



Where Language Thrives: Increasing Authentic Communication in Every Lesson

Jeff Zwiers
October 11, 2018
jeffzwiers.org/october11
jzwiers@stanford.edu

AGENDA


1. Authentic Communication
2. Conversation Skills
3. Structured Interaction Activities
4. Enhancing Instruction for Communication



Understanding Language | jeffzwiers.org/october11 | Jeff Zwiers

Communicating to Learn

“Language is learned, not because we want to talk or read or write about language, but because we want to talk and read and write about the world. Especially for children, language is the medium of our interpersonal relationships, the medium of our mental life, the medium of learning about the world.”
--Cazden (1977)

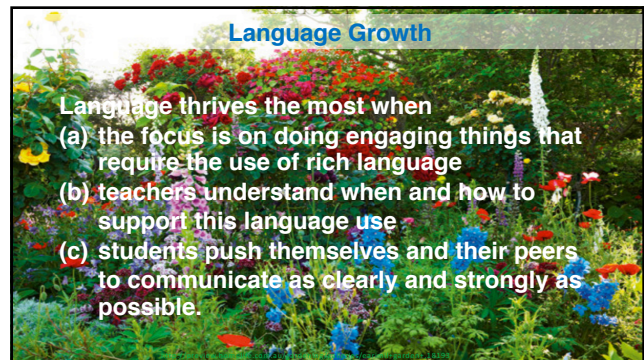


Understanding Language | jeffzwiers.org/october11 | Jeff Zwiers

Language Growth

Language thrives the most when

- (a) the focus is on doing engaging things that require the use of rich language
- (b) teachers understand when and how to support this language use
- (c) students push themselves and their peers to communicate as clearly and strongly as possible.




Pseudo-Communication vs. **Authentic Communication**

Using words and other meaning-carriers to share information and do things for reasons *other than* using the information in meaningful ways (e.g., for getting points & praise, showing learning, winning, etc.)

Using words and other meaning-carriers to share information for doing meaningful things (building, creating, changing, deciding, clarifying, negotiating, arguing, etc.) that just one person can't do. (R-W-L-S-C)

So what?



Understanding Language | jeffzwiers.org/october11 | Jeff Zwiers

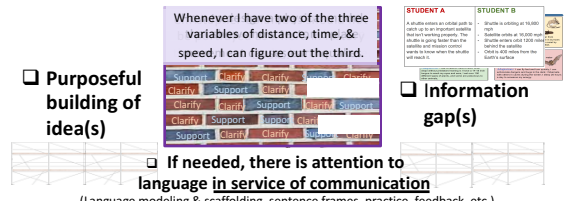
Authentic Communication Features
For developing content, thinking, language, and social skills

Whenever I have two of the three variables of distance, time, & speed, I can figure out the third.

Purposeful building of idea(s)

Information gap(s)

If needed, there is attention to language in service of communication
(Language modeling & scaffolding, sentence frames, practice, feedback, etc.)



Understanding Language | jeffzwiers.org/october11 | Jeff Zwiers

What are Ideas

that students would-could-should build?

Claim	Interpretation	Animals use energy to grow, heal,
Conclusion	Concept	The energy that animals have
Argument	Opinion	We divide the numbers when it's
Solution	Theory	Brian became more independent
Pattern	Perspective	I can use the story of when I
Plan	Theme	You need to think about bias
Inference	Story	All life needs water.
Prediction	Hypothesis	I can use a baseball bat, baseball,
Procedure	Approach	and Multiplying fractions makes them
Relationship	Explanation	even smaller.

Understanding Language | Jeff Zwiers

Building Ideas Mindset (RWLSC)

Fostering Voice, Agency, Autonomy, Engagement,...

What ideas am I/we building this week and how do these tasks & texts help?

What new ideas can I start building today?

Is this idea as clear and strong as possible? (How can I avoid being asked to clarify and support it?)

How can I help others build their ideas as much as possible?

Understanding Language | Jeff Zwiers

Focus Learning on Building Ideas (from the start)

Context

- 1st grade science
- English learners
- First day of the unit on animals

This Clip

After looking at pictures in the beginning of the unit, students are asked "What helps the slow pufferfish stay alive?"

Understanding Language | Jeff Zwiers

Whatever students do, it should help to build up ideas.

