Developing Students' Conversational Discourse Across Disciplines

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AGENDA

I. **Conversation Skills**

II. **Conversation Skills Support Activities**

III. **Conversation Modeling and Scaffolding**

IV. **Next Steps**

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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.
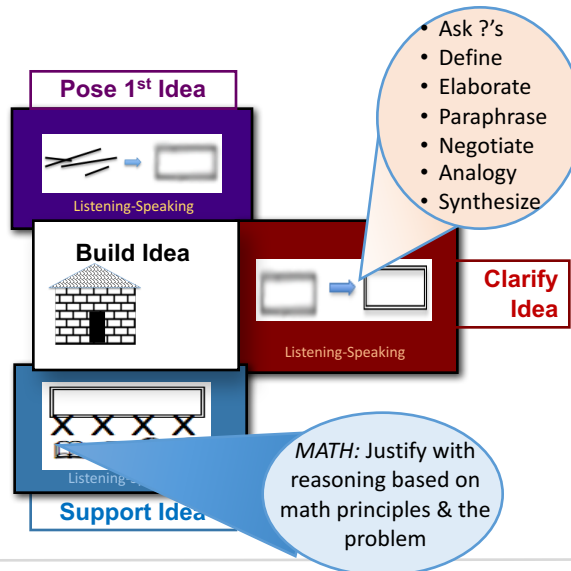
During conversation, participants orient towards the other person's mind, inferring meanings and relevancies, rather than just decoding and encoding verbal messages (as robots might do).

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

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Constructive Conversation Skills (Build one Idea)

Students (w/o teacher) **collaboratively build an idea** (e.g., claim, answer, solution, interpretation)— *not just answer questions*—**using the skills on the right:**

Pose 1st Idea

Listening-Speaking

Build Idea

- Ask ?'s
- Define
- Elaborate
- Paraphrase
- Negotiate
- Analogy
- Synthesize

Clarify Idea

Listening-Speaking

Listening-

Support Idea

MATH: Justify with reasoning based on math principles & the problem

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Stronger & Clearer Each Time

for Fostering Conversation Skills:

☐Speaking ☐Listening
☐Clarifying ☐Supporting
↳BUILDING↵

& Language Development Features:
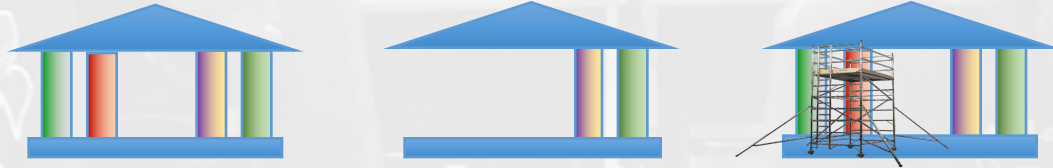
Designing "Stronger & Clearer Each Time" Activities

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. Listeners push for clarification & support, and offer ideas
4. Scaffolds are reduced during the activity.

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2/8/18
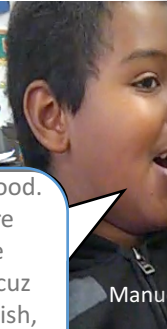

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"Stronger & Clearer Each Time" Grid

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.

Manu...

(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.

appens 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.*

Video of Stronger-Clearer

Bryant High School

ELA/ELD

Prep work for reading *Animal Farm*

Opinion Continuum: Communism vs. Capitalism

Interaction Mini-Lines

"Stronger & Clearer Each Time" Grid

Name	Do we need to spend more time reading and writing poetry?	
Me	(just two or three key words, if any)	
1.		
2.		
3.		
Me		

