



# Engaging Classroom Discourse

## Competency

Educator plans for and utilizes various strategies to encourage student discourse that supports student learning.

## Key Method

The educator uses a variety of instructional strategies to expand learners' communication. The educator implements various questioning techniques, wait times, and sentence frames to provide learning experiences that promote higher-order thinking.

## Method Components

### What is Classroom discourse, and Why is it Necessary?

Classroom discourse is the language used by teachers and students to communicate or convey information in the classroom (Miller, 2013).

Multiple forms of communication convey ideas and foster self-expression. Educators know when and how to use appropriate strategies to differentiate instruction and engage all learners in complex thinking and meaningful tasks (InTASC, 2011).

### Some Elements for Creating Student Discourse

Educators can increase meaningful classroom discourse by intentionally providing the students with open-ended, higher-order thinking questions.



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*For example, instead of asking a student what the setting of the story is, ask him or her how the setting affected the events in the story.*

Educators can also provide a 3- to 5-second wait time to increase critical thinking skills and engagement when asking and answering questions.

*For example, the educator would say to the students, "I am going to give you 10 seconds to solve  $x - 135 = 280 + 463$  in two different ways. Put your thumb up when you think you have an answer."*

To take this strategy a step further, have the students "turn and talk" after the 10-second wait time and then ask if anyone changed their answers after discussing the solutions with their partners.

Educators can also incorporate sentence frames to assist students who struggle with articulating their ideas orally.

*For example, when discussing the choices the characters made in the book *Lord of the Flies*, A student may want to disagree with a classmate's viewpoint but does not know how to respond. The educator could display the following sentence frame:*

*That is not how I see it. I see it as\_\_\_\_\_.*

Examples of strategies that support classroom discourse

- Gallery Walks
- Philosophical Chairs
- Socratic Seminar
- Affinity Mapping
- Concentric Circles
- Fish Bowl
- Turn and Talk
- Think-pair-share
- For more examples, look in the resource section of this micro-credential.

What Does Classroom Discourse Look Like?

- Student discourse can happen in whole group, small group, or partner activities.
- The students should be talking more than the teacher.
- Students should be learning and improving on and deepening their understanding as a result of classroom discourse.



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# Supporting Rationale and Research

Chapin, Suzanne H., Mary Catherine O'Connor, and Nancy Canavan Anderson. *Talk Moves: A Teacher's Guide for Using Classroom Discussions in Math, Grades K-6*. Sausalito, CA, USA: Math Solutions, 2013. Print.

*Talk Moves: A Teacher's Guide for Using Classroom Discussions in Math* offers an award-winning, unparalleled look at the significant role that classroom discussions can play in teaching mathematics and deepening students' mathematical understanding and learning. Based on a four-year research project funded by the U.S. Department of Education.

Danielson, C. *The framework for teaching (Competency 3a, 3b, 3c)*.  
<http://www.danielsongroup.org/framework/>

Fisher, D., Frey, N., & Rothenberg, C. (2008). *Why talk is important in classrooms*  
<http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/108035/chapters/Why-Talk-Is-Important-in-Classrooms.aspx>

West, Lucy. "Accountable Talk Ain't Just for Kids." *Principal Connection* 19.3 (2016): 10-11. Web.  
<http://metamorphosistlc.com/images/Resources/Articles/accountable%20talk%20ain%20just%20for%20kids.pdf>.

## Resources

[Academic Language and ELLs: What Teachers Need to Know](#)

[Classroom Questioning](#)

[Questioning Strategies For Effective & Thoughtful Teaching](#)

[InTASC Teaching Standards](#)

[Questioning: A Comprehension Strategy for Small-Group Guided Reading | Read Write Think](#)

[Questioning Strategies](#)

[Sentence Frames for English Language Learners](#)

[Discussion Sentence Frames Discussion Sentence Frames](#)



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[Metamorphosis Teaching Classroom Discourse Handouts](#)

[The Big List of Class Discussion Strategies](#)  
[ACPS Student Discourse Page](#)

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## Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

*To earn the micro-credential, you must receive a passing score in Parts 1 and 3, and be proficient for all components in Part 2.*

### Part 1. Overview Questions (Provides Context)

450-500 words

*Please use the suggested word count as a guide to answer the following contextual questions. This will help our assessor understand your current context for working on this micro-credential.*

*Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers.*

1. Why did you decide to apply for this micro-credential?
2. Why is classroom discourse important to you and your students?
3. Are there any diverse learners in your classroom (English as Second Learners, Special Education Students, Gifted Learners, etc.)

