

Academic Conversations as a Gateway to Academic Literacy

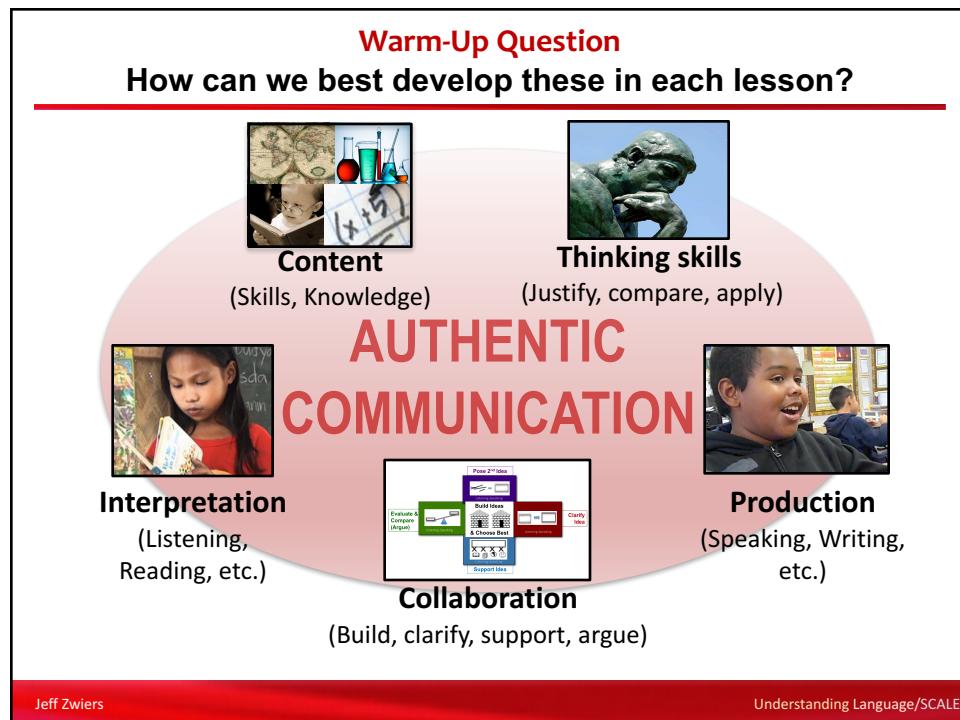
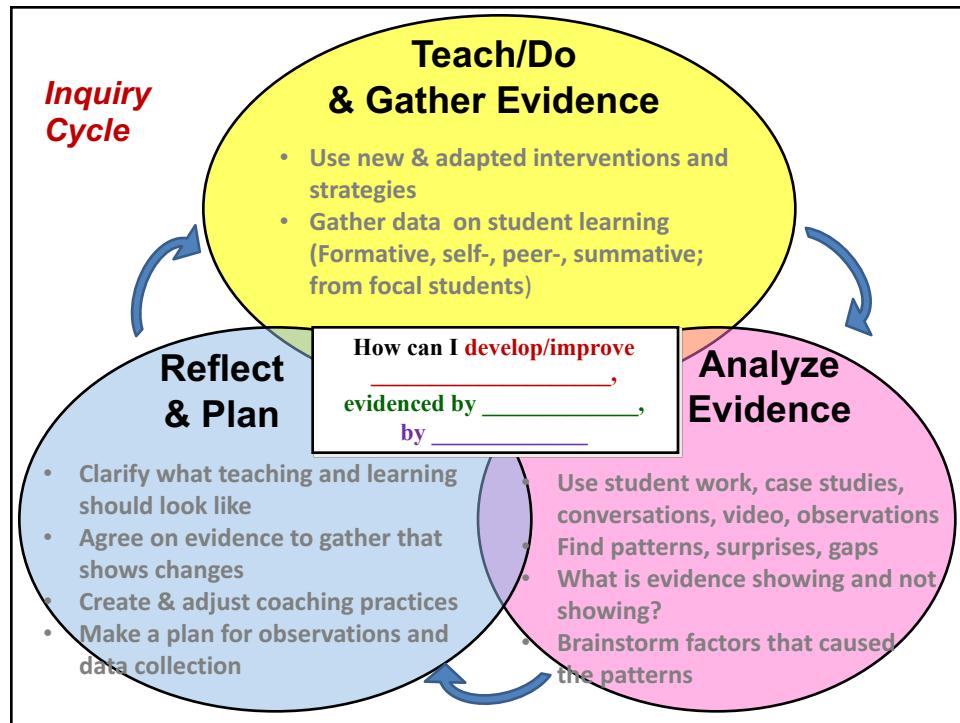


