

Classroom Discussions Module Facilitator Guide

Audience: Administrators and teachers can use this module to learn about classroom discussions as a best practice to integrate social and personal competencies into instruction. The information, knowledge, and tools can be used by professional learning communities focused on social and personal competencies and by administrators to support the social and personal skills of their teachers and students.

Duration: 40–70 minutes

Materials needed:

- PowerPoint Slides: Module 6: Classroom Discussion
- Classroom Discussions Handout 1: Classroom Discussions Self-Assessment
- Classroom Discussions Handout 2: See It in Action Reflections—Classroom Discussions
- Classroom Discussions Handout 3: General Guidelines of Classroom Discussions
- Managing Perspective Taking
- Classroom Discussions Handout 4: Purposeful Student Talk Activity
- Classroom Discussions Handout 5: Perspective Taking and Accountable Talk
- Classroom Discussions Handout 6: Reflection on Classroom Discussions and Additional Information
- [Toolkit for Integrating Social and Personal Competencies Into Instruction](#)
- Internet, projector, and audio speakers

Objective: Through the Classroom Discussions module, participants will learn about strategies to facilitate classroom discussions, to help students engage in perspective taking, and to help students assume increasing responsibility in discussions using a gradual release of responsibility model.¹ Participants will also learn how to ask good questions to further students' development of self-awareness, confidence, self-control, communication skills, teamwork, and problem-solving skills.

¹ Fisher & Frey, 2008.

Learning Outcomes: Participants will learn about types of purposeful student talk, questioning and the Question Formulation Technique, perspective taking, and routines for promoting quality classroom discussions—with the ultimate goal of supporting student development of social, personal, and academic skills.

Assessment and Evaluation: Participants will self-assess and self-reflect on how well their classroom discussions went and on the impact of the discussions on students. At the end of the module, participants can submit feedback about the module through an online evaluation.

How to Use This Guide: Below, you will find a script of the content that is associated with each PowerPoint slide. You will also find optional activities, videos, and guiding questions that you may want to incorporate into your session to make the professional learning more interactive, especially if the online module is conducted in a professional learning community.



Audio Option: There are two options to disseminate the PowerPoint. You can use the PowerPoint found on YouTube. This version contains an audio option in which a narrator takes you through the presentation. Conversely, you can use the professional learning community (PLC) version. The script for this version is presented below. The PLC version also allows for narration to be played, if preferred.

Materials	Content	Time
<p>Slide 1</p>	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Have you ever found yourself doing nearly all of the talking during classroom discussions or using more wait time than anticipated? Are you wondering why your students are not participating in classroom discussions? What can you do to increase student participation and to have students share their perspectives more?</p> <p>This module gives you some strategies to implement in your classroom to achieve these outcomes.</p>	<p>1 minute</p>
<p>Slide 2</p>	<p>Importance of Classroom Discussions</p> <p>In a survey administered to almost 90,000 middle and high school students in Tennessee in 2013-14, nearly 80 percent of students reported that they have at least one teacher who takes the time to listen to what they have</p>	<p>1 minute</p>

Materials	Content	Time
	<p>to say. However, only 34 percent of students agreed or strongly agreed that students at their school respect each other’s differences and trust each other, both of which are important components of holding dynamic classroom discussions.</p> <p>So, what can you do to help students respect and trust each other? How can we help develop the skills and environment necessary to hold effective classroom discussions? This module will help you think about how to do this.</p>	
<p>Slide 3</p>	<p>Ten Teaching Practices: Classroom Discussions</p> <p>Social and personal skills form the foundation for classroom discussions. Through classroom discussions, students become more aware of themselves and others; manage their own behaviors and their interactions with others; and use communication skills that they need to be successful in school, work, and life. Because social and personal skills are so connected to classroom discussions, teachers should ensure that students possess these skills to have successful discussions.</p> <p>Classroom Discussions is the sixth learning module in the Social and Personal Competencies series. If you haven’t already, you can review the Introduction to Social and Personal Competency module to learn more about the goal and purpose of this series. Each of the 10 modules in this series has been developed around one of the 10 teaching practices that promote social and personal competencies, as described in <i>Incorporating Social and Personal Competencies Into Classroom Instruction and Educator Effectiveness: A Toolkit for Tennessee Teachers and Administrators</i>.</p>	<p>1 minute</p>
<p>Slide 4</p>	<p>Introduction to Classroom Discussions</p> <p>Classroom discussion practices are built on the idea that students can communicate their ideas and learn from their teachers and peers when they are provided</p>	<p>2 minutes</p>

