GETTING STARTED:

INTERACTING IN MEANINGFUL WAYS

3 Goals and 8 Talk Moves for
Interacting in Meaningful Ways in All Disciplines

Goal One: Help Students Express, Expand and Clarify Their Own Thinking	Notes/Frequency of Use
☐ **1. Time to Think & Make a Claim / Inference** • Silent Looking Time • "What's going on in this (picture, story, scenario…)?" • Partner Talk • Drawing/Writing as Think Time	
☐ **2. Paraphrasing (leaving room for student to agree, disagree)** • "So, are you saying …?" "So, what you're saying is…." • "Did I get that right?	
☐ **3. Say More: Asking for Evidence or Reasoning** • "What do you see that makes you say that?" • "Why do you think that?" • "How did you arrive at that conclusion?" • "Can you say more about that?" • "Can you give an example?	
Goal Two: Help Students to Listen Carefully to One Another and Negotiate	
☐ **4. Who Can Rephrase or Repeat?** • "Who can repeat what Javon just said?" • "Who can put it into their own words?" • "What did your partner say?" "Tell me what your partner said."	
☐ **5. Agree/Disagree and Why?** • "Do you agree/disagree (and why is that?)?" • "Does anyone want to respond to that idea?"	
☐ **6. Explaining What Someone Else Means** • "Who thinks they can explain why Alejandra came up with that answer?" • "Why do you think he said that?"	
Goal Three: Help Students Deepen Their Reasoning	
☐ **7. Add On?** • "What more can we find?" • "Who can add onto the idea that Jamal is building?"	
☐ **8. Challenge or Counterexample?** • "Does it always work that way?" • "How does that idea square/compare with Sonia's example?" • "What if it had been _____ instead?"	

Getting Started: Interacting in Meaningful Ways

Rationale

Multilingual Pathways Department, in collaboration with STEM/STEAM, VAPA, and various teachers and administrators who form the Multilingual Pathways Department Design Team, have come together to create a toolkit for teachers to ensure ALL students, particularly English Language Learners, are engaging in intellectually challenging and meaningful ways, as required by the CA ELD Standards, CCSS and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). This toolkit addresses *Part 1 of the ELD standards: Interacting in Meaningful Ways* and is designed to support teachers and students as we shift towards a more collaborative and interactive approach. The toolkit provides guidance, tools, and strategies to help teachers make this shift. There are three modes of communication in *Part I: Interacting in Meaningful Ways* that should be considered in your instruction as you use this toolkit:

> a. **Collaborative**: engagement in dialogue with others (pairs, small group, whole group)
> b. **Interpretive**: comprehension and analysis of visual, written, and spoken texts
> c. **Productive**: creation of oral, written, and visual presentations, including performance

As a teacher, use this document to aid you as you work on raising the level of conversation and interaction in your classroom to address the language and content needs of your students while ensuring alignment with ELD, CCSS ELA and Math, and the NGSS. Education is in a time of great transformation and the mastery of language is ever more critical. All current adopted standards have overlapping practices that accentuate the development of thinking and communication, in addition to acquiring content knowledge. This shift in the new standards requires a transformation in the way some teachers teach and students learn. Emphasis on making thinking visible, constructing explanations, and arguing with evidence all point to new language demands that educators need to address.

Historically, teachers were asked to help ELs to acquire English and provide access to the core curriculum. Today, however, the standards mandate an instructional shift to build EL student capacity by implementing programs that have strong Academic Language and Literacy components across and within all disciplines. This document will enable you to get started with demanding, but exciting work. The goal is to have your student interact in meaningful ways through productive academic conversations. This talk should be spread throughout the day, throughout the content areas, and throughout the grades. It should become part of your classroom culture to maximize student engagement as well as rich and rigorous learning of both content and language.

The following is a suggested sequence and ideas to consider in this work. The kind of talk we are asking the students to engage in requires them to put themselves out there, pushing and challenging each other. This talk requires a great deal of trust and respect. Therefore, it is critical that you build a strong foundation by carefully and thoughtfully rolling out academic talk in your classroom. The end of this document includes links to related research articles and helpful websites and books.