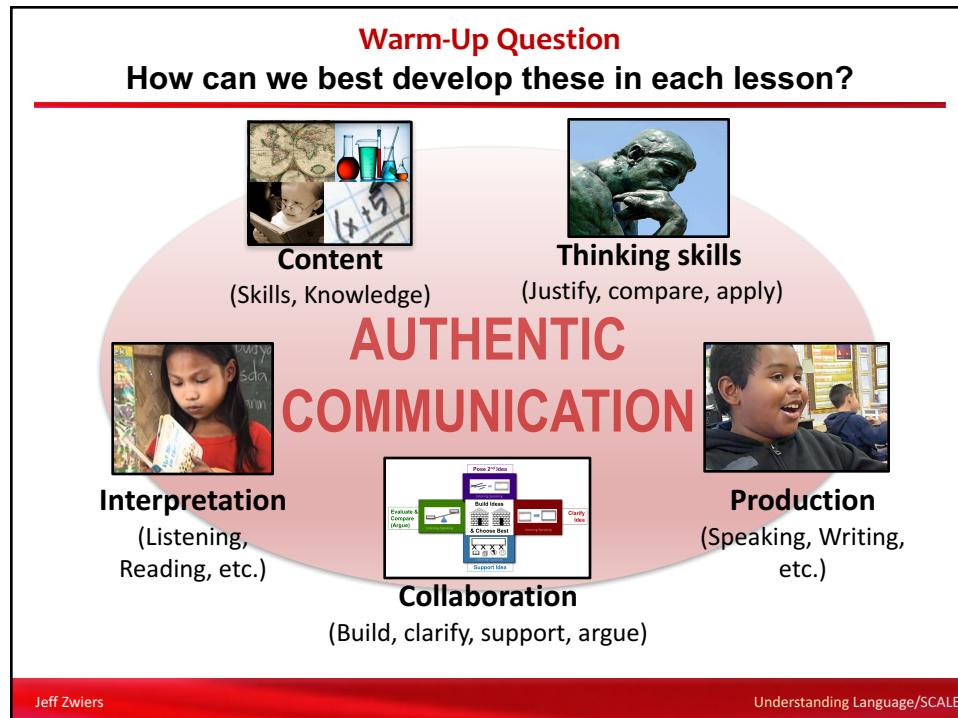
Jeff Zwiers
Coaches Webinar #1
December 22, 2017
jeffzwiers.org/december22
jzwiers@stanford.edu

Overarching Goals for this Session

1. Frame our coaching work with **inquiry cycles**
2. Be able to discern between **fake** and **authentic** communication
3. Reflect on ways to help teachers develop classroom **cultures of communication**
4. Know and apply the **3 features of communicative language development** across disciplines
5. Learn and analyze **several types of activities** that will help teachers develop students' speaking and listening abilities

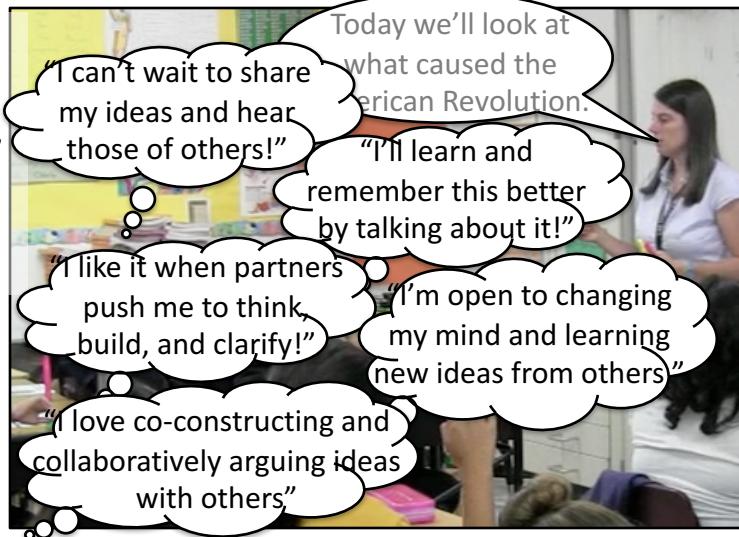






CLASSROOM CULTURE: Cultivating Conversation Mindsets

Each time a topic is introduced, every student thinks,



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Reduce 8 Obstacles that Hinder the Building of Communication-Rich School & Classroom Cultures