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	<p>with the necessary tools, resources, and skills to communicate effectively and appropriately. To do this, you can implement practices that provide students with opportunities to think critically, use textual evidence to challenge assumptions, reflect upon their own thinking and that of others, pose thoughtful and relevant questions, appreciate multiple perspectives, and develop the language to express complex ideas.</p> <p>Classroom discussions should bring to the surface students' voices and perspectives and keep them actively engaged in learning, rather than them passively accepting as fact inferences made or conclusions drawn. The goal of this module is to provide you with the knowledge, tools, and resources that will help you implement practices around classroom discussions that support student engagement in learning. Be sure to download the handouts that accompany this module so you can use them as you work through it.</p>	
<p>Slide 5</p>	<p>Objectives for This Module</p> <p>Traditionally, classroom discussions have been teacher-centered, with limited opportunities for students to extend the discussion in a meaningful way or contribute different perspectives. Despite the expectation that students become more proficient at comprehending and interpreting complex text through classroom discussions, opportunities to acquire and refine the necessary social and personal skills to hold discussions are brief and limited, which may result in student disinterest and misunderstanding.</p> <p>Through this module, you'll learn how the development of social and personal skills relates to classroom discussion practices. You'll also learn practices that you can implement in your classroom to help create a personalized and interactive learning environment in which students engage in discussions, collaborations, and problem solving to further their literacy and ability to manage dialogue. You'll finish up by developing</p>	<p>2 minutes</p>

Materials	Content	Time
	action steps for implementing classroom discussion practices in your classroom.	
Optional Discussion	<i>Take a moment and think about a great discussion you have had with colleagues in the past. What social and personal skills did you use during that discussion? Also, think about the context. What aspects of your classroom discussion practices did you bring to that great conversation that helped you facilitate it?</i>	5 minutes
Slide 6	<p>Benefits for Students</p> <p>When students engage in content conversations facilitated by the teacher, they not only tap traditional academic skills—such as reading and speaking skills—to interpret, integrate, and synthesize information, but they also develop social and personal skills. For example, students become more aware of themselves and others participating in the discussion. Furthermore, students consider their own and others’ background experiences and knowledge as they engage with others to solve problems or make sound arguments about content. Students also increase their confidence as they engage with others about their own ideas and think more deeply about the content. Finally, students are more apt to decrease their misunderstandings as they talk through their understanding of content.</p>	2 minutes
Optional Discussion	<i>Now, think about a classroom discussion that you had that did not go well. Why did the conversation not go well? Was it lack of knowledge? Lack of communication skills from other individuals? Was there something about the context within the classroom?</i>	5 minutes
Slide 7	<p>Alignment to TEAM Evaluation</p> <p>Classroom discussions are reflected in components of the Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model. Many educators in the state refer to this as “TEAM.” For example, effective classroom discussions can be seen in the <i>motivating students</i> component, because classroom discussions have the capacity to reinforce and reward</p>	2 minutes