The two key elements that will enable your students to interact in meaningful ways, truly learning through talk and from one another through the *3 Goals and 8 Talk Moves for Interacting in Meaningful Ways* and **Talk Structures.** *The 3 Goals and 8 Talk Moves for Interacting in Meaningful Ways* will enable you to support your students in pushing their thinking while developing language and content knowledge through conversations. The talk structures, on the other hand, will allow you to strategically group your students to best match the goal with the structure. More detail will be given on both moves and structures later in this document. But first, it is key that a solid foundation is laid for this kind of talk to make a difference in the lives of our students.

Suggestions: Lesson Sequence & Helpful Tips

I. Classroom Environment

A classroom where students are encouraged to interact in intellectually challenging and meaningful ways begins with creating a respectful, safe learning environment. Teachers strategically set up their classrooms to maximize effective learning habits students will eventually form, including their attitude towards learning.

A well-organized and stimulating classroom environment has structures and routines for various modes of interaction (whole group, small group, pairs, and independent). Access to multimedia, such as realia, audio and visual resources, and a diverse library of culturally and linguistically relevant texts is essential.

The walls and halls of a classroom and school display current student work with a range of anchor texts and charts to support and reflect student learning. Instructional materials within a classroom are clearly organized and labeled for student use in target languages (i.e. English, Chinese, Spanish, etc). Refer to 2014 Humanities *Comprehensive Approach to Literacy Handbook* for more tips and details:
https://district.sfusd.edu/dept/apd/hd/ela/Comprehensive%20Approach%20to%20Literacy%20Handbook/A%20Comprehensive%20Approach%20to%20Literacy%20Handbook%202014.pdf

II.   Set the Purpose and Rationale for Interacting in Meaningful Ways

Teachers successfully engage their students to interact in meaningful ways through academic conversations by co-constructing a clear understanding of what academic conversations are and what they are not, contrasting that style of communication with prior work they may have done. Here are some questions you can pose and discuss with your students. You could also start with a videotaped example of good conversation or a written-out script as a model of strong academic conversations look like.

- What do Productive Academic Conversations look like, sound like, feel like?
- Why are we having Productive Academic Conversations? What is the purpose?
- What conditions support Productive Academic Conversation?
- What might get in the way of meaningful conversations?
- How should we deal with that?

Research points to many reasons and benefits of having academic conversations in your classroom. Some include that we no longer live in a time of facts and knowledge. This is a time when it is critical to be able to do something with accessed knowledge and be able to express one's thinking with solid, reasoned evidence. "By talking about academic content with others, students begin to see ideas from more angles, and make links to other concepts and meaning they already have. This helps them remember new ideas and develop a richer set of associations with them, so that they can use them in new contexts," according to TERC (Technical Education Research Centers).

III. Brainstorm and Establish Norms for Interacting in Meaningful Ways

At this point, you and your students will understand the purpose, have a vision of how it will go, so you will need to be ready to share and begin enforcing norms and expectations for interaction and discussion. Some teachers share and discuss norms, limiting the number to 3-5; others brainstorm norms with the students to increase buy-in. Each has pluses and deltas. Choose which will work best with your students. Here are suggested norms that will allow successful conversations to flourish in your classroom.

- Listen attentively - focus on conversation and seek understanding. Ask for clarification or elaboration when understanding falters.
- Respond respectfully - share and challenge ideas, not people
- Speak loud enough for everyone to hear - when you can't hear, ask speaker to speak up.

According to the Institute for Learning, it is essential that students understand that **all students will have the right to be heard, the right to be listened to, and the right to be responded to respectfully. By the same token, all students will have the obligation to not interrupt classmates, to listen hard and build on one another's ideas, and to challenge or critique ideas rather than an individual person.**

Just because you have established the norms, do not expect that they will be followed flawlessly. The students will need ongoing practice and reflection. It can be useful to review the norms at the beginning of a conversation session and to reflect on them at the end. Whichever norms you decide on, it is key that they are printed in large fonts, posted publicly and visibly to all students during conversational sessions. You will also want to think though the consequences and procedures for students not following the norms. Be ready so that you can handle it calmly and efficiently when a situation arises. Because we are asking the students to take risks, share their ideas, and challenge others' ideas, it is essential that we create and maintain a safe environment to talk. Part of maintaining a safe environment requires handling situations consistently and calmly.

