

# Academic Discourse Strategies, Protocols & Techniques

1. **3-2-1**
  - 3 things you discovered
    - 2 interesting things
    - 1 question that lingers
  - 3 differences between \_\_\_ & \_\_\_
    - 2 effects of \_\_\_ on \_\_\_
    - 1 question on the topic
  - 3 key words
    - 2 new ideas
    - 1 thing to contemplate further
  - Mark 3 most significant passages
    - Mark 2 connections you can make to the text
    - 1 questions to facilitation a discussion
2. **3-minute Pause**

Designed to offer a chance to stop, reflect and make connections and seek clarification about new ideas/topics.

  - I changed my attitude about...
  - I became more aware of...
  - I was surprised about...
  - I related to...
  - I concurred with...
3. **Carousel**

Use this strategy to share information in an interactive format. First, divide and assign the group into smaller groups based on how many posters you have. Place 4-5 posters with information and have participants a) independently read the information, b) discuss in a small group, and c) process the information by writing a question, comment, or application. Assign a designated amount of time to each station and have groups rotate after time is up. Use an online "countdown timer" for participants to see and hear.
4. **Jigsaw Groups**

Jigsaw is a well-established method for encouraging group sharing and learning of specific content. This technique can be used as an instructional activity across several days and is best to use when there is a large amount of content to teach.

  - a. Introduce the technique and the topic to be studied.
  - b. Assign each student to a "home group" of 3-5 participants who reflect a range of reading abilities.
  - c. Determine a set of reading selections and assign one selection to each student.
  - d. Create "expert groups" that consist of participants across "home groups" who will read the same selection.
  - e. Give all participants a framework for managing their time on the various parts of the jigsaw task.
  - f. Provide key questions to help the "expert groups" gather information in their particular area.
  - g. Provide materials and resources necessary for all participants to learn about their topics and become "experts".
  - h. Discuss the rules for reconvening into "home groups" and provide guidelines as each "expert" reports the information learned.
  - i. Prepare a summary chart or graphic organizer for each "home group" as a guide for organizing the experts' information report.
  - j. Remind participants that "home group" members are responsible to learn all content from one another.
- k. Next, ask participants to share interesting hobbies, interests, things they like to do. Recorder collects all items. Tell groups to pick one thing on their list and use it in the sentence, "Learning is like \_\_\_\_\_ because . . ."
- l. After three minutes, STOP. Next step is for each group to share their sentence. Give them a minute or two, and then share by table group.
5. **Linear Array**

This strategy is used to gather participant feedback. Ask each person to write one word on a post-it that summarizes how the training/class/day went. Draw a line on a board with a (-) negative sign, (0) neutral sign, and (+) positive sign. Participants should get up and place their word on the line based on the type of emotion the word evokes.
6. **Line Up**

Use this strategy to activate prior knowledge or informally assess a group. Ask participant to self-assess based on a question that is posed. Designate a space in the room for members with low responses to stand and for members with high responses to stand. Others will form a line representing their response in relationship to those two points.
7. **M.I.P.**

Use this strategy at the end of a session or activity as a way for participants for capture the most important point/idea. Participants can write their M.I.P. on a post-it and place on a door/table on the way out or share with the group.
8. **Mix-Freeze-Pair-Share/Stir the Classroom\*\***

Use this strategy as a sponge/activator. Have a large group get up and mix. When signaled, they should freeze and pair with the nearest person. Ask pairs to first question and have them share their responses. Mix and freeze again and ask second question. Continue with all questions. \*\*Used with music
9. **Penny for Your Thoughts**

Use this as an activator strategy to engage and connect groups.

  - Distribute one penny to each participant.
  - Ask participants to share a story (personal, professional, political, social, etc.) that connects to the year of the penny.
10. **Role Play**

Use this strategy to help participants understand ideas from a different point of view.

  - Assign an identity to each person in the group.
  - Listen to the scenario.
  - Respond to the scenario from your given identity.
11. **Say Something**

This strategy provides participants with opportunities to construct meaning and monitor their understanding. It establishes a very clear

and simple method for helping participants make clear connections to text, especially when the material is especially complex.

- Participants are assigned a partner.
- An assigned portion of the text is read either silently or orally.
- When they have finished, they turn to their partner and "say something" about what they have just read. This might involve summarizing, connecting, or asking each other questions.

## 12. Mathematical Symbol Meeting Partners

Use this strategy to help participants create learning partners. Have them choose partners they don't ordinarily work with or partners not at their table.

## 13. 5-3-1

Use this strategy as a sponge/activator.

- List 5 words or phrases that bring back the experience of the last session. (These may be content connections, feelings, recollections, vocabulary, descriptions, etc.)
- Share your items with your table group and choose THREE.
- Now, as a group, chose ONE word which captures the essence of the last session -- it may be one of your three, or a different word entirely. Be ready to share your choice

## 14. Four Corners

Use this strategy to gather information about how participants feel about a specific idea or to gauge interest in a topic. Set up options or choices at four different corners of the rooms and ask participants to select one corner. Once there, participants discuss their choice.

