



Effective Classroom Discussions

Students participate in class discussions every day in every class. The question becomes one of effectiveness. When John Hattie arrived at a 0.82 effect size for this phenomenon, he was referencing classroom discussions that are engaging and productive.

Productive classroom discussions enable students to invent, create, imagine, take risks, and dig for deeper meanings. Teachers can create a climate conducive for these kinds of conversations by being mindful of the essential conditions of interactive teaching.

- We can set clear expectations for the outcomes of class discussions. Is there a graphic organizer to complete? Will there be a final written question or writing assignment to be completed?
- Classroom space should be controlled and used effectively. Will you sit in rows? In a circle? In small groups?
- Cooperative learning structures (such as Kagan) should be in place and used regularly so students are familiar with how to collaborate with their peers.
- Remember to ask good questions. If you plan your questions ahead of time and anticipate student responses, their misconceptions, etc., you will be prepared to follow up with whatever they need.
- Resist responding to questions yourself. Instead, you can redirect students, confirm responses, or restate what they have said.

There is no doubt that our students love to talk, but the talk they do should be managed in a way that promotes their learning without stifling their enthusiasm. Practice channeling their youthful energy into great classroom discussions and watch their achievement increase.

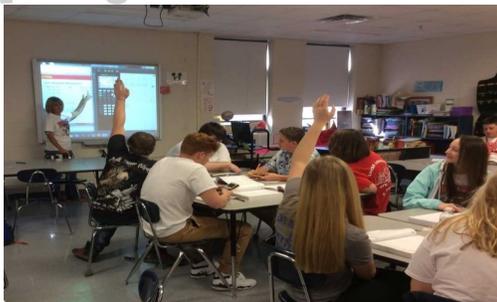
Meaningful Conversations

- I agree with ___ because...
- I disagree with ___ because...
- I'd like to go back to what ___ said about...
- I'd like to add...
- I noticed that...
- Another example is...
- So, what you're saying is...
- Do you think that...?
- Couldn't it also be that...?
- Why do you think that?
- Where can I find that in the book?
- Can you explain what you mean?
- Can you tell me more?
- Can you give an example of that?

"YOUR OBLIGATION IS THAT OF ACTIVE PARTICIPATION. YOU SHOULD NOT ACT AS KNOWLEDGE-ABSORBING SPONGES, BUT AS WHETSTONES ON WHICH WE CAN ALL SHARPEN OUR WITS"

— EDGEE W. DIJKSTRA

Spotlight on Excellence



The Carter County School District recently purchased the ACT Mastery Prep Program. ACT Mastery Prep improves student skills in Reading, Math, English, Science and Social Studies.

Left: Mrs. Julie Jackson completes a math lesson using Mastery Prep.

Fall Events

- ◆ **October 19** Fourth and Fifth Grade Literacy Academy, 8:15, Carter City Elementary
- ◆ **October 19** Google Academy, 4 p.m., Central Office

Inside

This Issue:

- [Discussion Strategies | The Teaching Center](#)
- [13 Strategies to Improve Student Classroom Discussions - We Are Teachers](#)
- [10 Classroom Discussion Techniques - Minds in Bloom](#)
- [Make Class Discussions More Exciting](#)