Chapter 1: Establish Norms

Investment

Transcript:

Preparing for student discussions starts with creating an environment conducive to rich conversations and providing students with the tools to actively participate in them.
Module Purpose

In this module you will learn how to establish norms, consider logistics, and model desired skills for your students.

Establish Norms for Discussion

What are Norms?

Norms are...
Agreed-upon expectations for how to participate.
Created by students to build investment.

(Bambrick-Santoyo, 2013; Brookfield & Preskill, 2005; VanDerPloeg, 2013)
Transcript:

Successful class discussions begin with setting up strong norms for interaction (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2013). When we say norms, we mean agreed-upon expectations for how to participate during a discussion (Brookfield & Preskill, 2005). When you involve students in the process of deciding norms, they will be more invested in them (VanDerPloeg, 2012).

Example

Transcript:

Let’s look at one possible way to include your students in the process of creating norms. You should complete this process before your students have a discussion.

To see a list of sample norms click the Example button. Otherwise, click Proceed to continue.
Classroom Discussion Norms

- Turn towards the speaker.
- Allow one person to speak at a time.
- Speak clearly and concisely.
- Listen actively.
- Ask clarifying questions.

(Bambrick-Santoyo, 2013)

Chapter 2: Consider Logistics

Logistics

Transcript:

After deciding on your norms, get ready for a specific discussion by considering logistics. Click on each image to hear about the options you may want to consider.
**Grouping**

**Determine Grouping Structure**

Which type of grouping is most beneficial?

- Pair share to practice new discussion skills
- Small groups to share a variety of ideas
- Large group to establish a common thread of understanding

(Caughlan et al., 2013; VanDerPloeg, 2012)

**Transcript:**

Each type of grouping structure offers benefits. A pair share helps students practice new discussion skills and have more time to share their thoughts and ideas. A small group allows students to hear a variety of ideas and perspectives. A whole class discussion provides a space to establish a thread of common understanding (Caughlan et al., 2013; VanDerPloeg, 2012).

**Turn-Taking Expectations**

**Establish Turn Taking Expectations**

How will someone enter the discussion?

- Open the floor
- Pass a physical item

(Bambrick-Santoyo, 2013)


Transcript:

A system for turn taking can help identify how someone enters a discussion. Consider these two possibilities. If you open the floor and allow students to enter at will, the discussion will be more natural. If you want to provide a structure for how students take turns, you can use a physical item. Students pass it to one another and the person who has it is invited to speak (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2013).

Additional Supports

Depending on their level of experience with discussion, sometimes students need additional support. Here are two suggestions. Pre-teach key terms that are essential to the discussion (VanDerPloeg, 2012). This will encourage students to use the vocabulary more naturally. You can also assign roles to help keep students engaged and on-task. In a group of four, assigned roles could be leader, recorder, voice monitor, and timekeeper (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 1994).
Mrs. Ranger Scenario

Scenario:
Mrs. Ranger’s 3rd graders have been using small group discussions for about two months. Today she has prepared for a small-group discussion on national symbols. The students will discuss: What national symbol best represents American democracy and values to you personally, and why?

Transcript:
Now that we’ve examined possible logistics for student discussions, let’s put our knowledge into practice. Acting as a coach, you will identify which additional action Mrs. Ranger should take to prepare for a small-group discussion.
Take a moment to read Mrs. Ranger’s scenario. Click “Proceed” when you are ready to move on.
Scenario:
Mrs. Ranger’s 3rd graders have been using small group discussions for about two months. Today she has prepared for a small-group discussion on national symbols. The students will discuss: What national symbol best represents American democracy and values to you personally, and why?

Choice A: Assign student roles to make sure everyone is paying attention.

Choice B: Pre-teach the vocabulary words (prominently, democracy, and values) so that everyone is clear on key terms.

Transcript:
Here are two additional actions that Mrs. Ranger could take to prepare for this discussion. Click on the one you think will help the discussion run more smoothly.

Feedback

Transcript:
The correct choice is B. Since Mrs. Ranger’s discussion question uses higher-level vocabulary like
prominently, democracy, and values, it is important that her students have a common understanding of what they mean. This will help the students use the words during the discussion with more confidence.

Mrs. Ranger’s choice to assign student roles does not necessarily enhance *this* discussion. Students have already been practicing small group discussions for two months and are likely familiar with this conversational format. To get students talking about the topic, it might be more helpful to pre-teach some of the difficult vocabulary needed for the conversation.

**Chapter 3: Model Discussion Skills**

**Discussion Skills**

Once you’ve considered logistics for the specific discussion, it’s time to model the skills you want your students to use. Based on your students and the discussion topic, determine the skills are needed most. For some discussions, you may want your students to focus on one specific skill. For others, you may want to emphasize a combination.

In this module, we will focus on three: listening actively, building on other’s ideas, and elaborating (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2013; Gillies, 2015; VanDerPloeg, 2012).