You are a teacher who will present on this topic to parents.
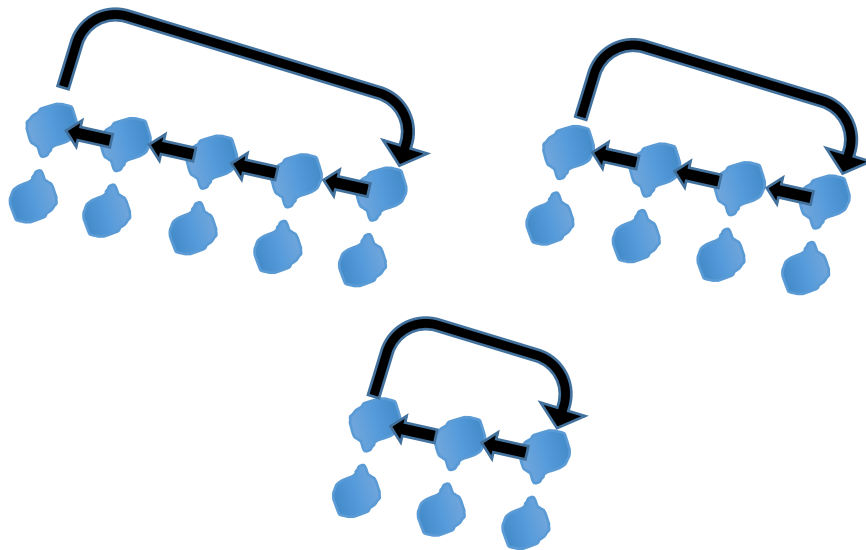
Jigsaw variation,   Follow w/ conversation

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"Stronger & Clearer Each Time" Grid

Name	How can developing students' oral language (speaking, listening, conversing) influence reading and writing—and content learning?	
Me	(just two or three key words, if any)	
1.		
2.		
3.		
Me		

You will present to colleagues on this topic.

Listeners can & should:
- *Prompt for clarification*
- *Prompt for support*
- *Help with "What about…?"*

One way in which oral language influences reading is…because…
A student with a strong command of oral language can read...
Even though.....
~~I disagree with you...~~

15 sec "take w/ me"

Constructive Conversations
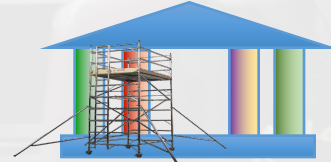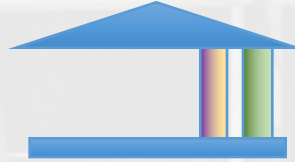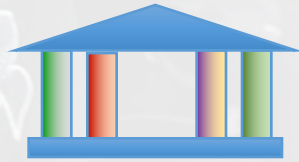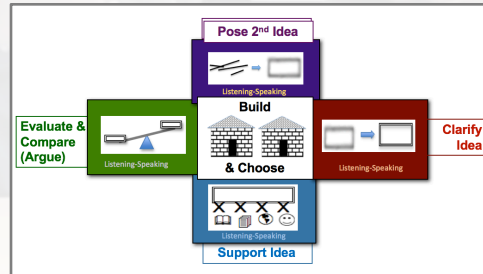
Conversation – 1st Gr.

Context
- 1st grade science
- English learners

This Clip
- After seeing pictures in the beginning of the unit, students are asked **"What helps the slow pufferfish stay alive?"**

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Constructive Conversation Skills

Pose 2nd Idea

Listening-Speaking

Build

& Choose

Evaluate & Compare (Argue)