Materials	Content	Time
	<p>student behavior. Similarly, effective classroom discussions can be found in the <i>presenting instructional content, activities and materials, questioning, and academic feedback</i> components of the TEAM General Educator Rubric. This module helps you learn how to use classroom discussions in a way that is consistent with the “Significantly Above Expectations” category of the TEAM rubric.</p>	
<p>Slide 8 (Activity) <i>Refer to Handout</i></p>	<p>Self-Assessment and Self-Reflection (Activity) Before you get started, take a few minutes to reflect on how you use classroom discussions in your classroom and the ways in which students react to it. How does your use of classroom discussions help students attune to and respond to a speaker, and support students in communicating their point of view? If it’s helpful, reflect on your use of a classroom discussion in a recent class, one that you can easily remember. Otherwise, try to think more holistically about your use of classroom discussions during a typical day.</p> <p>You can refer to <i>Handout 1: Classroom Discussions Self-Assessment</i> to reflect on how you implement classroom discussions in your classroom.</p> <p>Ask participants to complete <i>Handout 1: Classroom Discussions Self-Assessment</i>.</p>	<p>7 minutes</p>
<p>Slide 9 (Activity) <i>Refer to Handout 2</i></p>	<p>See It in Action (Activity) Now that you’ve reflected on your own use of classroom discussions, take a deeper look at classroom discussions in action. Select one of the short videos based on whether you are interested in viewing an elementary or high school classroom. As you watch the video, pay close attention to the questions asked and the discussions in which the classroom engages. Refer to <i>Handout 2: See It in Action Reflections—Classroom Discussions</i> for some questions to reflect on as you watch the video.</p>	<p>2 minutes</p>

Materials	Content	Time
<p>Videos</p> <p>Classroom Discussions in the Elementary School https://youtu.be/w1yZBU2-0Mw</p> <p>Classroom Discussions in the Middle School https://youtu.be/Gx4rUY8l-aM</p> <p>Activity</p> <p>Ask participants to complete the reflection questions in <i>Handout 2: See It in Action Reflections—Classroom Discussions</i>.</p> <p>Optional Video Ideas</p> <p>Working Through the Wrong Answer http://tnclassroomchronicles.org/video-supporting-students/</p>		<p>6 minutes</p> <p>5 minutes</p> <p>5 minutes</p> <p>3 minutes</p>
<p>Slide 10</p>	<p>Exploring Classroom Discussions</p> <p>Classroom discussions are powerful tools to help students develop and apply their social and personal skills. For example, classroom discussions help students regulate their communication to examine content, make evidence-based decisions, engage in meaningful and respectful interpersonal exchanges with adults and peers, and assume greater responsibility for their learning. Similarly, empowering students to frame discussions around content—for example, textual evidence or scientific inquiry—will help guide students as they pose questions, hear and respond to different perspectives, and interpret meaning for deeper learning.</p> <p>In addition, classroom discussion practices foster a respectful classroom environment and help shape the way in which students see themselves and others in the context of learning, encourage positive student–teacher relationships, and facilitate students’ prosocial behavior for improved academic achievement.</p>	<p>2 minutes</p>
<p>Slide 11</p>	<p>General Principles of Effective Discussions</p> <p>Effective discussions have four basic hallmarks.</p> <p>First, effective discussions are thoughtfully planned in advance. Effective discussions draw on your knowledge of both the course content and your students. As such,</p>	<p>4 minutes</p>

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	<p>it is important to plan ahead with both in mind to ensure that students engage in activities that are likely to ready them for classroom discussions. To help prepare yourself and your students to engage in classroom discussions, clarify the goals of the discussion in advance, and implement student support activities that will allow students to prepare in advance. For example, you could provide students with preliminary questions, allowing them to think through and articulate their ideas in writing first and later in pairs or small groups. This can bolster their confidence and stimulate them to engage actively and to make thoughtful and relevant contributions to classroom discussions.</p> <p>Second, effective classroom discussions are intentional and purposefully led. To provide a climate in which students are self-aware and learn how to manage themselves when sharing their points of view, set ground rules to establish a classroom norm of inclusive and courteous interactions. Move students beyond superficial participation in classroom discussions and toward embracing opportunities to talk to their peers, and to see each other and observe nonverbal clues that may enhance their ability to understand social and personal context as they discuss. Along with ground rules and setting the stage for students, be intentional about how you facilitate the discussion. You may deepen the discussion and move the conversation along by posing different types of questions and keeping a running log of key points that surface during the discussion. For example, ask clarifying questions to encourage students to expound on their responses, and encourage students to ask clarifying questions of their peers. Similarly, challenge students to justify their responses or support them with evidence, and require students to assume a stance that requires them to consider alternative perspectives.</p>	