**Passing:** Answers give contextual understanding to the reviewer and exhibit some reflection on the current classroom practices. Specific examples are used from either the educator's classroom experience or personal experiences as a learner. The examples support the answers to the questions.

### Part 2. Work Examples/Artifacts/Evidence

To earn this micro-credentials please submit the following **three** artifacts as evidence of your learning.

*\*Please do not include any information that will make you or your students identifiable to your reviewers.*

#### **Artifact 1: Video**



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Submit an unedited video or audio recording of students learning, improving on, and deepening their understandings as a result of classroom discourse. This can be done in a whole group, small group, or partner setting. Teacher talk should be minimal. (10-minute maximum)

**Artifact 2: Description of Lesson in Recording**

(300-word limit)

A short description of the lesson being recorded. Please include the teaching strategies that you used to encourage high-level classroom discourse. Include the outcomes for the lesson and context of the discussion. This will set the context for the reviewer. The description may include the following:

- Grade level
- Accommodations and modifications for diverse learners (English as Second Learners, Gifted Learners, Special Education Students, etc.)
- Unit of study
- Outcomes expected
- Possible teacher moves in case the discussions need to be moved along. (For example, prompts, sentence frames to scaffold if needed, rephrasing the question...)
- Timestamps within the video to help review focus on the strategies used

**Artifact 3: Written Analysis of the Lesson**

(500-word limit)

A written analysis of the lesson. This should include the following:

- What did you expect to happen and how did you plan for it?
- What did happen?
- Did using this strategy support student learning? Why or why not?
- What teacher moves did you make or could have made to support student discourse?
- How did you differentiate for the diverse learners?

Part 2. Rubric

	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Basic</b>	<b>Developing</b>
<b>Artifact 1: Video</b>	<p>Students are engaging in discourse that will improve and deepen their understanding of the concept(s) being taught</p> <p>Teacher talk is minimal</p>	<p>Students are talking to each other with minimal teacher talk</p> <p>The discussion may not support or deepen students understanding of the concept(s) being taught</p>	<p>Teacher talk dominates the discussions</p> <p>Little or no evidence of the educator planning for student discourse</p>



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	The teaching strategy used is easy to identify	The teaching strategy used is not evident in the discourse	Recording or video is of poor quality and cannot be understood by the reviewer
<b>Artifact 2: Description of Lesson in Recording</b>	Lesson description includes: -Outcomes -Strategies -Teacher moves -Context for the lesson	Lesson includes some of the details needed for the reviewer to understand the context of the recording or video, but some important details were left out	Lesson does not show any intentional planning for student discourse
<b>Artifact 3: Written Analysis of the Lesson</b>	Analysis shows an understanding of how planning for classroom discourse supported student learning  Specific examples from the recording or video are cited and matched with the intentional teaching strategies and teacher moves that were outlined in the lesson description  and/or  Specific examples from the recording or video are cited and matched with the intentional teaching strategies and teacher moves that could have been used to increase and improve the quality of student discourse	Analysis may not show a connection between the lesson plan and the recording or video  Specific examples are not given to support analysis of the lesson  and/or  The examples don't match the lesson plan	Analysis does not include details  and/or  Analysis doesn't match the lesson or the recording



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## Part 3 Reflection

400-500 words

Use the word count as a guide to write a personal reflection about your work on this micro-credential. For tips on writing a good reflection review the following resource:

[How Do I Write a Good Personal Reflection?](#)

*Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers. Answer the following questions:*

1. What impact did working on this micro-credential have on your classroom practice?
2. How did intentionally planning for student discourse improve your students' level of discussion?
3. What will you do differently next time?
4. Are there any strategies that you would like to try out in your next lesson?

**Passing:** Reflection provides evidence that this activity has had a positive impact on both educator practice and student success. Responses completely address each of the questions using specific examples from their classroom practice to support the answers. The answers show reflection on current practice as well as plans to continue to incorporate the learning into future lessons. Writing is organized and easy to read.



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