Listening-Speaking

Clarify Idea

Listening-Speaking

Support Idea

Listening-Speaking
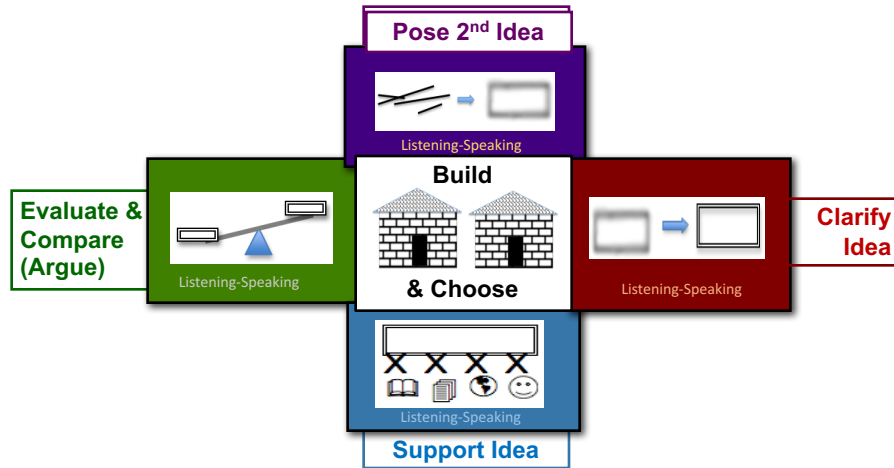
Hand motions

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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?

Build up the first idea first!!!!!!!

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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Conversation (1st)

A: I think she not share it (bread)
B: Why?
A: Cuz the other animals not work; just lazy.
B: Yeah. I don't think to share, too.
A: Why?
B: Like my dad. He work for money. Not work, no money.
A: Yeah, no es justo.
B: Not fair. But teacher said is good to share.
A: I share when they help. Like maybe I paint the school. I don't want others…it's my money.
B: No. Maybe if …no pueden trabajar, like they're sick, maybe. But the animals are lazy.
A: Is good to share, but not all the time, not with lazies.

Conversation (5th)

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 …ladrones 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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Silent Cards for a 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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Constructive Conversations in 9th ELA

Context

- Sheltered 9th grade English class

- 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.

- Some prompts are on the board

This Clip

- Prompt: "What do you think an important theme in this book is?"

- How do they clarify and support ideas? (*"What does courage mean?"* *"Can you elaborate on that?"* *"Can you give an example from another book?* *"How does this apply to our life?"*)

2/8/18

Silent Support Cards (from the COAT)

Ask for an (another) example to support the idea

Paraphrase what your partner said

Ask your partner to clarify (Why...How...)

Build up the first idea first

Show that you are listening with your eyes, nods, posture

Pose an alternative idea and start to build it up

Stay focused on the conversation prompt/purpose

Encourage your partner to talk more

Refer to the text

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Using the Cards – 6th Gr. ELA

A: So, what do you think the poem is about?

B: I think maybe something like, You gotta be yourself. What do you think?

A: I think it's about being out in nature, that it's good to see plants...
Oh, OK, So, why do you think it's about 'be yourself'?

B: Cuz it says he doesn't want to be growing in clusters in the valley, and stand alone, and like not stuck in a pot of dirt.

A: I like that. And the title is "Identity"

B: Yeah...
How does that help us?

A: Identity means how you're different...

Identity (excerpt, by Julio Noboa Polanco)

Let them be as flowers,
always watered, fed, guarded, admired,
but harnessed to a pot of dirt.

Build up the first idea first

~~~gly weed,
an eagle
high, jagged rocks.

I'd rather be unseen, and if
then shunned by everyone,
than to be a pleasant-smelling flower,
growing in clusters in the fertile valley,
where they're praised, handled, and
plucked by greedy, human hands.

How does the title support the idea?