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	<p>Finally, it is important to help students connect classroom discussions to their life experiences.</p> <p>Third, effective classroom discussions are assessed with student learning in mind. Quality classroom discussions build in assessments to establish what students are learning and to capture the extent to which students are applying, challenging, and extending what was gleaned from the discussions. As such, it is important to infuse opportunities for you and your students to reflect on key takeaways, pose lingering questions, and explore curiosities that emerge. This may be done by varying the modes of assessment to include projects, assignments, quizzes, and continuing discussions, to name a few.</p> <p>Finally, effective classroom discussions prompt further discussions. Concluding or wrapping up a quality discussion should not represent the end of that discussion. Instead, good discussions should prompt other discussions. You can do this by emphasizing connections between current and previous or upcoming discussions or by utilizing lessons learned, questions posed, or issues raised by students.</p>	
<p>Slide 12 (Activity)</p>	<p>General Guidelines of Classroom Discussions (Activity)</p> <p>To help you enact general principles of classroom discussions, it is important to develop norms for conversing that are based in courtesy, respect, inclusion, active listening, evidence, and the desire to understand and be understood. In developing a classroom climate conducive to this sort of participation, you may want to involve students in generating the norms that will guide classroom discussions.</p> <p><i>Handout 3: General Guidelines of Classroom Discussions</i> provides examples of general guidelines from the University of Michigan Center for Research on Learning</p>	<p>10 minutes</p>

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	<p>and Teaching. Take a few minutes to review these examples, and identify guidelines that you would like to create or modify (if you already have them) for classroom discussions. You will also want to identify the ways in which you will teach these guidelines to your students and reinforce them throughout the discussions you have in your classroom. Note that you will have to modify the examples based on the grade level that you teach.</p>	
<p>Slide 13</p>	<p>Learn About Classroom Discussions</p> <p>Consider the approaches you currently use to facilitate effective classroom discussions. Is your voice predominant in discussions or those of your students? Are students asking questions of you and their classmates, or are you posing most of the questions? Shifting the responsibility for moving the conversation along from you to your students is a way to help students find their voices, to increase the amount of time they spend talking and using academic language, and to begin to learn to express themselves appropriately. In other words, effective classroom discussion is about shifting the roles of teacher and student, in which the teacher now advocates for students to listen and learn from each other and to hold each other accountable during the discussions.</p> <p>The content of the remainder of this module helps you think through some of these questions and concerns by discussing five practices to consider as you implement classroom discussions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Purposeful student talk is a scaffolded approach that teachers can use to help shift the responsibility for moving the conversation along from the teacher to the students. ▪ Questioning and Question Formulation Technique is a process to help students develop good questions. 	<p>2 Minutes</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perspective taking is thoughtfully considering perspectives that differ from one’s own and garnering sufficient information about the related experiences that shaped those perspectives to converse about them or issues related to them with respect and sensitivity. ▪ Accountable talk provides mechanisms to help with perspective taking and facilitating discussions. ▪ Routines and structures—such as annotation, text rendering, or Socratic seminars—that teachers deliver through a scaffolded approach to students, can help students better organize their ideas and contribute to discussions. <p>Through these approaches, you can help motivate students by facilitating their collaboration with others, give them opportunities to converse with their peers in purposeful ways, help them learn how to express and support their viewpoints, give them a platform to extend their understanding while helping others to do so, and help students develop a sense of curiosity about the content they learn.</p>	
<p>Slide 14</p>	<p>Purposeful Student Talk</p> <p>The first practice in classroom discussions is purposeful student talk. How often do students in your classroom get to exchange their own well-reasoned ideas, probe reasoning and evidence, resolve contradictions, or study a full range of positions on a topic? Effective classroom discussions involve purposeful talk that is meant to help learners do just that. Through purposeful talk, students can think collaboratively about academic or complex issues, co-construct understanding of various topics and content, and develop skills for independent thought and problem solving.</p> <p>Purposeful talk does not happen overnight. Using a four-step process, you can help your students assume</p>	<p>5 Minutes</p>

