

Building An Environment for Discourse

Teacher Talk Moves and Classroom Norms That Promote the Development of a Community of Discourse

Social Norms and Clear Expectations

1. Teacher states explicitly that she expects students to listen to one another's ideas and be able to question or comment once a speaker is done. This implies that students are to be thinking about what's being said no matter who is talking.
2. Students are expected (or taught) to look at the speaker and to refrain from raising their hands while someone else is speaking.
3. Teacher states explicitly that she expects students who are talking to articulate their thinking clearly so others can understand and assists them to do so.
4. Teacher interjects to focus in on meaning and clarity when students' explanations are vague or meaning is implied.
5. Teacher holds students to the standard to speak loud enough for others to hear and does NOT repeat or restate for students when they cannot be heard, but gently nudges them to try again.
6. Teacher explicitly states she will call on a student whether or not they raise their hands and uses techniques to ensure equity (e.g. cards, popsicle sticks with student name on each stick).
7. Teacher calls on another student to paraphrase what was stated and then to take a stand in relation to the idea under discussion or to ask about or add to the idea.

Teacher Facilitates the Communication Process

When an answer is stated or a visual presented, some people may understand and others may not. Teacher moves to ensure all students are held to the same standard include:

- Write relevant student statements, vocabulary, and/or representations on white board or on technology board—make language and diagrams, tables, etc. visible for all learners
- Have students turn and talk to a partner to explain the idea or representation and be able to explain the idea/representation to the entire group
- Ask clarifying questions to the presenter
- Ask members of the group to explain, restate, or paraphrase what was just said or demonstrated BEFORE agreeing, disagreeing or adding to the idea and BEFORE expressing another idea. In other words, the community works to keep one important idea in play until all members of the class can engage in the conversation.