~~~ould stand alone, strong and free,
~~~ather be a tall, ugly weed.

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Using the Cards – 7th Gr. Science

1 Karla: So, why do squids have ink?
2 Maya: For writing.
3 Karla: What do you mean?
4 Maya: Is for writing.
5 Karla: Squids can't write…
   OK, so what do you mean that they write?
6 Maya: Not pens, but on rocks. Para marcar su territorio.
7 Karla: OK, but I think they got ink to…, they escape. Like the picture.
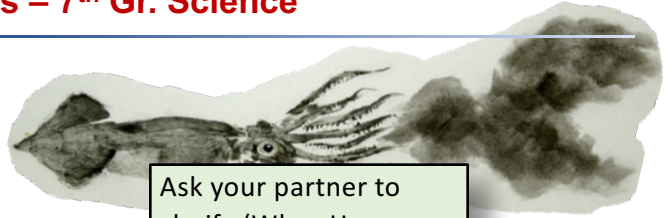8 Maya: OK…
   How do they escape with ink?
9 Karla: They let it out; it makes a cloud so they, you know, can swim away.
10 Maya: And poisons the fish?
11 Karla: I don't know; I think jellyfish are poison.
12 Maya: Yo odio los jellyfish.
13 Karla: Me too.

> Ask your partner to clarify (Why…How… What do you mean by)

> Clarify: How do they escape with ink?

> Stay focused on the conversation prompt/purpose

Using the Silent Support Cards

PROMPT: Come to a consensus with your partner on why the painter painted the painting in this way: why he included certain figures, their composition, postures, movements, gazes. Include what the painter wanted the viewer to feel or think, empathize, and learn from the painting. Try to agree on how accurate a depiction you think this is and why.

First landing of Columbus on the shores of the New World, at San Salvador, W.I., Oct. 12th 1492. (1862) Dióscoro Puebla, Spanish painter

Using the Silent Support Cards

PROMPT: Read the excerpt from *Huckleberry Finn* (Twain, 1885) and come to an agreement on what the most important theme in the passage seems to be. Make sure to clarify and support idea(s) along the way as you build or choose your final main theme idea and prepare to present it to others.

Excerpt from The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (Twain, 1885)

So I was full of trouble, full as I could be; and didn't know what to do. At last I had an idea; and I says, I'll go and write the letter—and then see if I can pray. Why, it was astonishing, the way I felt as light as a feather right straight off, and my troubles all gone. So I got a piece of paper and a pencil, all glad and excited, and set down and wrote: *Miss Watson, your runaway slave Jim is down here two mile below Pikesville, and Mr. Phelps has got him and he will give him up for the reward if you send.*

I felt good and all washed clean of sin for the first time I had ever felt so in my life, and I knowed I could pray now. But I didn't do it straight off, but laid the paper down and set there thinking—thinking how good it was all this happened so, and how near I come to being lost and going to hell.

