

**Promoting Interactive Discussions:
Creating Space for Interpretation & Dialogue
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Interactive Discussions

Each student is responsible for Articulating their interpretations & ideas to other students

The Lines of Communication are from student to student as well as from student to teacher

Readers need to be Active Listeners during the discussion

Meaning is Negotiated during the interactions

Promoting Interactive Discussions

Employs Quality Literature

Co-Elaboration

Expanding Reader Perspectives

Focus on Initial Responses & Reflection

Utilizes Visual Artifacts & Coding

Setting Expectations that are Clear, Transparent & Obtainable

Setting Expectations for Discussions

Honestly Reported

Listening Well & Thinking is As Important As Talking Well

Address Other Students as Well as the Teacher

Half Baked Ideas are Accepted and Encouraged

Consider What Has Been Offered

Interactive Discussion Strategies – Picture Books

Noticings-Connections-Wonderings

Notice-What Might It Mean-So What

Four (4) Post-Its

Graffiti Boards

Insider - Outsider

Structured Coding

Word Storms

Story Structures

Interactive Discussion Strategies – Novels

Open Coding

Reflecting on Codes

Open Coding – Three Coders

The Role of Questions

Asking More Open-Ended Questions will NOT Change the Quality of Children's Thinking if They Continue to Think There is Only One Correct Answer (Hidden in the Teacher's Head)

Initial Thoughts on Questions

Student Responses are Reflective of the Questions Teachers Ask and The Expectations Set for Discussion.

Questions can be Confrontational, Rather Than Invitational.

Too often Questions are Used to Control Rather than Inquire (Who's Paying Attention?)

Who Gets to ask Questions is Reflective of the Power Relations in the Classroom.

Types of Questions

Display / Rote

Process / Reasoning

Procedural / Expectations

Inquiry / Exploratory

Inquiry Questions

Go Beyond Literal Recall

Allow for a Range of Acceptable Answers

Are Concerned with Possibilities, not Correctness

View Text as a Point of Departure

Are Concerned with Intellectual Complexity, not "Main Idea"

Inquiry Question Examples

Noticings:

What are your initial impressions?

What caught your attention?

What seemed unique, peculiar?

Generate Meaning:

What might these noticings mean?

How does this connect with what you know?

What other meanings are possible?

Co-Elaboration:

Have you considered other's ideas?

How do alternative interpretations affect your ideas?

What do these ideas mean for your future reading?

Using Questions More Effectively

Teachers should stop asking questions they know the answers to all the time.

Teachers Should ask More Questions in Response to Students' Ideas Than In Front of Them.

Questions should invite students to think, rather than report what others think.

Students should be invited to ask the questions that matter to them.

Discussion Techniques

Raising Hands No Longer Necessary to Enter Discussion - "Getting the Floor"

1st Person Plural - Reciprocal Objectives

Notetaking - Post-Its - Coding
Teacher Gaze - Handing Off
Exploratory Pausing (Wait Time)
Taking Up (Uptake) From What is Offered
First we Thought, Now we Think
Re-Voicing - So let me understand what you have said so far...

Units of Study

Select Central Focus (genre, topic, author, theme, etc.)
Choose a Cornerstone Text
Set Unit Objectives
Design Learning Experiences
Create Text Sets
Response Centered Instruction
Culminating Experiences

Units of Study Framework

Exposure
Immersion in the Unit of Study
Exploration
Understand the elements and structures of the genre, author theme, topic, ect
Experimentation
Make Competence Visible
Multi-Literacies

Some Things to Consider

Breaking the myth of “Main Idea” is an important starting point.
Creating Space for Interpretation and Dialogue
Students learn to think, talk and respond to literature by imitating the way teachers and others respond.
The text is conceptualized as the “Point of Departure” for discussions.