clearer!

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.

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



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.



What happens when cultures meet and why?

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“Stronger & Clearer Each Time” Grid

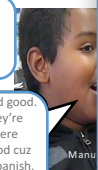
I think bad things happen when cultures meet, like wars.

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?

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Stronger & Clearer Activity

Context

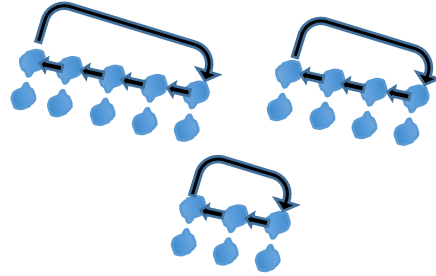
- 4th grade Science class
- Early Advanced speakers.
- Have read and discussed energy conversion
- Focus on stronger and clearer messages using examples.



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.

Interaction Mini-Lines



"Stronger & Clearer Each Time" Grid

Name	Why is it important to learn about history through primary source documents?	<i>You are a historian trying to convince a history textbook author to include primary sources.</i>
Me	(Just two or three key words, if any)	
1.		
2.		
3.		
Me		

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"Stronger & Clearer Each Time" Grid

Name	Is it worth the time and energy to adapt instruction and assessment to have more authentic communication in every lesson? Why or why not?	<i>You will present to your school on the value of having more authentic communication during lessons.</i>
Me	(Just two or three key words, if any)	
1.		
2.		
3.		
Me		

One powerful way in which conversation can help students is...
I think educators need to know that authentic communication means...
We can adapt our lessons and activities in several ways, such as...
I disagree with you

Listeners can & should:
- Prompt for clarification & support
- Help ideas along with "What about...?"

COLLABORATIVE CONVERSATIONS



The Power of Conversation

In the Bantu language, the word *ubuntu* means that a person becomes a person only through other people.

Neuroscientists agree, arguing that our brains and minds are shaped in continuous interaction with other people.

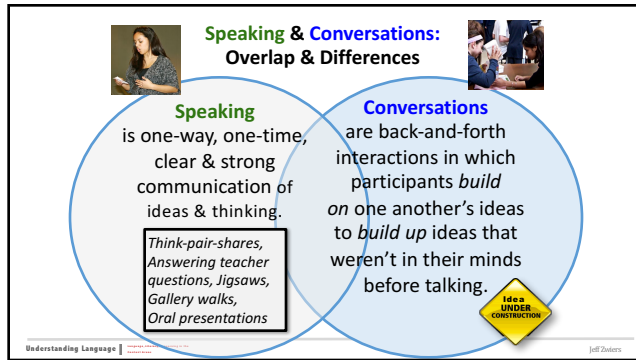
During conversation, participants orient towards the other person's mind, inferring meanings and relevancies, rather than just decoding the verbal messages.



(Hari & Kujala, 2007. *Brain Basis of Human Social Interaction: From Concepts to Brain Imaging*)

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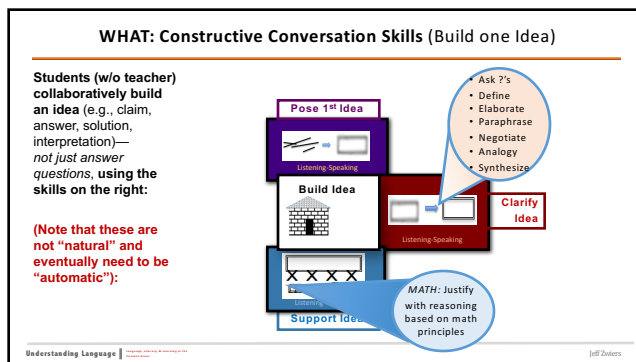
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WHY: The Power of Collaborative Conversations

- ☐ **CONTENT: Clarify, Use, & Reinforce**
- ☐ **LANGUAGE: Input + Output + Mini-Challenges**
- ☐ **Formative Assessment**
- ☐ **Social Skills, Empathy, Equity, Agency, & Ownership**

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Conversation (Build 1 Idea)

Alicia: Rosa Parks. Marcos said all she did was sit down, but I think she was a hero.

Paty: I agree. She has a book about her.

Alicia: Why do you think a whole book?

Paty: She was so brave to go to jail, and it was like just cuz she sat down on a bus.

Alicia: Jail is scary, I think. They put you in the bars with ...ladrone and//

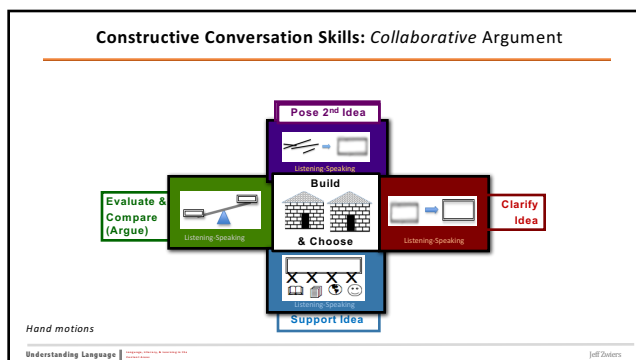
Paty: //Yeah, and I think she knew it would happen. That's a hero cuz she knew they would put her in jail.