IV. Teach the Behaviors to Effectively Interact in Meaningful Ways

Although you will have taught the norms, your students may benefit from explicit teaching of the behaviors that are imbedded in the norms. Here is a list of behaviors that support successful conversation. You want the students to internalize these behaviors and hold each other accountable to them, rather than depending upon the teacher to enforce them. Again, reviewing at the beginning of a talk session and reviewing at the end help keep students focus on the behaviors. Some teachers even pick a target behavior for all students to focus on.

- Appropriate Eye Contact (not staring, but steady eye-contact)
- Facing One Another (body and face)
- Attentive Posture (leaning in)
- Nodding to show understanding
- Appropriate Gesturing (no eye-rolling, sighing, looking bored, folded arms…)
- Showing Interest (laughing, smiling…)
- Using "keep talking" tactics - (Uh huh, Wow, Interesting, Go on, Really? Seriously…)
- Using Silence (to allow thinking time and time to put thoughts into words)
- Prosody (changing voice tone, pitch, volume and emphasis)
- Appropriate Interrupting (for agreeing, asking for clarification, elaboration)

V. Teach the Kind of Listening Required for Interacting in Meaningful Ways

This kind of conversation might be quite different from the kind of talk they have engaged in prior. It might be helpful to really share with students what is required from the brain to truly be successful with this kind of work. Help them understand that this kind of listening is more active and requires greater focus and attention.

- We are **NOT** just listening to remember or repeat back. More is expected.
- Instead, we are listening to go somewhere (to build, to challenge, to negotiate...)
- Teach students the parts of the brain that are engaged when listening & that they will be expected to do in academic conversations
  - One part is trying to figure out what the speaker is saying
  - Another part is trying to identify key ideas or flaws in speaker's sharing
  - Another part is thinking of questions to ask

VI. Teach the *3 Goals and 8 Talk Moves* that Build Productive Academic Interactions, Language, and Content Knowledge

We all know from experience that getting students to truly converse, where they listen and build off each other, deepening their understanding of content is not an easy task. Talk moves, as named in Catherine O'Connor's work (also called core skills of academic conversations by Jeff Zwiers) have gotten a lot of attention recently as mounting research shows they are effective in increasing the level of academic interactions and conversation in your classroom.

We suggest the *3 Goals and 8 Talk Moves for Interacting in Meaningful Ways* outlined below. These strategic talk moves can be used throughout the day and across all disciplines. Each talk move has sentence stems to support the speakers in developing the conversation.

Once the *3 Goals and 8 Talk Moves* have been introduced, explained, modeled, and practiced with familiar content, you may find it helpful to have tools that help you monitor their use. We have modified the above TERC checklist of the talk moves, adding sample language and room for notes. In addition, Zwiers' book *Academic Conversations* and his more recent publication *Common Core in Diverse Classrooms* (Zwiers, O'Hara, & Pritchard, 2014) have lesson activities for all disciplines to help you develop the core talk moves with your students.

Important note regarding Goal 1, Talk Move 1: <u>Wait Time</u>. According to TERC, wait time "is the most researched talk move. If a teacher increases wait time to three seconds or more, dramatic changes take place—students say more; they expand, clarify, and explain their thinking with evidence; the number of questions asked by students increases dramatically; and student-to-student talk increases." This is especially critical for English Language Learners as they have to process and interpret in their heads what was said, find the language to produce their own questions, ideas or thoughts, then express their thoughts within the time given and engage in an extended, productive conversation. There is magic in wait time as long as you give them something compelling to think about and the skills and time to interact in meaningful ways.