Understanding Language | Jeff Zwiers

Constructive Conversation Skills: Building an Idea

Build up an Idea (at least to here)

Support

Clarify

Ask ?'s

- Define
- Elaborate
- Paraphrase
- Negotiate
- Analogy
- Synthesize

Hand motions

Constructive Conversation Skills: Building an Idea

Build up an Idea (at least to here)

Support

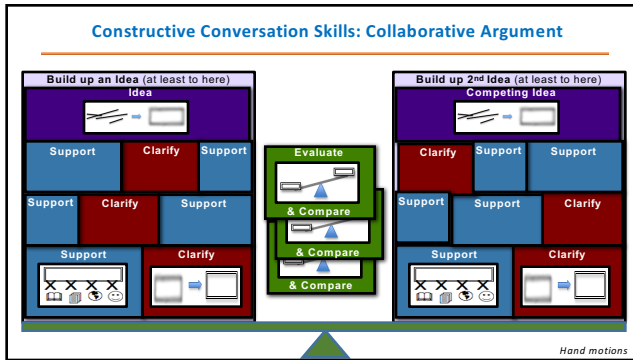
Clarify

Support

Ask ?'s

- Define
- Elaborate
- Paraphrase
- Negotiate
- Analogy
- Synthesize

Hand motions



Building Ideas and Bridging Information Gaps with Structured Interaction Activities:

The background image shows students in a classroom setting. Overlaid on the image is a table with the following labels: Support, Clarify, Support, Clarify, Support, Clarify, Support, Clarify, Support, Clarify, Support, Clarify, Support, Clarify, Support, Clarify. Below the table, the text reads: **Transition Improv Activities**

Transition Improv Activity: Pro-Con

Topics: Social media's influence on language development

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 _____,

Listeners can & should:

- Prompt for clarification
- Prompt for support
- Offer idea seeds w/ "What about...?"

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

A & B, Lean? Understanding Language | Jeff Zaitsev

Transition Improv

Elementary

Pros and cons of ice cream

Features:

- Build ideas?
- Clarify & Support?
- Meaning, not points?
- Value ideas & take risks?
- ?

Transition Improv: For-Against

Topics: Genetic engineering, electoral college, nuclear energy, social media, human-caused climate change, wolf reintroduction, de-extinction, zoos, year-round schools, corn as fuel, extraterrestrial life, desalination, going to college* (2 texts)

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

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, motion Understanding Language | Jeff Zaitsev

Transition Improv: Similar-Different

Topic: old Brian & new Brian


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

Frames: Unlike the old Brian, new Brian _____, which came from _____ Both new and old Brian _____, which ... New Brian differs from old Brian in that _____ An important trait that didn't change in Brian was ...

Understanding Language | Jeff Zaitsev

Transition Improv: Two Views w/ Evidence

Views: Patriots
Loyalists



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

~~DXT~~


Frames: The ___ thought that ...
Many ___ believed that...
A different perspective held by ___ was that...
In the eyes of ___...

Understanding Language | Common Core State Standards for Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects | Jeff Zuckers

Transition Improv Activity: Positivo-Negativo

Tema: Viaggiare a altri paesi


Positivi



Posso...

- mangiare cibo nuovo. Per esempio, in Peru ho mangiato ceviche...
- Imparare la storia del paese
- riposare, leggere, nuotare

Negativi



Devo...

- spendere molti soldi. Per esempio, ...
- passare molto tempo in aereo.
- Cercare bagni puliti

D'altra parte,
Tuttavia,
Nonostante

~~DXT~~

Nei viaggi, ...
Un vantaggio
Un'altro aspetto positivo e che ... per che...
Un svantaggio e che...

A & B, Lean?

Understanding Language | Common Core State Standards for Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects | Jeff Zuckers

Transition Improv: Math Situations

Topics: Addition-Subtraction, Area-Perimeter, Multiplication-Division, Sine-Cosine, Volume-Surface Area, Linear-Quadratic, Fractions-Decimals, Integral-Derivative, Constant-Variable

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

~~DXT~~

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...

Director can prompt for clarification and/or spark ideas, if needed.

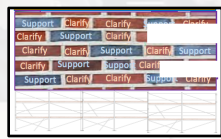
Understanding Language | Common Core State Standards for Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects | Jeff Zuckers

Do Transition Improv Activities have the Features of Authentic Communication?



Understanding Language | Common Core State Standards for Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects | Jeff Zuckers


Building Ideas and Bridging Information Gaps with Structured Interaction Activities:



Stronger-Clearer Each Time Activities

Understanding Language | Common Core State Standards for Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects | Jeff Zuckers

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.

Understanding Language | Common Core State Standards for Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects | Jeff Zuckers

"Stronger & Clearer Each Time" Grid

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

What's an example of fighting?

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

A begins and B listens and asks clarify & support questions. Go.

Take two-word notes. New 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.

The Aztecs and Spain. They didn't like each other.