1. “Coverage,” “Memorization-Regurgitation,” and “More Right Answers = More Learning” mindsets
2. *Inauthentic & shallow communication* that pervades curricula and pedagogy of language, literacy, & content
3. Desire for “control” over learning
4. Lack of consequences for unclear language
5. Lack of seeing long-term & learning value of classroom conversation
6. Lack of constructive conversation models
7. Lack of conversation practice time (scrimmages)
8. Over-structured “discourse” activities and over-use of sentence frames



How can we reduce these?

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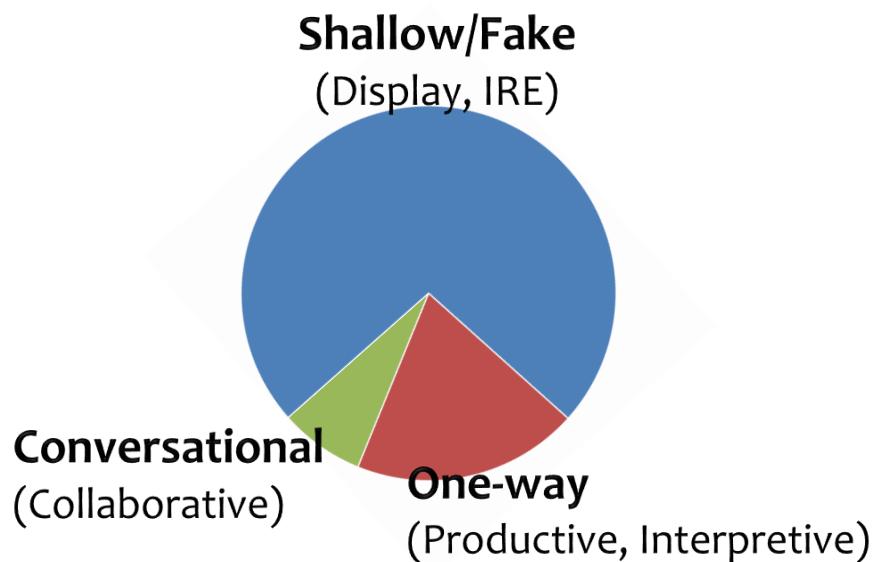
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Knowing and communicating are in their nature highly interdependent, indeed virtually inseparable.

--Jerome Bruner

Types of Classroom Communication



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?



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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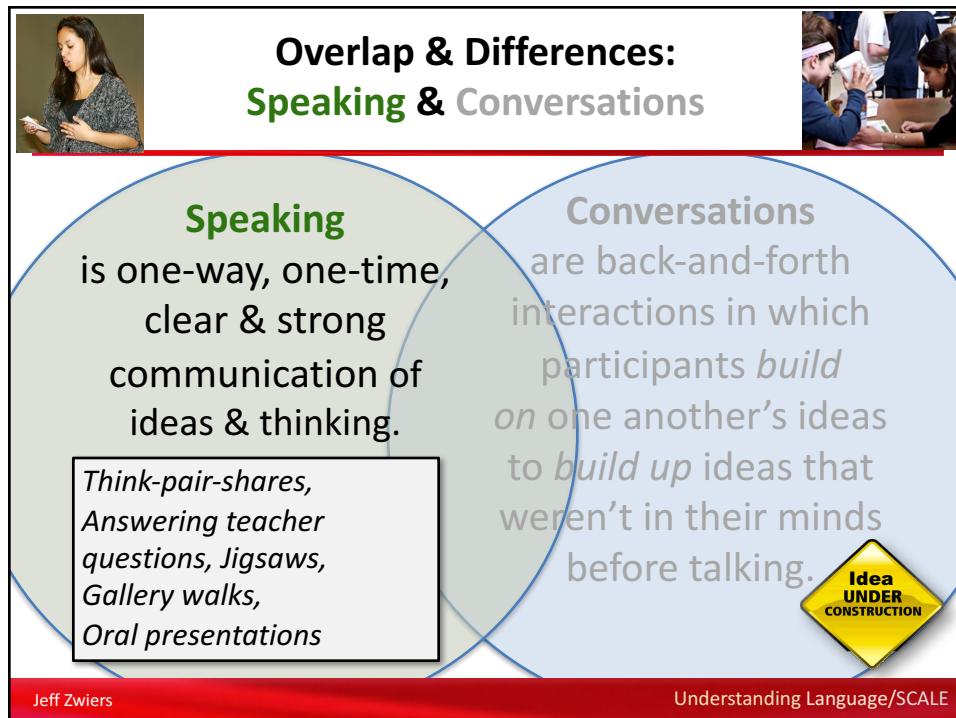
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Goals