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	<p>increased responsibility for their learning. The extent to which students actively engage in classroom conversations gradually increases from step to step. The overall approach uses small groups of 2–4 students. The teacher gives seed questions to each group and then intermittently starts and stops the lesson every 5–15 minutes, depending on the age and comfort level of the students. By stopping periodically, students get opportunities to discuss their thoughts about the topic or question, and then they can restart their attention span.</p>	
<p>Slide 15</p>	<p>Four Steps of Purposeful Student Talk</p> <p>By engaging in purposeful student talk, you are shifting the roles and responsibilities of discussions from yourselves (as teachers) to the students. The four-step, scaffolded approach of purposeful student talk includes teacher modeling, guided instruction, collaborative tasks, and independent tasks. As you engage in classroom discussions and purposeful talk, it is important not to praise students. Instead, pose questions to scaffold student thinking and to help guide students to correct answers rather than telling them the answers.</p> <p>The first step in purposeful talk is teacher modeling, which demonstrates to students how to hold a discussion around content—do not assume that students know how to hold content-based conversations. Modeling involves an “I do it” approach, in which the teacher sets the focus of the lesson during a 10- to 15-minute discussion, providing topical information and emphasizing certain content in addition to using select strategies—such as demonstrating how to summarize and reflect upon content, to make predictions and draw inferences, to use questioning, to make connections, to synthesize information, to evaluate, and to connect aspects of the conversation to their own lives and experiences. Each of</p>	<p>15 Minutes</p>

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	<p>these strategies will need to be modeled and taught to students.</p> <p>Modeling clarifies for students what is expected of them in terms of individual and collective roles, goals of the lesson, deadlines, and so forth. In addition, you may want to consider modeling a content-based discussion with a colleague, or having students analyze a discussion via a video. When you model, it is important to be explicit, such as letting them know how you use wait time to reflect on others' thinking, and how you connect your comments to students.</p>	
<p>Slide 15 (continued)</p>	<p>Lastly, a key aspect of the modeling component is the seed question, which is a question used to focus students' thinking and stimulate their discussion. Seed questions are usually open ended, likely advance discussion, require critical thinking, call for evidence, promote the rigor of a lesson, and ensure the relevance of a lesson. They may be very general; for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What did you learn from reading the selection? ▪ What surprised you about the selection? Why? ▪ What, from the selection, did you not understand? What was unclear? <p>Seed questions may also be specific. For example, an elementary teacher covering the topic of citizenship might ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How can students in elementary school be good citizens? <p>On the topic of the Civil War, a high school or middle school teacher might ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Why was the Civil War fought? ▪ Was the Civil War avoidable? Explain your response. <p>On the questions, students are encouraged to make inferences based on evidence, articulate responses, and</p>	

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	<p>engage with the reading material to present and discuss their understandings with other learners.</p> <p>The second step in purposeful talk is guided instruction. During this “we do it” approach, the teacher again uses seed questions to increase the amount of time students talk to each other, and to get them to (a) engage collaboratively in reflecting and activating their prior knowledge, thus requiring them to discuss the topic or lesson briefly in small groups; (b) pose questions to each other for clarity, context clues, and resources; and (c) rely on each other to further the discussion. Throughout the lesson, the teacher intermittently stops and has students talk to each other, allowing them to teach one another and to develop trust and confidence in themselves and their knowledge as well as that of other learners. The guided instruction aspect of purposeful talk gives you a chance to observe nonverbal cues; listen to and, where necessary, provide guided support and offer additional questions to students to further their discussions. This is where planning in advance becomes useful—to know where students will need additional help.</p>	
<p>Slide 15 (continued)</p>	<p>The third step in purposeful talk is collaborative tasks. During this “you do it together” approach, students take the lead in generating and responding to questions, helping each other reflect on content and related structures and features, seeking and providing clarification, and delving into discussions. At this point, students can learn more about themselves and each other, assess their strengths, refine their interpersonal skills, and cooperate with peers while the teacher continues to observe, pose questions, and offer guidance and redirection as needed. During the collaborative tasks step, it is important to help students develop the skills to effectively respond to peers who are involved in the discussion. For example, help students to listen and reflect on what their peers are</p>	

