



CLASSROOM DISCUSSION



Definition

Classroom discussion is a structured conversation facilitated by the teacher in which learners share ideas, ask questions, and build understanding through dialogue centered on academic content.

Do

- Prepare open-ended, thought-provoking questions
- Set clear norms and expectations for discussion
- Scaffold with sentence stems or discussion protocols
- Create a safe, inclusive environment
- Allow think time before responses
- Use structures like Socratic seminar or Fishbowl
- Facilitate conversation

Teacher Tips

- **Use question scaffolds**
 - Exemplar: Provide prompts like "I agree with ____ because..." or "Can you explain why...?"
- **Model active listening and response strategies**
 - Exemplar: Pause, paraphrase what a student said, and ask another to build on the idea.
- **Build confidence with low-stakes discussion routines**
 - Exemplar: Start with quick "Turn and Talk" activities before moving into whole-group formats.
- **Track participation with non-verbal tools**
 - Exemplar: Use speaking chips or tally charts to ensure equitable participation.
- **Use visual aids to anchor conversation**
 - Exemplar: Refer to anchor charts, graphic organizers, or visual texts during discussion.
- **Plan reflection opportunities**
 - Exemplar: Ask students to write a "discussion exit ticket" reflecting on what they learned or contributed.

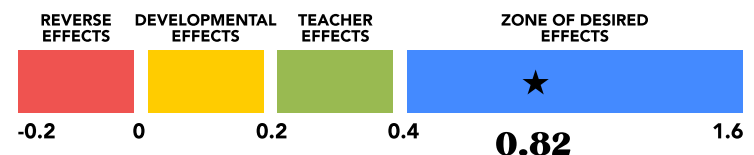
Why It's Important

- Promotes critical thinking and deeper understanding
- Encourages student voice and active engagement
- Builds communication and reasoning skills
- Helps students clarify and articulate their thinking
- Fosters a culture of respect and inquiry
- Supports all learners, especially through verbal processing

Don't

- Dominate the conversation
- Accept only surface-level answers
- Let a few students monopolize the discussion
- Ignore off-topic comments or side conversations
- Skip post-discussion reflection
- Assume all students feel safe or confident speaking

Hattie Check



Activities

- Socratic Seminar
- Fishbowl Discussions
- Think-Pair-Share
- Philosophical chairs
- Literature circles
- Debate
- Four corners
- Structured academic controversy
- Accountable talk
- Student-led discussions
- Discussion webs
- Turn and talk





CLASSROOM DISCUSSION



Teacher Rubric Connection

Domain 1- Planning and Preparation for Learning

- E - Anticipation
- G - Engagement

Domain 2 – Classroom Management

- C - Classroom environment
- D - Social-emotional
- E - Routines
- G - Efficiency

Domain 3- Instructional Delivery

- C - Clarity
- F - Repertoire
- G - Engagement
- H - Differentiation

Domain 4- Monitoring Assessment and Follow Up

- A - Criteria
- B - Prior knowledge
- C - Checks for understanding

Exemplar Strategy



Implementation Steps

Planning

- What is the central question or goal of the discussion?
- What text, topic, or stimulus will ground the conversation?
- What norms or protocols will guide the discussion?
- How will I support reluctant speakers or English learners?
- What formative tools will I use to track participation and understanding?

Implementation

- Have I modeled expectations for respectful, evidence-based talk?
- Have I allowed time for students to prepare their ideas?
- Have I created opportunities for all students to contribute?
- Am I guiding without dominating the conversation?

Reflection

- What ideas were most developed during the discussion?
- Who contributed and who may need more support next time?
- How can I improve the structure or questioning to deepen dialogue?