	 ORAL OUTPUT	 ACTIVITIES
Increasing Quantity	# of students # of minutes	Information Gap Transition Improv
Increasing Quality	Strength Clarity	Stronger & Clearer Each Time

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Fortifying Speaking & Listening with INFORMATION GAP Activities

Info Gap Activities for Listening and Speaking

Information Gap: DRAW IT FOR ME



Info Gap Activities: A and B Forms

B: Bluz ne kadar?

A: Yehdee lira

B: Kitap ne kadar?

A: Ohn-besh lira

...

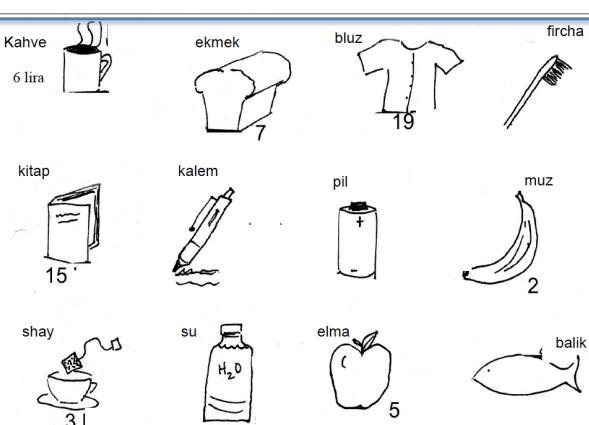
A: Fircha ne kadar?

B: Sekeez lira.

A: Balik ne kadar?

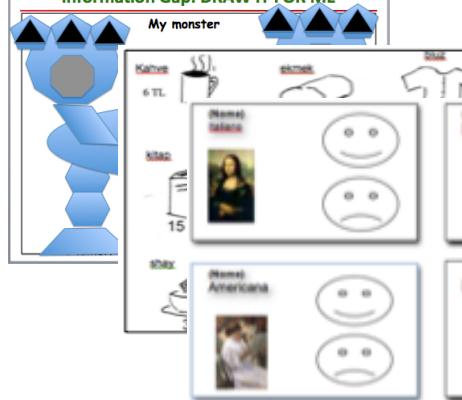
B: Yeermee yooch lira

A



Info Gap Activities for Listening and Speaking

Information Gap: DRAW IT FOR ME



What are situations in each discipline in which two people have to share information?

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| A: | You need to paint the walls and ceiling in a classroom. Your partner went to the school and did some measurements. Ask your partner for the information that you think you need in order to know how many square meters you will paint in total. |
| B: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 walls in each classroom - Each wall is 8 meters long and 3 meters high - The ceiling has an area of 64 meters squared |
| A: | 10m 10m 10m
10m |
| B: | You need to buy carpet to cover the floors of 3 classrooms in the school. You have Your partner went to the school and made some measurements. Ask your partner for the information that you think you need in order to know how many square meters of carpet to buy. |

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

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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

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?

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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?

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 ___

Transition Improv Activity: Math Operations

Topics: Addition-Subtraction
Multiplication-Division

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 multiply when... because...
When you ... you need to divide because...

A & B, Learn?

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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?



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_____ **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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ASSESSMENT: Clear and Strong Oral Output (Self, Teacher, Peer)

- 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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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.



What happens when cultures meet and why?

“Stronger & Clearer Each Time” Grid

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

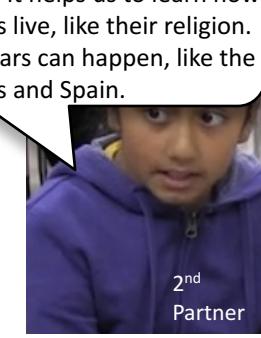
Cultures meet and bad things happen like war. But good things, too, like you can learn other language.

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

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.

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?

