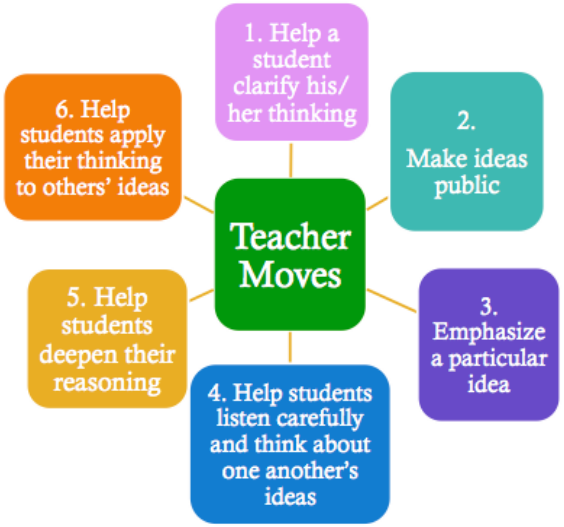
Teacher Discourse Moves



1. Help a student clarify his/her thinking

Wait time: 20-30 seconds after questions and after responses.

"Can you say some more about that?"

"Can you show us what you mean?"

"Can you draw that?"

2. Make ideas and thinking public and available for discussion

"Tell us more about what you're thinking."

Clarify/repair how idea is expressed, without overriding student's ownership.
"Did I say your idea correctly?"

Re-voice to connect everyday expression to more precise academic language. *"So, you're saying…"*

3. Mark/emphasize a particular idea.

"Rebroadcast" an idea by revoicing, or ask a student to re-voice or paraphrase to give an idea more exposure so everyone can hear it and think about it again.

"That's interesting. Can you say that again for us?"

"Will someone re-tell that idea for us?"

4. Help students listen carefully to and think about others' ideas

"Who can rephrase or repeat that idea for us?"

"How is that idea different from what we had said earlier?"

"Who wants to explain the evidence that Group A used?"

"Do you agree or disagree with that?"

"Whose idea/thinking is most different from your own?"

5. Help students deepen their reasoning

"Will you tell us more about your thinking on that? Why do you think that works?"

"Would that always be true?" "Is there a condition that would make that false?"

"How could you show that that is true?"

"How could we revise our model to account for this?"

"What new questions do you have now? What do we need to know more about now?"

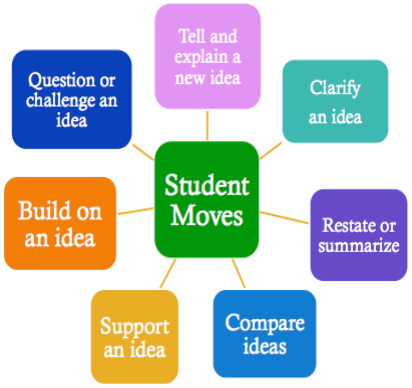
6. Help students apply their thinking to others' ideas; prompt peer-to-peer talk

"Who will re-tell that idea for us? Please check back with X to see if you told it correctly."

"Who is ready to tell us the connection between those two ideas?"

"You look uncertain. What can you ask X to find out more?"

"How does that idea build on the last one? What's the connection?"

Student Idea Moves	***1. Tell or explain a new idea***	***2. Clarify someone's idea***	***3. Restate or summarize an idea.***
	"I think…" "I know it will work because…" "The best strategy would be…."	"Say again, please." "What did you mean when you said…?" "Are you saying that…?"	"He said…" "In other words, …" "The suggestion was made that…"
4. Compare ideas	***5. Support an idea***	***6. Build on an idea***	***7. Question or challenge an idea***
"The same." "Ours is better because…" "The new strategy is more efficient because…"	"Good idea, because…" "Remember, it said in our book that…" "The advantage of that method is…"	"Let's try that." "We should change our model to show that." "That idea would help us figure out why…"	"Why?" "But that doesn't explain what we saw when…" "Is there a more efficient way to …?"

Additional Resources

The following books, articles, and websites offer excellent resources. Most are specifically related to working with English Learners. Some, such as the websites listed below, are about the teaching practices and discourse practices that help create meaning; these do also address meaning-making with new learners of English.

Chapin, S., O'Connor, C., & Anderson, N. (2003). Classroom Discussions: Using Math Talk to Help Students Learn. Sausalito, CA: Math Solutions Publications.

- Some of the early work on mathematical discourse; many good suggestions for classroom teachers

Lee, N., Cortada, J., & Grimm, L. (2013). WIDA Focus On: Group Work for Content Learning. Madison, WI: WIDA Consortium.

- Excellent suggestions for using group work effectively with English Learners

Leinwand, S., Brahier, D., Huinker, D. (2014). Principles to Actions: Ensuring Mathematical Success for All. Reston, VA: NCTM

- Excellent resource on critical mathematical teaching practices that support student sense-making in mathematics

Smith. M. & Stein, M. (2011). 5 Practices for Orchestrating Productive Mathematics Discussions. Reston, VA: NCTM.

- Brief and wonderful resource on teaching for meaning in mathematics

Zwiers, J. (2008). Building Academic Language: Essential Practices for Content Classrooms. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

- Excellent and practical strategies for focusing on academic language

Zwiers, J., O'Hara, S., & Pritchard, R. (2014). Common Core Standards in Diverse Classrooms: Essential Practices for Developing Academic Language and Disciplinary Literacy. Portland, Maine: Stenhouse.

- Many strategies to strengthen students' ability to develop and sustain academic conversations
- Many additional resources on the related website: http://aldnetwork.org/core-practice/resources-fostering-academic-interaction