Using the Silent Support Cards

And got to thinking over our trip down the river; and I see Jim before me all the time: in the day and in the night-time, sometimes moonlight, sometimes storms, and we a-floating along, talking and singing and laughing. But somehow I couldn't seem to strike no places to harden me against him, but only the other kind. I'd see him standing my watch on top of his'n, 'stead of calling me, so I could go on sleeping; and see him how glad he was when I come back out of the fog; and when I come to him again in the swamp, up there where the feud was; and such-like times; and would always call me honey, and pet me and do everything he could think of for me, and how good he always was; and at last I struck the time I saved him by telling the men we had small-pox aboard, and he was so grateful, and said I was the best friend old Jim ever had in the world, and the ONLY one he's got now; and then I happened to look around and see that paper.

 I took it up, and held it in my hand. I was a-trembling, because I'd got to decide, forever, betwixt two things, and I knowed it. I studied a minute, sort of holding my breath, and then says to myself:
"All right, then, I'll GO to hell"—and tore it up.

It was awful thoughts and awful words, but they was said. And I let them stay said; and never thought no more about reforming. I shoved the whole thing out of my head, and said I would take up wickedness again, which was in my line, being brung up to it, and the other warn't. And for a starter I would go to work and steal Jim out of slavery again; and if I could think up anything worse, I would do that, too; because as long as I was in, and in for good, I might as well go the whole hog.

Structuring Collaborative Argument Conversations:
Argument Scale

Claim   **vs.**   **Opposite or Different Claim**

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

Claim/Position   Are humans good or evil?   **Claim/Position**

Good   Evil

Argument Balance Scale

Prevent dropouts & jail costs

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Kids need to eat

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

Gets them to read

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Gets kids to read

Kids need to eat

Claim/Position   ISSUE   **Claim/Position**

Yes   Should pizza be a reward for reading?   No

Stay after school

Pizza tastes good

Argument Balance Scale

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Expensive