“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 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

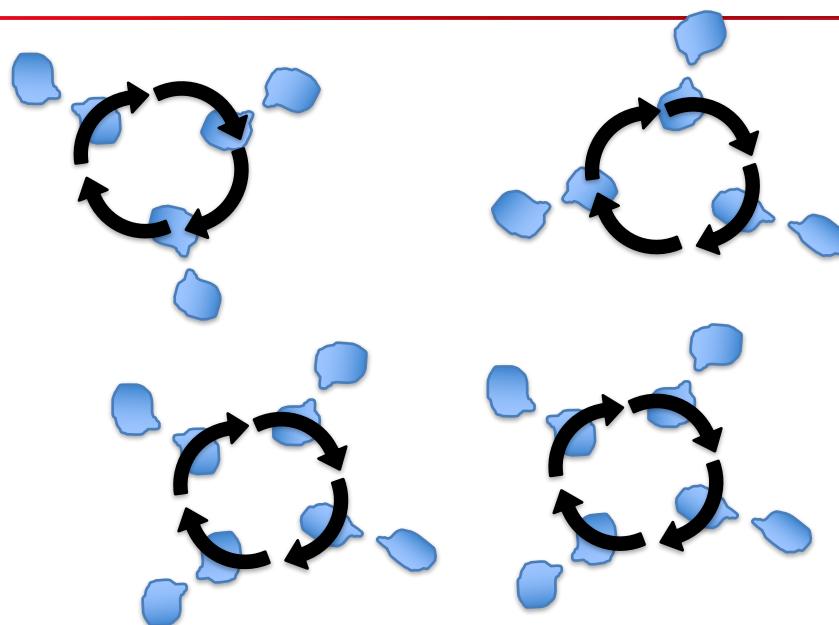
- Prompt is: What is energy conversion?
- Daniel talks to three different partners
- Look for if and how his response becomes stronger (idea-wise) and clearer (language-wise)
- *Reflect on ways to improve his response and/or the activity.*

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Practically Speaking: Interaction Mini-Circles



“Stronger & Clearer Each Time” Grid	
Name	How can school influence the current and future lives of students?
Me	(just two or three key words, if any)
1.	
2.	
3.	
Me	<p>One powerful way in which school can influence students...</p> <p>School offers a wide range of...</p> <p>Teachers often</p> <p><i>(Teacher can have listeners ask clarifying and supporting questions)</i></p>

The “Communicativeness Test” for an Activity’s Power for Developing Language	
<u>Is there a useful & engaging purpose?</u> 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?	
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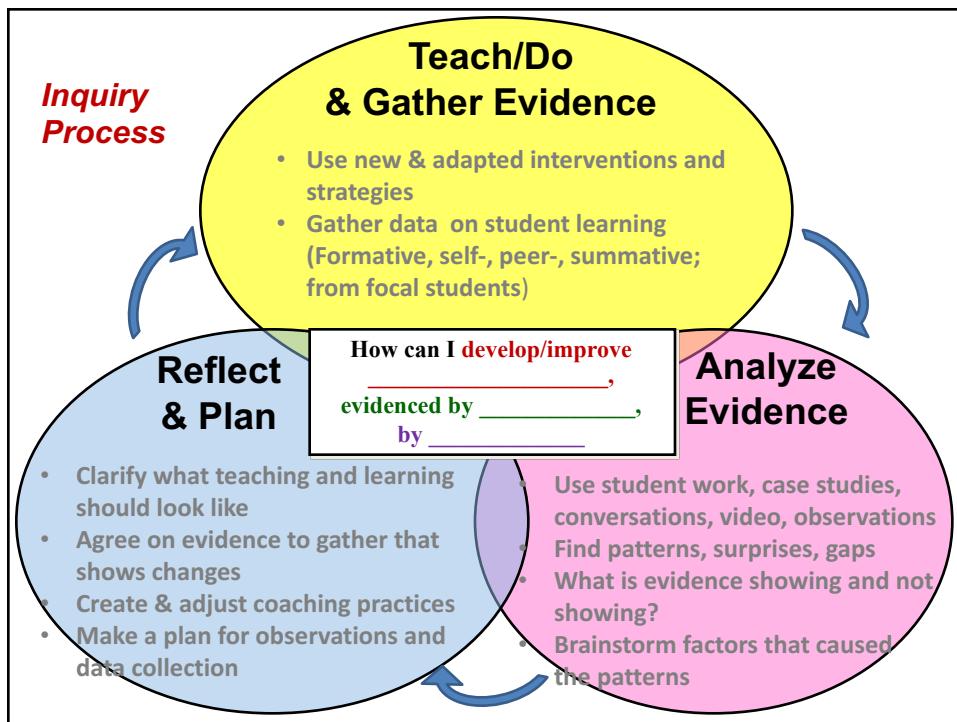
INSTRUCTION & ASSESSMENT Key Ideas