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	<p>saying, to identify whether they agree with what their peers are saying, to extend on what their peers are saying, or to pose additional questions.</p> <p>The fourth step in purposeful talk is independent tasks. During this “you do it alone” approach, students rely on a metacognitive process involving reflection and self-talk to inform changes in their understandings and viewpoints; develop and give feedback to other learners; and report outcomes of their work to the teacher, their peers, and possibly others.</p>	
<p>Slide 16 (Activity)</p>	<p>Purposeful Student Talk Activity</p> <p>Use <i>Handout 4: Purposeful Student Talk Activity</i> to provide detailed steps about enacting purposeful talk with your students. These steps can be used at all grade levels. However, the types of questions and the ways in which you guide students to respond to each other will differ by age group. For example, to promote responses among elementary school students, you will need to provide them with more sentence stems.</p>	<p>10 minutes</p>
<p>Slide 17</p>	<p>Questioning</p> <p>The second practice in classrooms discussions is questioning. The key aspect of questioning is often an area in which learners express reluctance—both to answer questions and to ask questions. Yet, questioning is one of the few ways in which students can pursue their intellectual curiosities, probe for details and elaboration, check for accuracy, and clarify their contributions to discussions.</p> <p>The Question Formulation Technique (QFT) is one way to assist learners with developing the ability to pose effective questions to enrich classroom discussions. QFT is a four-step process in which learners produce, improve, and prioritize questions before deciding upon next steps for furthering engagement around the questions produced. By engaging in this process to develop and refine questions, learners are more apt to</p>	<p>3 minutes</p>

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	generate questions based on their authentic curiosities and to exercise social awareness and perspective taking.	
<p>Slide 18</p>	<p>Question Formulation Technique (QFT) You can follow four steps to implement the QFT with your students:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Produce questions. You want your students to produce as many questions as they can on the given topic or related to a specific text or conversation. Let them know that the questions should not be censored, as long as they are focused on the topic at hand, and they do not need to be edited, except for a final check to ensure that they are in fact all questions. 2. Improve the questions. You want your students to improve their questions. To do this, first have them categorize their questions as closed or open ended, and then have them list the advantages and disadvantages of the two types of questions. Finally, give students time to modify or change their questions. 3. Prioritize the questions. Have students prioritize their questions and give their rationale for doing so. This allows students to select the three questions deemed most important. 4. Determine next steps. Have students determine the next steps for their top three questions. This requires students to decide how the questions will be used. <p>This four-step strategy for producing effective questions is likely to enhance student motivation to learn, to improve peer relationships, and to inspire a deeper connection to school.</p>	<p>5 minutes</p>
<p>Slide 19 (Activity)</p>	<p>QFT Activity Let’s give QFT a try. First, let’s suppose that your students have the opportunity to interview the</p>	<p>5 minutes</p>

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	<p>President of the United States. How might they prepare for such an important experience?</p> <p>Use the steps shown on the screen. What additional instructions or guidance would you give students to help them frame questions based on their authentic curiosities, social awareness, and understanding of perspective taking?</p>	
<p>Slide 20</p>	<p>Perspective Taking</p> <p>The third practice in classrooms discussions is perspective taking. Perspective taking involves thoughtfully considering perspectives that differ from one’s own and garnering sufficient information about the related experiences that shaped those perspectives to converse about them or issues related to them with respect and sensitivity. Perspective taking helps us to explore and better understand how others are experiencing the world and how we can avoid misinterpreting their opinions, thoughts, and behaviors.</p> <p>Our ability to consider and integrate new or unfamiliar information into our existing repertoire of knowledge has major implications for our learning experiences. Thus, perspective taking is an important skill. Teaching perspective taking calls on you as a teacher to (a) reflect on your own abilities to hear and appreciate different perspectives and (b) use strategies to tackle content that is difficult to explain.</p> <p>Consider, if you will, moments in which ideas put forth in a classroom discussion are diminished, criticized, or rejected because of conflicting views held by others. Without your skillful facilitation, the different opinions of students may escalate into heated discussions, arguments, or worse. So, it is critical to establish norms that engender openness, free and respectful expression, opportunities for posing questions and reflecting on responses, and possibilities for amicable disagreement. Of equal importance is your capacity to</p>	<p>3 minutes</p>

