Student Academic Conversations: Benefits, Tools, & Strategies
Introductions

Hello!
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Current 7th and 8th Grade Math teacher at Toledo Public Schools.

Hello!
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Current GA- Teaching Associate.
Previous Curriculum & Instructional Specialist in Galena Park ISD, Houston, TX and 8th Grade Science Teacher.
Introduce Yourselves!

Hello! I am ___________________ and I teach ___________________ at ___________________.

Students, write your response!
# Student Academic Conversations:
## Benefits, Tools, and Strategies

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My Student Academic Conversation goal for the 2021-2022 school year is to...
Our Classrooms...
Brainstorm...

What are the benefits of student conversations in the classroom?
What We Experienced...

Galena Park ISD
- 36% Limited English Proficient
- 68% Considered ‘At Risk’
- 86% Economically Disadvantaged

Toledo Public
- 32% Average Math Proficiency Score
- 35% Average Reading Proficiency Score
- 68% Graduation Rate
What We noticed...

- Whole group discussions were not benefiting the ‘whole group’
- Students learn from one another (if given the opportunity)
- The instructor isn’t the only one that can answer questions - use your resources!
- Students were more likely to participate in structured, small-group discussions
What we Learned...

- The implementation of peer conversations has been linked to positive student outcomes (Resnick, Asterhan, Clarke, & Schantz, 2018).

- Possible benefits include...
  - increased sense of belonging (Masika & Jones, 2016)
  - higher retention and increased participation
  - improved communication and leadership skills
  - and exposure to diverse perspectives (Cornell University, 2021).

- Another benefit that students receive from collaboration with peers is a high feeling of accomplishment (Skager et al, 2016).
1. How frequently do you allow students the opportunity to process knowledge with classmates?

2. What are some drawbacks to having students converse during class time?
**Tool #1**

**Table Mats**
How could this tool be adapted to virtual learning?
Table Mat Reflection

- What would your table mats look like? Sketch it out.
- If in a large lecture-style environment, what are some adjustments that could be made?
- How could you bring in your content to the table mat design?
Tool #2
Embedded Digital Timers
Timer Use Pre-Survey...

A: I've never used a timer for student pacing
B: I use my phone/watch to set time limits
C: I use 'google timer' in a separate tab to display
D: I use embed timers in my presentations
How do I Embed a digital timer?
Timer Use Post-Survey...

A: I'm going to attempt to embed timers in my lessons to assist with student conversations.

B: I'm going to continue to use embed timers in my presentations to assist with student conversations.
Tool #3

Sorts
What about a virtual environment?

Slides Sort Example
What are other ways a sort could be used to promote student conversations?
Tools Share Out!

➔ Which tool are you most likely to use? Why?
➔ What modifications would you make?
➔ Any brilliant ideas? Please share!
Strategy #1
Embedded Questions
What Do You Think?

- Make a list of the basic needs for survival.
- What kind of security needs did the settlers need to think about?
- What natural resources can you use to construct your settlement?

Use the picture on page 67 to help answer these questions.
Strategy #2
Sentence Stems
SENTENCE STEM EXAMPLES

- I think that...
- For example...
- In my opinion...
- Based on the passage, I can infer that
- I agree/disagree with you because...
- I don’t understand why...
What is a possible sentence stem that you could use in your first couple classes of the semester?
Strategy #3

Round Table
Round Table Variations

- Conversational
- Directional
- Item Placement
- Total Time
- Individual Time
Ready for More Conversations?!
Remember...

1. Questions or topics of discussion are pre-planned in content and placement in the lesson.

2. The instructor allows for equal opportunities of participation from all students.

3. The students are provided a model/example and a time limit.
Similar to the idea that two or three heads are better than one, educational researchers have found that through peer instruction, students teach each other by addressing misunderstandings and clarify misconceptions.

-Cornell University
Final Thoughts

My student academic conversation goal for the 2021-2022 school year is to...