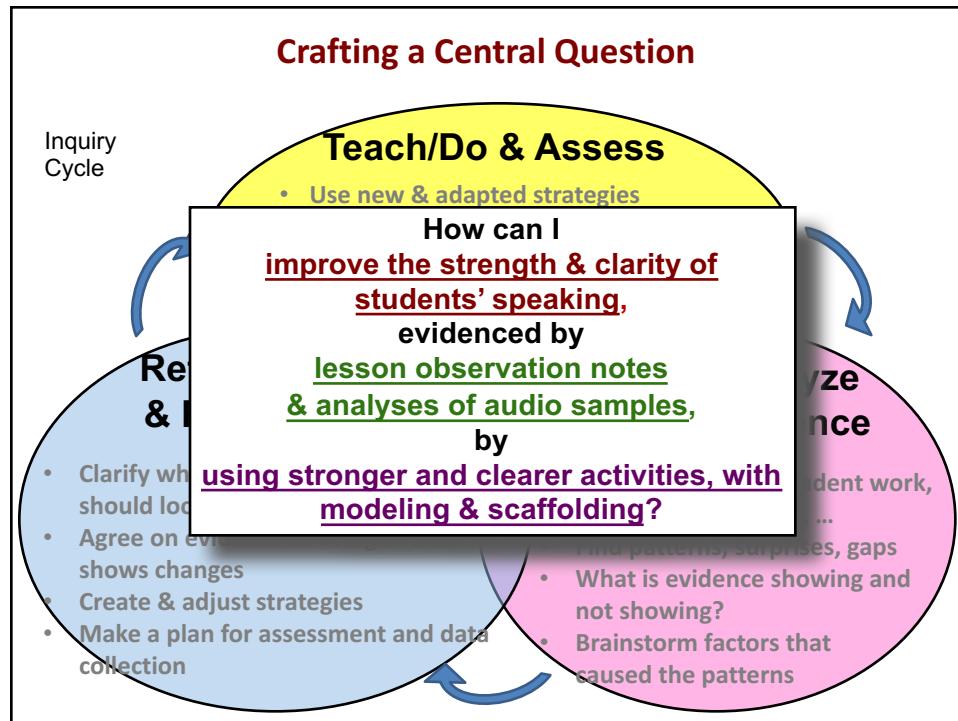
- Push students to push themselves and peers to be as clear as possible every time they say something—and to support one another in speaking.
- Help students value oral language and the time given to practice it.
- Encourage students to be “mini-teachers” who support and draw language out of peers.
- Set up situations in which students want to be clear and want to listen to others—where there are meaningful consequences, positive or negative, for being clear or unclear.



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Session Recap

Excited to frame our coaching work with inquiry cycles?

Able to better discern between fake and authentic communication?

Insightful regarding ways to help teachers overcome obstacles to a communication-based learning culture?

Confident in applying 3 features of communicative language development across disciplines?

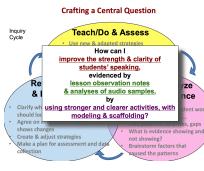
Excited to share new types of activities that will help teachers develop students' speaking and listening abilities?



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Between Sessions Tasks

- Reflect on the needs in your setting and consider (a) which features of communicativeness need strengthening; and (b) which types of activities might be effective.
- Share one or more of this session's activities with your teacher(s), if there is time. Begin an inquiry cycle around it.
- As a reminder of what we covered today, read:
[Literacy practices that adolescents deserve: Opportunities to develop oral language](#)



Jeff Zwiers

jeffzwiers.org/December22

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: jzwiers@stanford.edu
Websites: jeffzwiers.org/December22
ell.stanford.edu

References

- Mercer, N. (2000). *The Guided Construction of Knowledge: Talk amongst teachers and learners*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Zwiers, O'Hara, & Pritchard (2014) *Common Core Standards in diverse classrooms: Essential practices for developing academic language & disciplinary literacy*. Stenhouse.

Between Sessions Tasks

- Reflect on the needs in your setting and consider:
 - a) What good conversations between two students would sound like in your settings
 - b) which conversation skills need strengthening; and
 - c) which activities might be effective for strengthening the skills
- As a reminder of what we covered today, read:

[Conversing to fortify literacy, language, and learning](#)