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	foster perspective taking by modeling and effectively managing respectful exchanges among students.	
<p>Slide 21 (Activity)</p>	<p>Perspective Taking (Activity)</p> <p>Let’s consider how we might use perspective taking in a third-grade science class. The lesson is about predators and prey. The assignment is as follows:</p> <p>First, have students identify one animal that fits the definition of “prey.” For example, maybe a spider. Have students draw a cartoon to illustrate the spider’s experience with one of its predators, perhaps a snake. In the blank thought bubbles provided, have students write a script from the spider’s perspective as a prey.</p> <p>Next, reverse the role of the spider, in which it is now a predator to an insect. Have students draw a cartoon in which the spider acts naturally as a predator. In the blank thought bubbles provided, have students write a script from the spider’s perspective as a predator.</p> <p>Be prepared to discuss what you learned about perspective taking.</p> <p>It is not uncommon for academic literature, research, or current events and the classroom discussion around it to further perspective taking. Debatable topics certainly require students to think deeply about and consider various perspectives.</p>	<p>5 minutes</p>
<p>Slide 22</p>	<p>Accountable Talk and Conversation Moves</p> <p>The fourth classroom discussion practice is accountable talk. Fisher and Frey (2013) refer to accountable talk as a mechanism for fostering meaningful classroom discussions and academic discourse and debate that helps students cultivate the habits necessary for perspective taking, specifically to help students determine the degree to which their peers’ ideas are similar to or differ from their own. Using accountable talk, students participate in peer-led,</p>	<p>5 minutes</p>

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	<p>collaborative discussions enriched by their own reasoning, details from text, and clearly articulated personal contributions that propel the conversation forward. As the discussion ensues, students are, by nature of the accountable process, positioned to hear, understand, and appreciate the contributions of their peers and, in doing so, engage in perspective taking.</p> <p>By scaffolding the use of sentence frames that help students organize their thoughts during discussions, you can develop in them habits associated with accountable talk. For example, to help students take note of certain types of information and make substantive contributions to a classroom discussion, you may make certain conversational moves. These moves require students to frame their thoughts and comments about what they have read, heard, or observed during the discussion. For example, to get a student to note a point of relevance, you may use a move called “marking” by saying, “That’s an important point.” To help students clarify their contributions to the discussion, you may use a “verifying and clarifying” move and ask, “So are you saying ...?” In doing so, you enable students to more clearly express their thoughts, follow or summarize key points in the discussion, expound on ideas or ask for them to be clarified, or link their contributions to the content of the classroom discussion or text.</p> <p>To help students accrue the greatest benefit, accountable talk mechanisms should be introduced as early in the academic year as possible, preferably during the first month of school, and they should form the basis for continuing classroom discourse.</p>	
<p>Slide 23 (Activity)</p>	<p>Perspective Taking and Accountable Talk (Activity)</p> <p>To help you plan for effectively facilitating perspective taking during classroom discussions, as well as review specific conversation moves you can use in the</p>	<p>5 minutes</p>

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	classroom, complete and review <i>Handout 5: Perspective Taking and Accountable Talk</i> .	
Slide 24	<p>Instructional Routines That Promote Good Discussions</p> <p>Finally, let’s review three instructional routines that promote students’ use of textual evidence in discussions. These routines are annotation, text rendering, and Socratic seminars. The use of these routines helps students manage their emotions when tackling complex topics and aids students in participating in discussions with confidence; as they are using a problem-solving strategy that is grounded in evidence and the ability to frame arguments with factual information.</p> <p>Annotation helps students solidify their thinking about a given topic or issue; organize their thoughts prior to the discussion; and monitor any shifts in their thinking, attitudes, and opinions that can link back to the text, hence furthering their sense of social self-awareness. An example would involve tracking one’s ideas about text by making notes within the text,</p> <p>Text rendering is typically used with reading that is relatively short but dense or ambiguous in meaning. It requires that students attend to the textual details to arrive at a “big picture” understanding; it also helps students engage in responsible problem solving. An example would involve identifying and succinctly summarizing the essence of a document, perhaps by noting a sentence or phrase perceived as meaningful.</p> <p>Socratic seminars involve reading, writing, questioning, and listening, and also calls for the teacher to act as more of a facilitator than an instructor. As the facilitator, the teacher poses a question meant to prompt students to engage with the text to develop their general understanding of the text, which will be clarified through the finer details of the work. Students</p>	3 minutes