VII. Teach Structures that Facilitate Interacting in Meaningful Ways

There are many different ways your can structure and organize your students for powerful academic conversations. It is critical that you think through the different ways you can group your students for effective conversations and match a structure that best supports your goals. Flexible grouping that is mindful of all students participating equitably is ideal. Without that pre-thinking and planning, many teachers fall back on what they grew up with, that is, the teacher posing a question and calling on hands, one at a time. Each of these structures is described and detailed at the end of this document. With all of these structures, students should be encouraged to engage in extended discourse, multiple exchanges that go beyond simply reporting. It is also worth repeating the critical role of move 1—**wait time**—when posing a question or prompt for students to discuss. Note that these are not an exhaustive list, and we suggest you modify them as needed.
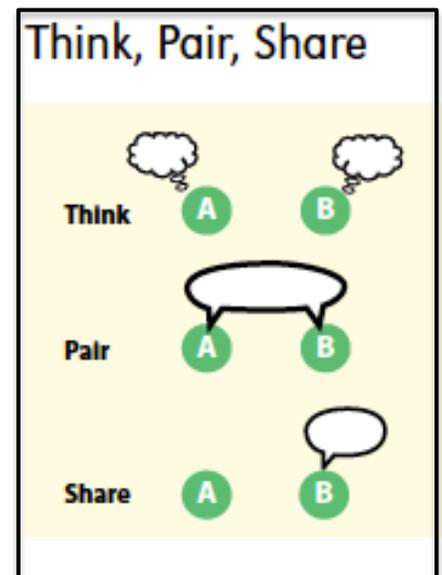
Extended Think, Pair, Share

What & How:
The teacher poses a question or prompt and signals to all the students to think (point to head, for example.) After sufficient wait time, the teacher signals to students to turn to partner and pair (index and middle finger together, for example). Lastly, the teacher indicates "share" and students begin sharing their thinking with their partner. Continue "share" so A and B engage in an extended discussion on the topic.

Why:
This conversation structure is extremely helpful for English Learners (ELs) in that it allows the necessary think time to organize what they want to share with their partner. Therefore, it is critical that the teacher allows for think time and does not simply pose question and then quickly tell students to "turn and talk". Respect students need to think. It is also helpful if you have grouped students by 1's and 2's or A's and B's and students are clear on who will begin sharing first. Because this is a partner structure, it is relatively risk free for students. A variation on this structure is think, write, pair, share. The write part of this structure allows students to try out the language and their idea prior to sharing it with their partner. It also allows time to filter through the initial ideas and get

at one that is more developed.

Think, Pair, Share

Continue "share" A-B, B-A…until time is called to ensure students engage in an extended discussion.

Three Way Interview

What & How:
This structure is much like "think, pair, share", with the added step of partners reporting out for each other. Pairs interview each other and listen carefully to their partner. Reverse roles. The teacher then calls on partnerships and each reports out their partner's response.

Why:
This conversation structures is helpful in many ways. Interviewing requires students to ask and answer questions that increase the receptive and expressive language load. In addition, active listening demands are increased in order to report out their partner's ideas.
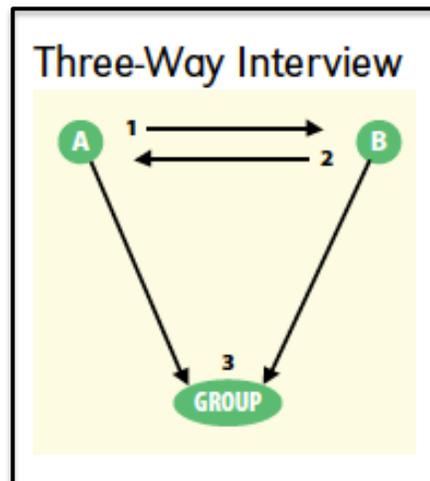
Numbered Heads

What & How:
In this structure, students are put into groups (size can vary from 3-5 people) and given a number within each group. Again, the teacher gives a prompt, question or topic for discussion. Students are given sufficient wait time to think or write out their thinking prior to discussion. Groups then discuss and all members participate and follow along so that they can report out. The teacher calls on one number and the person with that number in each group reports out discussion highlights