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Not healthy food

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Not good motivation

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Kids need to eat

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

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Gets kids to read

Claim/Position
No

Claim/Position
Yes

Should pizza be a reward for reading?

Not healthy food

Expensive to run

Need to exercise

Not good motivation for reading

Some kids don't like pizza

Argument Balance Scale

Compare the evidence on both sides (use criteria)

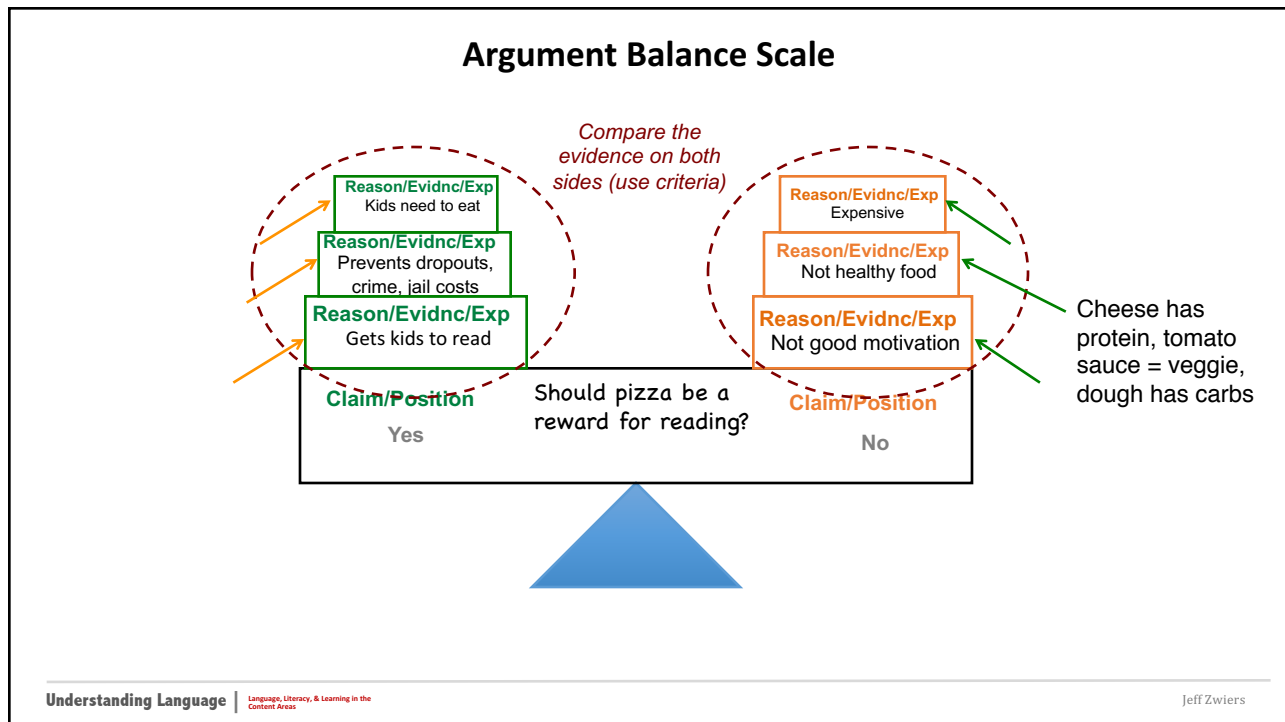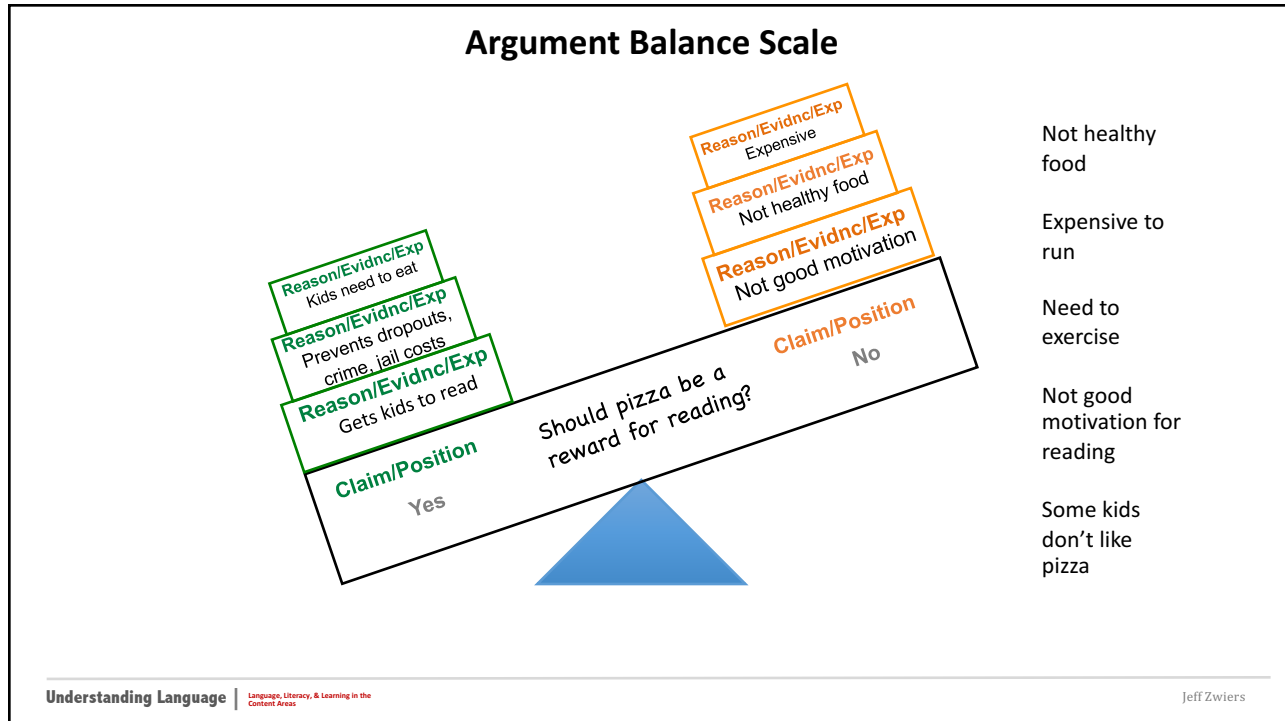**Reason/Evidnc/Exp**
Kids need to eat

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

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Gets kids to read

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Expensive

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Not healthy food

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Not good motivation

Claim/Position
Yes

Claim/Position
No

Should pizza be a reward for reading?

Cheese has protein, tomato sauce = veggie, dough has carbs

Argument Balance Scale

Choose a side and argue why it "weighs more"

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Kids need to eat

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

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Gets kids to read

Claim/Position
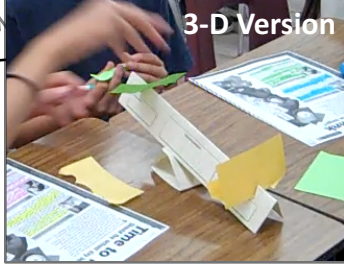Yes

Should pizza be a reward for reading?

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Expensive

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Not healthy food

Reason/Evidnc/Exp
Not good motivation

Claim/Position
No

3-D Version

2D-Scale

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Video Example

CONTEXT

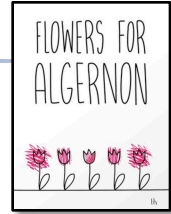5th grade Language Arts/ELD class Advanced and early advanced partners.

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, turn-taking, and clarifying
- Notice if and how the balance scale helps students to extend talk
- Consider next steps based on this conversation

8th ELA – Using the Argument Scale

A: Why do you think the author wrote this story?
B: Maybe teach us we should be who we're born to be.
A: What do you mean?
B: You know, in the story Charlie wants to be smart, and his operation makes him smarter. But it's not natural. And he wasn't happy, even after he's smart.
A: Yeah. And he was kinda like a science experiment. I don't think they should experiment on people. It's maybe like when they experiment on animals.