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

What happens when cultures meet and why?

Understanding Language | [www.illustrativecommunication.com](#) | Jeff Zuckers

"Stronger & Clearer Each Time" Grid

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

What happens when cultures meet and why?

My notes: Bad, wars, both, learn religion, mix

Take two-word notes. Switch partners! Don't forget to use examples & ask for clarify & support. Stronger + Clearer!

Cultures meet and bad things happen like fighting, like the Aztecs and Spain. But good things, too, like you can learn other language.

What do you mean they learn 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 to learn how others live. Like religion. But wars can happen, like you said.

Maybe not learned, but like mixing religions together.

What happens when cultures meet and why?

Understanding Language | [www.illustrativecommunication.com](#) | Jeff Zuckers

"Stronger & Clearer Each Time" Grid

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

Cultures meet and bad things happen like fighting, like the Aztecs and Spain. 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.

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.

(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.

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

What happens when cultures meet and why?

Understanding Language | [www.illustrativecommunication.com](#) | Jeff Zuckers

Stronger & Clearer Activity

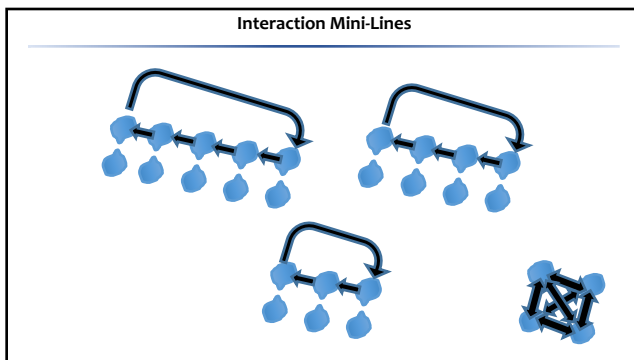
Context

- 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.

Understanding Language | [www.illustrativecommunication.com](#) | Jeff Zuckers



"Stronger & Clearer Each Time" Grid

Name	Do we need to spend more time reading and writing poetry?	<i>You are a teacher who will present on this topic to parents.</i>
Me	(Just two or three key words, if any)	
1.		
2.		
3.		
Me		

Understanding Language | [www.illustrativecommunication.com](#) | Jeff Zuckers

"Stronger & Clearer Each Time" Grid

Name	How can doing things that develop students' oral language (speaking, listening, conversing) influence their reading, writing, and/or content learning?	You will present to colleagues on this topic.
Me	(just two or three key words, if any)	
1.		
2.		
3.		
Me		

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... 10 sec "take w/ me" | Highlight the writing
 Jigsaw variation | Follow w/ conversation

Listeners can & should:

- Prompt for clarification
- Prompt for support
- Help with "What about...?"

Do Stronger & Clearer Each Time Activities have the Features of Authentic Communication?

Understanding Language | Jeff Zwiers

Enhance Other Activities to Develop Conversation Skills
 In most of our other activities, how can we get students to push themselves and peers to **clarify** and **support** in order to **build up their ideas**?

<p><i>Read & answer questions</i></p> <p><i>Pictorial/Narrative Input Charts</i></p> <p><i>Cooperative Strip Paragraphs</i></p> <p><i>Learning Logs</i></p> <p><i>Create a story</i></p> <p><i>Writers' Workshop</i></p> <p><i>Whole class discussion</i></p> <p><i>Simulation/dramatization</i></p> <p><i>Solve a problem in pairs</i></p>	<p><i>Take a Side/Four Corners</i></p> <p><i>Oral Presentation</i></p> <p><i>Gallery Walk</i></p> <p><i>Think-Pair-Share</i></p> <p><i>Literature Circles</i></p> <p><i>Expert Groups (Jigsaw)</i></p> <p><i>Socratic Seminar</i></p> <p><i>Watch a video</i></p> <p><i>Games (Bingo, Jeopardy, etc.)</i></p>
---	---

Understanding Language | Jeff Zwiers

Bulking Up an Activity's Authentic Communication

Engaging Purpose
(Clarity and strength matter)

Prepare an estimate of the costs and financial benefits of using an electric car. Should I buy one?

Information Gaps

3 articles from different perspectives (maker, consumer, environmental)

Expert Groups

Attention to language

Model and frames for coming up with and estimating costs

Pushing selves and others to clarify and support ideas to build them

Expert groups practice synopsis in pairs, then in expert group, others ask 1 clarify/support each; then share in home groups; others also ask to clarify/support each

Understanding Language | Jeff Zwiers

CONTACT INFO

Jeff Zwiers | jzwiers@stanford.edu | jeffzwiers.org/october8