Why:
This conversation structure allows for a larger discussion group size while still maintaining a lower risk than a whole class discussion. The teachers use of calling on random numbers to report out maintains accountability and allows the teacher to assess both the individual's thinking and also that of the group.
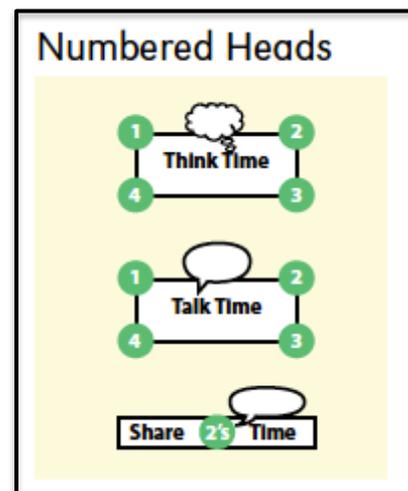
Round Table

What & How:
Students sit in a group (size to be determined by teacher). The teacher asks a question with multiple answers. Students go around the circle sharing their perspective, answer to the question. Each student is encouraged to offer a different idea than has already been shared. Suggest having Talking Chips available to ensure equity of voice.

Why:
The challenge of this talk structure is eliciting multiple ideas. This kind of thinking and pushing for diverse ideas enhances language literacy. A variation on this is that each successive person, rather than offering up a new idea, elaborates on the prior idea or provides evidence to support the initial idea. This requires students to listen carefully and filter through the ideas in their heads to share one that is relevant.
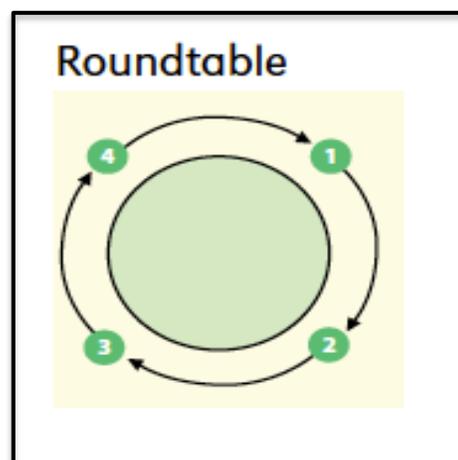
Talking Stick

What & How:
This structure is organized much like round table, though students need to simply share their idea, not necessarily a different idea like in round table. Only the person with the talking stick (popsicle stick, stuffed animal, ball) speaks.

Why:
This conversation structures is a beginning level structure for larger group settings. It is structured carefully so that each person gets a chance to speak and be heard. Once the stick has gone around the circle, you can open it up, so that students then begin to go back and forth and challenge or elaborate on students' ideas.
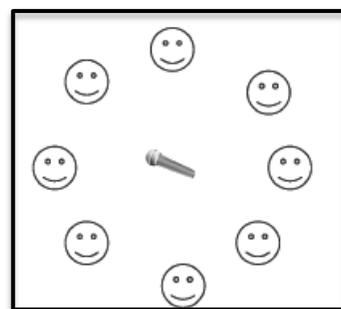
Lines of Communication

What & How:
In this structure, students form two lines, facing one another. A variation is to form two circles, an inside circle and an outside circle, again facing one another. The teacher asks a question, poses a prompt or topic. One side shares their thinking and then the other. To rotate, one side moves down one space.

Why:
This particular conversation structure is very helpful when you want students to have multiple opportunities to practice similar language. They will be able to share their thoughts with multiple people in a low-stress arrangement. You can vary it by giving a new prompt after each movement of the line.
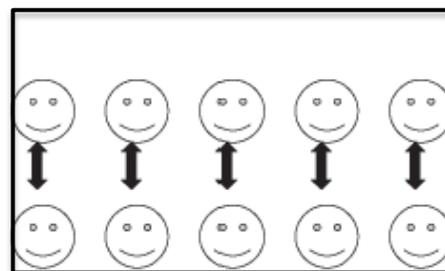
Give One, Get One

What & How:
In this structure, the teacher poses a question, prompt or topic. Then, the whole class moves around the room. At the signal, students find a nearby partner to share and discuss their thinking and hear alternative ideas. They are expected to ask one another for clarification, elaboration or other talk moves. They then jot down their partner's idea along with their name onto a recording sheet and prepare for the next partner. A new signal can be given if additional structure is needed or you can teach your students how to mingle and find a new partner after each sharing/recording session.