Materials	Content	Time
	<p>read the text based on the question and compose a short reflective piece before the discussion. They come to class ready to participate in discussions, during which they sit in a circle or square facing their classmates and the teacher, and they collaborate to deconstruct and reconstruct the text. Norms are established in advance so that students know that they are engaging in a conversation that <i>includes</i> the teacher rather than being led by the teacher.</p>	
<p>Slide 25</p>	<p>Additional Tips for Classroom Discussions</p> <p>There are some additional tips to keep in mind that we discussed throughout this module that will help you engage in classroom discussions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Change the role of the teacher and the students in classroom discussions. ▪ Ensure students have the appropriate content knowledge before the classroom discussion to engage during the classroom discussion. For example, for a reading or research assignment, provide students with opportunities to think about discussion prompts before the discussion. ▪ Teach students explicit skills to engage in classroom discussions, such as elaborating on classroom discussions, responding to others without being combative, disagreeing respectfully, and actively seeking to understand different points of view. Let students know which skills they are learning. ▪ Support students in asking good questions—that is, questions that help clarify or deepen understanding and questions that express curiosity. ▪ Give students time to think during classroom discussions. You may want to model what you are thinking so students know how to target their thinking. ▪ Help students who are less likely to speak or do not speak regularly in the classroom. Ask these students 	<p>5 Minutes</p>

Materials	Content	Time
	<p>to organize their thoughts by writing before they speak or have nonparticipating students respond to other students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Try to avoid praising or giving evaluative feedback during classroom discussions. Instead, encourage students to provide each other with feedback during the discussions. If students offer wrong information or are off topic, ask them to offer evidence or ask clarifying questions. ▪ Ensure that students know the norms, expectations, and structure of the classroom discussion. ▪ Provide time after the discussion for students to self-assess and self-reflect. 	
<p>Slide 26</p>	<p>Reflect and Plan for the Future</p> <p>To help you plan for facilitating more effective discussions, complete <i>Handout 6: Reflection on Classroom Discussions and Additional Information</i>. It contains some questions for reflection that can lead to concrete action steps to impact your use of classroom discussion procedures. This handout also provides additional resources that you can use to find more information about classroom discussions, as well as the references found in this module.</p> <p>As you consider your own plan of action, keep in mind the following helpful hints.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Set realistic goals. Identify realistic goals for yourself in implementing classroom discussions. Classroom discussions can be difficult to implement effectively, and you want to ensure that you and your students are ready to engage. In addition, be mindful of what classroom discussions look like depending on the grade you teach. 2. Involve students. Let the students know you want to try out new strategies that will help them be better learners and more engaging conversationalists in their own lives. Identify discussions that the students 	<p>2 minutes</p>

Materials	Content	Time
	<p>would like to have in addition to content-based discussions.</p> <p>3. Be reflective. Based on the benefits associated with effective classroom discussions and the related strategies detailed in this module, what changes do you plan to make in planning, facilitating, and evaluating discussions in your classroom? How will you know if the changes you make are beneficial to your students?</p> <p>If you're reviewing this information in relation to better understanding the TEAM Rubric, consider how you might share your action steps with coaches, mentor teachers, administrators, or those who might observe your class. They will benefit from knowing your efforts and may be able to provide feedback on your actions.</p>	
<p>Slide 27 Evaluation</p>	<p>Module Evaluation</p> <p>The Tennessee Department of Education developed this online module in collaboration with the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders and the Appalachia Regional Comprehensive Center, which are funded by the U.S. Department of Education. If you want to find out more information about the online modules or about social and personal competencies, please contact the office of safe and supportive schools, division of student support services at the Tennessee Department of Education.</p> <p>Thank you again for participating in the Classroom Discussion online module. We encourage you to complete the online evaluation of this learning module. We also encourage you to review the other online modules that provide knowledge, tools, resources, and strategies to embed social and personal learning in your classroom.</p> <p>Classroom Discussions Module Evaluation: http://www.questionpro.com/t/ALa5QZYGcX</p>	<p>2 minutes</p>
<p>Slide 28</p>	<p>References</p>	

Materials	Content	Time
Slide 29	Conclusion	