Alicia: And she started the...what's that word?

Paty: Boycott. They stopped using the buses.

Alicia: Boycott, so it, it changed those racism rules. All cuz of Rosa! ... Where's Marcos?

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Improving Conversations

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

Eli: I respectfully disagree with you.

Laura: Why?

Eli: Cuz I can't feel it. Put your hand out. Do 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.

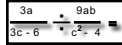
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Improving Conversations

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.



Manny: I think we should use a table, like yesterday.
 Sara: I hate those things. They're so boring.
 Manny: So, what should we do?
 Sara: Maybe just times it.
 Manny: Why?
 Sara: Cuz that's what we did yesterday.



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USE the Cards – 2nd 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.



Conversation - 5th Gr. ELA/ELD



Context

- 5th grade Language Arts/ELD class
- Advanced and early intermediate

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

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Conversation Prompts

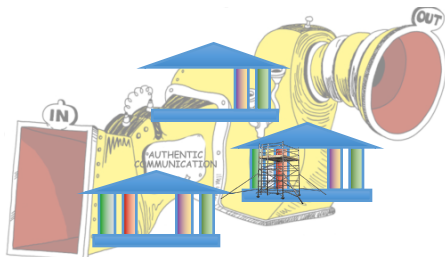
- ❑ There is an engaging purpose for conversing that (a) connects to lesson objectives, and (b) requires thinking & doing something with ideas
 (e.g., create, clarify, argue (=>consensus), decide, rank, solve, evaluate, combine, compare, choose, fortify, build, & transform) (+ Agency)
- ❑ There is a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

ELA Literature: Collaboratively decide
ELA Expository: Decide whether or not to
Math: Work with your partner to create a
Science: In your conversation, compare
History: You will co-author a letter to a history journal. Converse with your partner to 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..."

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Transforming Instruction and Assessment



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APPLICATION : Strengthening Communication in Every Activity

Write essay, report, letter	Give One, Get One*	Create a story
Read & answer questions	Four Corners	Video
Use graphic organizers	Games (Bingo, Jeopardy)	Dramatization
Numbered Heads Together	Oral Presentation	Debate
Create a poster	Gallery Walk	Readers Workshop
Write a lab report	Answer teacher questions	Write a Prequel/Sequel
Solve a word problem	Think-Pair-Share*	Make a Podcast
Writers' Workshop	Literature Circles	Anticipation Guides
Simulation	Jigsaw	Exit & Entry Tickets
Analyze a painting	Socratic Seminar	Homework

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Applying the features to what you already do



Think-Pair-Share

BEFORE - Tends to consist of:

- Turn and tell your partner your answer (similar);
- More talkative person starts;
- Do it to make teacher happy

AFTER- With features applied:

- Give a purpose for talking and listening to partner (You will use the information to help you draft a letter—and vice versa...)
- Have A and B students read different texts, do different problems, etc.
- Tell A or B partner to start; model the language they can use; have them practice what they will share out in groups of 6 (w/ #d heads).

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Applying the features to what you already do



Jigsaw

BEFORE - Tends to consist of:

- Copy from copies
- Purpose to fill in boxes
- Do it to make teacher happy

AFTER- With features applied:

- Give a purpose for talking and listening to partner (You will use the information to help you create a model of the water cycle...)
- Practice in expert groups, twice; stronger & clearer
- In home groups, other member looks at your notes as you orally share to group
- Model language and questions to use

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Applying the features to what you already do



Gallery Walk

BEFORE - Tends to consist of:

- One person repeating description of poster
- Multiple others listening
- Do it to make teacher happy

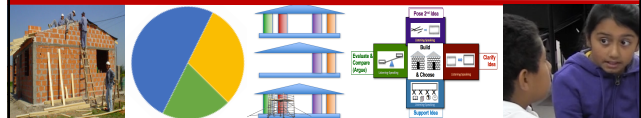
AFTER- With features applied:

- Give a purpose for talking and listening to partner (e.g., You will use the information to help you decide which persons belong in our history book...)
- Presenter pushes self to present stronger and clearer message each time
- After presenter talks, "audience" pair-shares
- Teacher models language and questions to use

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RECAP



Shift from solo piling up pieces to co-constructing whole ideas!

Increase **authentic** speaking, listening, reading, writing, & conversing

Language features include purpose, info gaps, and attention to language

Core conversation skills are posing clarifying, supporting, and evaluating ideas

Conversations build language, content, agency, empathy, and social intelligence

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