Why:
Students appreciate the movement and ability to choose someone to partner with, which increases motivation. All talk moves are used in the structure with the benefit of pushing the students to summarize their partners sharing as they record it before moving on to their next partner.
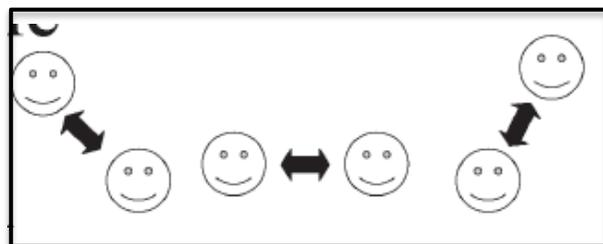
VIII. Teach How to Evaluate Talk and Develop Accountability

In order for this critical work to really stick and reap the benefits outlined in the research, it is important to put in place ways for both the teacher and the students to evaluate the talk, determine growth, areas for improvement, and increase accountability for all. CDE suggests that the following items be assessed for this purpose.

- Active Listening – using eye contact, nodding and posturing to communicate
- Meaningful Transitions – linking what they are about to say to what has been said
- Shared Participation – all share and actively seek contributions from all group members
- Rigor and Risk—students explore original ideas, ask important question that have no right/easy   answer
- Focus on Prompt – staying focused on key prompt/prompt, relating it back
- Textual Evidence – refer specifically to text and evidence to support ideas
- Open-Minded Consideration of all Viewpoints – students are willing to alter initial ideas

The teacher, students or both could evaluate these items. You could also choose a talk move or even a particular ELD standard to focus your observation, evaluation, and goal setting. The talk move checklist is set up for just that purpose. A suggested three-point rubric could be used to determine areas of mastery and growth needed, per Jeff Zwiers' suggestion, *At or Above (3), Approaching (2) and Below (1)].*

Suggested Three-Point Rubric for Mastery and Growth		
3 – At / Above	2 - Approaching	1 – Below / Basic

Building Student Capacity, Checking for Understanding and Providing Focused Feedback

One way to roll out this work is to co-create with your students or create ahead of time a rubric for whatever particular element you and your class is focusing on.

I. Co-Constructing Common Understanding
Students identify what a level 2 clarification looks and sounds like and, **more importantly,** help them identify what a level 3 clarification looks like so they have a clear understanding of what they need to do to get to the next level. You can do this work for moves, behaviors or as stated earlier, ELD standards. When students are clear on what specifically they need to do to improve, they are more motivated and much more likely to make gains.

II. View and Analyze Interactions: Student-to-Student, Paired/Trios, Small Group, Teacher to Whole Group View interactions between partnerships, small groups or whole group. There are several links at the bottom of this document to videos for this very purpose. **Once your rubric is in place, students can view and analyze other students on video, which can be a much less threatening than viewing themselves. Help your students discuss what they observed, what score they would give the conversation and what evidence supports that score. Most importantly, what advice do they have for the students in the video to increase the rigor of their conversation?**

III. Use Your Own Students for the Next Phase of Evaluation
Some teachers like to do a fishbowl, inviting chosen students to sit in the center of the circle and allow the rest of the class to be the bowl and observe and analyze, and set goals after the conversation is over. An alternative that is both motivating and less scary for students who are shy in front of the whole class is to videotape your own students' conversations. The teacher can use a smartphone, tablet, or video camera to tape conversations. Then, either on your own or with students, you can project and play back the video to allow for evaluation and future goal setting.

VI. Check for Understanding and Providing Focused Feedback
This step is important for English Learners. They require immediate and focused feedback. Formative assessment allows for "just-in-time scaffolding" students need. In other words, there is often a need to adjust the scaffold provided based on what students are doing, saying, thinking in the moment to help them learn and interact in intellectually challenging ways. Use the time students are interacting in pairs, small groups and whole group work to get a pulse on where the students are. Make a commitment to monitor and formatively assess all your students by the end of each week focused on the learning and language outcomes at hand and the skill you are emphasizing your students use.   Keep a clipboard with your focal students for each day, making sure you have data on ALL your students by the end of the week.