B: Yeah. It's messed up. What about the other side?
A: Maybe it's that we can be smart, all of us. And maybe it's OK when science helps? Science helps people be better in lots of ways.
B: What's an example?
A: Like drugs. When we are sick, they help cure us. I took pills last year when I had a infection and they made me better.

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8th ELA – Using the Argument Scale

B: I guess. And I think it's good to see, like, people like him could be smart.
A: What do you mean?
B: Like I see people like him, like at school, and I think they're just, I don't know, broken. But inside they're like us, maybe smarter than us.
A: Maybe, OK, so are we done with both sides?
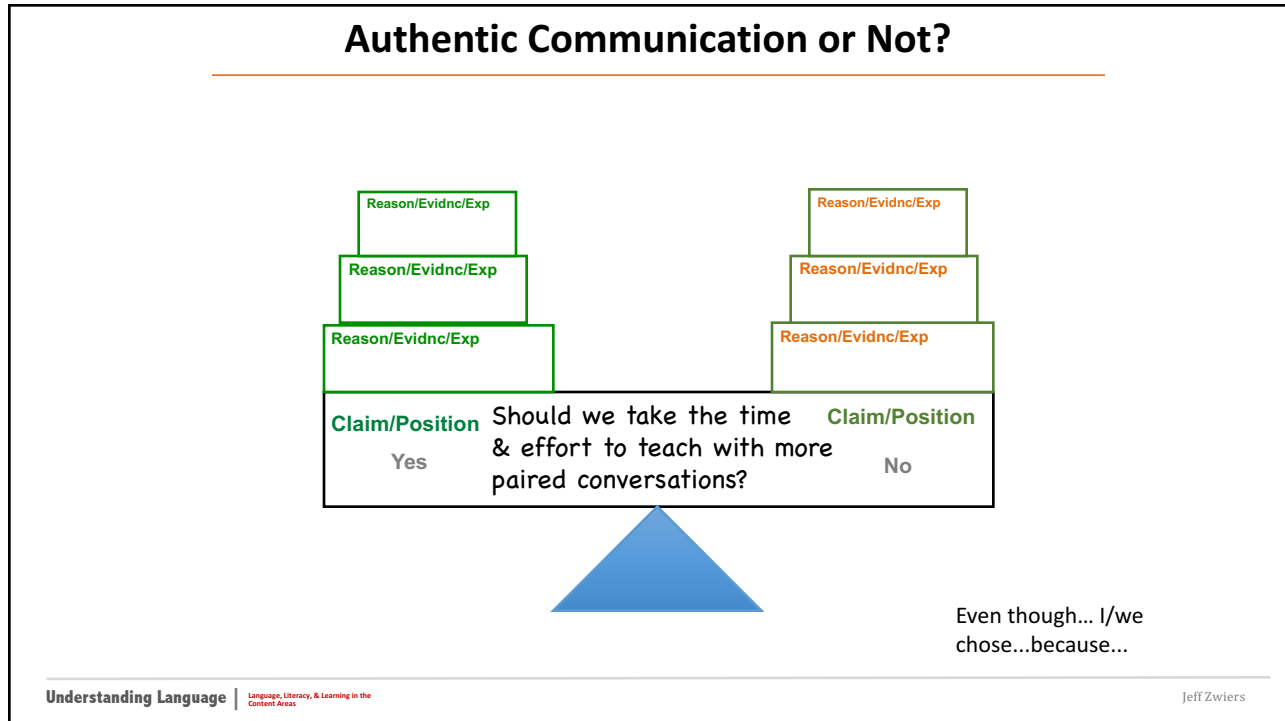B: Yeah. Now we gotta decide which is heaviest.
A: I can't decide. I don't think it's natural and it was like an experiment on a person//
B: //But it also, like I said, it helps us see inside people like Charlie.
A: I think the author wanted us to think that more. Maybe it wasn't natural, and that's bad, but the author, I don't know, is, more wants us not to think they're broken. What do you think?
A: I agree. At the end of the book I thought that a lot more than being mad about the experiment. If he died from that experiment, then it'd be different, but he didn't.
B: OK.

Authentic Communication or Not?

Reason/Evidnc/Exp

Reason/Evidnc/Exp

Reason/Evidnc/Exp

Reason/Evidnc/Exp

Reason/Evidnc/Exp

Reason/Evidnc/Exp

Claim/Position

Yes

Should we take the time & effort to teach with more paired conversations?

Claim/Position

No

Even though… I/we chose…because…

Conversation Prompts

☐ **There is an engaging purpose** for conversing that (a) **connects to lesson objectives,** and (b) r**equires 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 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…"

2/8/18

Conversation Prompts

Math: Work with your partner to create a word problem that requires the solver to solve it using two equations.
Both of you contribute ideas and then decide which would make for the most interesting problem for your classmates to solve. Make sure the problem is clear; it can contain extra information and numbers, if you want to be tricky. Make sure to set up what is happening and use consistent units.

ELA Literature: Collaboratively decide

