Creative Conversations: Incorporating Innovative Classroom Discussion for the Gifted Learner

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Who We Are

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Why Student Conversation is Important
• “As challenging as it must have been to write and finesse the adoption of the Common Core State Standards, that accomplishment is nothing compared to the work of teaching in ways that bring all students to these ambitious expectations.”
  • Calkins, Ehrenworth, and Lehman (2012)

• “...the vast majority of my talk time now happens one-on-one or with a small group, while I keep whole-class direct instruction very short. Most of my talk these days comes in the form of conversation, not lecture.”
  • Minkel (2015)

• “…that whoever was doing the work was the one getting smarter.”
  • Tovani (2011)
Successful Conversations

- Have purpose
- Purpose matches type of conversation
- Follow class guidelines
  - Fishbowl
- Bomer & Bomer (2013)

- Tomlinson (2001)
Turn and Talk

- Press and Release
- Interactive lectures
- No time limit
- Stop the chatting before it wanes
Poster 1

1. What symbols, if any, are used in the poster... what do they represent?

2. Who do you think is the intended audience?

3. What does the government hope the audience will do?

4. Is this poster effective, why-why not?
Poster 2

1. What symbols, if any, are used in the poster… what do they represent?

2. Who do you think is the intended audience?

3. What does the government hope the audience will do?

4. Is this poster effective, why-why not?
Using Partnerships to Promote Independence

• **Housekeeping**
  – Make Up Work
  – Accountability

• **Troubleshooting Confusion**
  – Relying on a peer for clarification
  – Promoting independence and self-advocacy
Argument Protocol

- Conversation is an intellectual sport that will improve the mind.
  
  Michel de Montaigne

- Prelude to Debate
- Debate Work
- Debrief

Work is based on Teacher’s College Reading and Writing Project
Debate Work

- Prelude to debate

- Debate
  1. Caucus with your side
  2. Quick, timed debate
  3. Specific, named praise
  4. Caucus with your side
  5. Quick, timed rebuttal

- Debrief
Socratic Seminar + Meaningful Feedback

- Will students be respectful?
- How can I intervene if someone dominates?
- How do I grade it?
3rd period -
Who/What brought the US out of the Great Depression?

- Confused WWI & WWII (Central v. Axis)
- Spoke first excellent point about CCC and promotion of public service
- Stayed quiet first 10 mins, echoed David’s point about FDIC
- Misspoke about WPA
- State point about War Production Board
- Good point about TVA’s effectiveness
- Talked over Alan-Twice
- Confused Cindy Brown
- Laura Wall
- Chris Burress
- John Williams
- Rachel Copa
- Kaci Sams
- Mary Ann Whidden
- Dana Fincher
- Josh Sealy
- Alan Schuyler
- Angela Shepherd
- David Bowers
- Brought up FDIC & restoration of confidence in banks
Socratic Discussion Score Sheet

Name of Student:

The student exhibits confidence in making rational statements to support his/her position.

1  2  3  4  5  6

The student exhibits the ability to organize thoughts in a logical manner and to communicate those thoughts, ideas, or opinions through his/her knowledge.

1  2  3  4  5  6

The student exhibits a high level of original thinking in exploring new ideas and choosing alternatives.

1  2  3  4  5  6

The student recalls accurate information when citing sources and schools of thought.

1  2  3  4  5  6

The student demonstrates a positive attitude toward other people and a willingness to accept individual differences among people, e.g., listens to other students in the discussion and contributes to the conversation rather than trying to dominate.

1  2  3  4  5  6

Total Score:
Conferencing

- Formative assessment
- Practice time before the game
- Meaningful, real-time feedback
What’s a Teacher to Do?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conference Guidelines</th>
<th>Ways to Get Kids Talking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Keep an eye on the clock.</td>
<td>1. What are you working on?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Strive for balance between listening and talking.</td>
<td>2. What are you thinking?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Avoid generalized praise and be honest.</td>
<td>3. What are you next steps?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Take notes and leave notes.</td>
<td>4. What do you notice?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How did you figure that out?</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

– (modified from Atwell’s In the Middle, p. 224-226)

– (modified from Tammy Mulligan’s Nerdy Book Club Post)
Centers: Not just for elementary school

- Why would you do centers?
- How do you manage centers?
- How do I manage students during centers?
Rigor & Relevance in Centers

1. Name a purpose
2. Decide structure, time, place, and centers
3. Create prompts with clear instructions and with clear directions for tasks.
   • Make sure your tasks take about equal amounts of time.
4. Have fun!

• Statistics
• Compare/Contrast
• Primary Documents
• Problems
• Articles, book excerpts
• Photographs, artwork, diagrams & other visual texts
• Commercials, movie clips, etc.
• Songs
• Websites, virtual tours, etc.
Speed Dating Discussion

One side is stationary, the other side shifts to the left

Respond to and discuss a stimulus (article, video, image)

Beneficial to shy and outgoing students
# Top 5 Professional Books

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eleta’s List</th>
<th>Christie’s List</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Kelly Gallagher’s <em>Readicide</em></td>
<td>1. Cris Tovani’s <em>So What Do They Really Need to Know?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Dana Goldstein’s <em>The Teacher Wars</em></td>
<td>2. Christopher Lehman &amp; Kate Robert’s <em>Falling in Love with Close Reading</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Doug Lemov’s <em>Teach Like a Champion</em></td>
<td>3. George Hillocks, Jr.’s <em>Teaching Argument Writing</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Roxanna Elden’s <em>See Me After Class</em></td>
<td>4. Harvey Daniels &amp; Nancy Steineke’s <em>Texts and Lessons for Content Area Reading</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Howard Zinn’s <em>A People’s History of the United States</em></td>
<td>5. Heather Lattimer’s <em>Thinking Through Genre</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Top 5 Resources

Eleta’s List
1. www.cnn.com/studentnews
2. Pinterest
3. DBQ Project
4. mentalfloss.com
5. Teacher’s College

Christie’s List
1. Twitter: @WallChristie
2. Readingandwritingproject.com
3. learning.blogs.nytimes.com/tag/text-to-text/
4. kassandcorn.com
5. Newsela.com
References