Place recording device in the middle of the group and record their conversation, with or without video. Here are many apps that allow you to do this. Listen at their leisure to the conversation and rewind it to hear all the nuances and words missed when trying to listen in real time during class. This structure is nice in that it allows the teacher to really listen carefully and identify what the students are doing well, attempting or simply missing. Some teachers rotate the device so they regularly check in with all students.

Making a structure like those suggested above part of your regular assessment and goal setting will really push the students to reach new heights and keep the focus on the importance of this critical work.

Resources and Research

Academic Language and Literacy Website
Jeff Zwiers website - full of videos, posters, and ideas to build stronger academic conversations
http://www.jeffzwiers.org/

Talk Science Primer
An excellent article that spells out the what, why, and how of Productive Talk
http://inquiryproject.terc.edu/shared/pd/TalkScience_Primer.pdf

Talk Strategies
A short and succinct article that outlines how to implement talk strategies in your practice.
http://eec.islandwood.org/files/clancyw/Elementary%20Science%20Methods/labs/Talk_Strategies.pdf

Setting the Stage for Accountable Talk Practices
Excellent article that helps spell out how to setup Accountable Talk in your classroom
http://www.scsk12.org/uf/ci/files/2013/modules/Science%206-12%20CC%20Study%20Groups/Study%20Group%205%20Science/SettingTheStageForAccountableTalk.pdf

SFUSD ELA PK-12 Core Curriculum
  ➢ Engagement and Interaction Strategies K-5
    https://district.sfusd.edu/dept/apd/hd/elagrlevres/EngagementInteraction%20Resources/SFUSD%20Engagement%20and%20Interaction%20Strategies%20K-5.pdf

  ➢ Engagement and Interaction Strategies Speaking, Listening & Academic Conversations
    https://district.sfusd.edu/dept/apd/hd/elagrlevres/EngagementInteraction%20Resources/SFUSD%20Engagement%20and%20Interaction%20Strategies%20for%20Speaking_Listening%20and%20Acad%20Conv.pdf

  ➢ Strategies for Reflection and Summarizing Learning: Collaborative Activities for Formative Assessment
    https://district.sfusd.edu/dept/apd/hd/elagrlevres/EngagementInteraction%20Resources/Strategies%20for%20Reflection%20and%20Summarizing%20Learning_%20Collaborative%20Activities%20for%20Formative%20Assessments.pdf

SFUSD Mathematics Core Curriculum
  ➢ Math Teaching Toolkit
    http://www.sfusdmath.org/math-teaching-toolkit.html

The Inquiry Project Website
Website dedicated to strengthening science instruction with a library of videos to help you understand and implement talk strategies as well as videos of student engaged in talk.
http://inquiryproject.terc.edu/prof_dev/library.cfm

Talk Moves Checklist
This is the checklist that can be helpful for assessing and monitoring student use of the talk moves along with lists of language that goes with each talk move and room to take notes.
http://inquiryproject.terc.edu/shared/pd/Goals_and_Moves.pdf

Professional Books that Support this Work

Academic Conversations - Classroom Talk that Fosters Critical Thinking and Content Understanding
by Jeff Zwiers & Marie Crawford
http://www.stenhouse.com/html/academic-conversations.htm

Common Core Standards in Diverse Classrooms; Essential Practices for Developing Academic Language and Disciplinary Literacy
by Jeff Zwiers, Susan O'Hara & Robert Pritchard
http://www.stenhouse.com/html/common-core-standards-in-diverse-classrooms.htm

English Learners, Academic Literacy, and Thinking: Learning in the Challenge Zone
by Pauline Gibbons
http://books.heinemann.com/shared/onlineresources%5CE01203%5CGibbonsFlyer.pdf

Teaching Reading in the Content Areas: If Not Me, Then Who? 3rd Edition
by Vicki Urquhart & Dana Frazee
http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/112024/chapters/1.-Academic-Conversation.aspx