ELA Expository: Decide whether or not to raise the max number of hours per day that teenagers should use screens. Engage in a collaborative argument conversation in which you and your partner build up both sides of the issue and. Use evidence and discuss the credibility of sources. Discuss and negotiate types of screen time, if necessary, for your final decision. Use evaluation language such as *outweigh, weak/strong because, credible*, etc.

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Conversation Prompts

ELA Literature: Collaboratively decide

ELA Expository: Decide whether or not to

Math: Work with your partner to create a

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…"

Science: In your conversation, compare the data that you got in the lab with that of your partner.
If the data are different, jointly come to possible explanations for this; if similar, explain why. Make sure your explanations are clear and use scientific language such as: We believe that differences in the data are due to…" Come up with a final conclusion that describes what you learned—or were supposed to learn— from the lab.

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Know the Types of Conversations in Different Disciplines

➢ Deciding between two or more sides of a controversial issue

➢ Collaborating to agree on interpretations in literature

➢ Collaborating to agree on the best ways to communicate ideas to others

➢ Collaborating to interpret data and generate scientific explanations

➢ Solving problems & deciding between two sides of controversial science issues

➢ Role-based improv conversations

➢ Deciding between two sides of an issue or account

➢ Collaborating to solve social problems and challenges

➢ Collaborating to explain events, systems, and people

➢ Collaborating to solve a problem

➢ Collaborating to create new math problems

➢ Modeling math concepts and experimenting with numbers, symbols, & shapes

Craft a prompt

APPLICATION TIME

Think about how you might plan using Conversation Modeling & Scaffolding activities-–and/or adaptations in your upcoming units or lessons.

Major Pillars for this Work

Foster authentic communication (Purpose, clarity & strength matter, Info gaps) & needed language

Use all interaction activities to foster skills of building, clarifying, supporting, & evaluating

Push students to push themselves and others for clarity and strength (act like teachers)

In conversations, build up every idea as much as possible—and build up the first idea first.

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NEXT STEPS

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Free Online PD Courses (Conversations | Language in Math) --> ell.stanford.edu