**Transcript:**

Once you’ve considered logistics for the specific discussion, it’s time to model the skills you want your students to use. Based on your students and the discussion topic, determine the skills are needed most. For some discussions, you may want your students to focus on one specific skill. For others, you may want to emphasize a combination.

In this module, we will focus on three: listening actively, building on other’s ideas, and elaborating (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2013; Gillies, 2015; VanDerPloeg, 2012).
Transcript:

One way to model active listening is to act out effective and ineffective examples. Then, ask students to identify what you are doing well and what needs to improve. For example, you can act out sitting at attention and facing the speaker versus slouching in your chair and looking at the floor.

Another way to model listening actively is to compare strong and weak examples from video. Ask students to identify which examples are strong, and discuss why.

With either of these approaches, students are identifying what active listening looks like. Make sure they identify skills like using positive body language and collecting the thoughts of others.

Now let's look at a few strategies that will help students build on others' ideas.
Building on Others' Ideas

Transcript:

Click on each strategy to see a brief definition and example.

Sentence Frames

Strategies for How to Build on Others’ Ideas:

Definition:
A group of words that pattern a response in a discussion for a specific purpose (Rajash-Drummond et al., 2013).

Example:
• In my opinion...
• What I hear you saying is...
• Based on..., I infer...
Uptake

**Strategies for How to Build on Others' Ideas:**

**Definition:**
The use of specific student responses as the basis for follow-up questions, comments, or discussion (Nystrand et al., 2001).

**Example:** Just like Laurie said, I think...

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**Authentic Question**

**Strategies for How to Build on Others' Ideas:**

**Definition:**
An open-ended question that solicits a student's evaluation or interpretation of another student's response (Nystrand et al., 2001).

**Example:**
Ben makes a good point. How do we get involved on a local level with education reform?
Respectful Disagreement

**Strategies for How to Build on Others’ Ideas:**

**Definition:**
A choice of words that convey one’s own opinion without belittling someone else’s
(Resnick, Michaels, & O’Connor, 2010).

**Example:**
I see where you’re coming from, but I disagree because...

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**Modeling**

**Ways to Model How to Build on Others’ Ideas:**

- Use a content specific topic and give examples of a strategy.
- Analyze a video clip of a student discussion.
- Draw attention to strategies as they occur naturally in class.

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**Transcript:**

Consider a few ways you can model the strategies for building on others’ ideas.

Choose a strategy and use a content-specific topic to give examples. During a social studies unit on civil rights, authentic questions might sound like: *How has government helped minority groups? How do we know there is still civil unrest?*
Another way to model is to show a short video clip of a student discussion and analyze it. Ask students to identify the demonstrated examples.

A final suggestion is to draw students’ attention to strategies as they occur naturally in class. Simply pause, and explicitly point out what you see. This reinforces their positive behavior.

Let’s continue to the final discussion skill, elaboration.

**Elaboration Strategies**

When students elaborate, they provide clarification for their ideas and back them up with evidence. Here are a couple of suggested strategies:

**Suggested Strategies for Elaboration:**

**Provide evidence**
- On page 24 it says...
- When I went to summer camp, I learned...(Soter et al, 2008)

**Explain your thinking**
- I think ____ because...
- What I mean is...(Soter et al, 2008)

**Transcript:**

When students elaborate, they provide clarification for their ideas and back them up with evidence. Here are a couple of suggested strategies.
Mr. Frank Scenario

Transcript:

Now that we’ve explored ways to model discussion skills, let’s put our knowledge into practice. Acting as a coach, you will identify which additional action Mr. Frank should take to prepare for a class discussion.

Take a moment to read Mr. Frank’s scenario. Click “Proceed” when you are ready to move on.
Scenario:
Mr. Frank has prepared for a whole-class discussion on environmental sustainability. He wants students to elaborate on their opinions. The discussion question is: What societal habits can we change today to promote a healthier environment for the future and why?

Choice A: Review ways to provide evidence in cause and effect relationships.
Choice B: Model authentic questions to ensure students keep the discussion going.

Transcript:
Here are two additional actions that Mr. Frank could take to prepare for this discussion. Click on the one you think most closely aligns to his objective for the discussion.

Feedback

Choice A: Review ways to provide evidence in cause and effect relationships.
Provide Evidence Explaining their Thinking

Transcript:
Choice A is correct. In order to elaborate on their opinions, students will need to provide evidence to support the cause/effect relationship of societal habits and a healthier environment. Mr. Frank should show how to use a line of text or refer to scientific data to provide evidence.

While authentic questions could help keep the discussion going, it is not as directly tied to the objective as choice A. The question the students are using for their discussion is already authentic. He wants students to elaborate on their opinions; providing evidence or explaining their thinking would be better strategies to review.

**Conclusion**

Transcript:

By establishing norms, considering logistics, and modeling desired skills, teachers can prepare their students to take an active role in classroom discussions.