## 15. In Your Pocket

Use this strategy as welcome activity. Each participant takes an item from his/her pocket, bag, or purse, as uses it as a metaphor for what they hope for in the training. For example, "I hope today is like my chapstick – smooth and refreshing!"

## 16. Metacognitive Markers

"Self-thinking" markers to improve comprehension. As skilled readers, we are constantly agreeing, questioning, connecting, etc. with the text. For emerging readers, this is something we have to teach them to do. These markers help them monitor their thinking as they read.

## 17. Paired Verbal Fluency

Use this strategy to allow participants to discuss a topic with structured time limits.

- Pairs designate an A and B
- When signaled, A will start talking about the given topic for the allotted amount of time.
- When signaled, person A will stop talking and person B will start talking.
- Pattern continues for three rounds with different time allotments for each round.

## 18. Text-Rendering Protocol

Purpose: to collaboratively construct meaning, clarify, and expand thinking about a text.

Reread a text and select meaningful: Sentence, phrase, word and share out. \*Words can become a poem, gallery walk to distill the "meaning" of a text.

## 19. A-Z

This strategy can be used at the beginning of a training to access prior knowledge about a topic or at the end to assess what participants have learned. One a paper, participants list ideas/words/phrases about a selected topic for a set amount of minutes. Participants can add to their list by sharing with a partner or with a whole group share-out.

## 20. Reflection Prompts

Participants write out before sharing with an elbow partner or table talk.

At first I thought....Now I know...

Strengths and Stretches

+ and –

## 21. Save the Last Word for Me

Text-based protocol to clarify and deepen our thinking about text that we read

## 22. Reciprocal Teaching

Reciprocal teaching refers to an activity in which participants become the teacher in small group reading sessions. Teacher models, then help participants learn to guide group discussion using four strategies: summarizing, question generating, clarifying and predicting. Once participants have learned the strategies, they take turns assuming the role of the teacher in leading dialogue about what has been read.

## 23. Concept Sort

Use this strategy to introduce participants to the vocabulary of a new topic or book. Facilitators provide participants with a list of terms or concepts from reading material. Participants place words into different categories based on each word's meaning. Categories can be defined by the facilitator or by the participants. When used before reading, concept sorts provide an opportunity for the facilitator to see what his or her participants already know about the given content. When used after reading, facilitators can assess their participants' understanding of the concepts presented.

## 24. Connection Affection

Use this strategy to help participants create a metaphor or simile based on the topic of discussion. Use a sentence frame to guide the connection. For example, "Since we last met, \_\_\_\_\_ has been like (insert noun) because ..."

## 25. Clock/Appointment Partners

Make "appointments" with colleagues using the 3, 6, 9, 12 of a clock. Student circulates and sets a time to meet with four other participants, writing their name down on the corresponding line.

## 26. Interview Grids

Give participants a grid and have them take the grids as they talk to other participants. The left column is for student names and the top row has several prompts or questions. Participants interview each other to fill in another row.

## 27. "Find someone who..."

Create pairs using...

Famous First and last names

Events and Years

Sentences with missing words

Split up sentences

Analogies

### 28. Stand Up, Hand Up, Pair Up

When ready to discuss with a colleague, participants stand up, raise hand. Individuals with raised hands will locate one another and pair up to discuss prompt/question.

### 29. Give one, Get one

Tell participants to walk around and find a partner. Each partner "gives," or shares, items from his or her list. For example, Partner A shares his/her responses until Partner B hears something that is not already on his/her list. Partner B writes the new response in the right-hand column on the paper, along with Partner A's name. Once Partner B has "gotten" one, the roles switch. Participants repeat this process with other peers until time runs out.

### 30. Novel Ideas Only

Participants write down 3 ideas, everyone stands up. Facilitator randomly calls on students to share, students sit when they hear one of their ideas 3 times. The last one standing "wins"!

### 31. Opinion Stations

Designate 4 stations in the room: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

- Participants are given a statement and asked to move to the station that matches their position
- Students discuss their reasons and evidence
- Half of the group crosses over to the opposite position and each group discusses

### 32. Think, Pair, Share & Square

Participants think about their response to question or prompt, at signal turn to partner and take turns listening to one another. Connect with another set of partners (square) and share with opposite partner.

### 33. Numbered Heads

Number off 1-4. Facilitator asks a series of questions, one at a time. Participants discuss possible answers for a set amount of time (30-90 seconds). Facilitator calls on a number (1-4) and all participants with that number raise hand. That person answers on behalf of the team. Continue with questions and rotating numbers until review is complete.

### 34. 30-Second Speech

Participants make a bulleted list of ideas to convey during speech. Pair up and partner A goes first for 30 seconds. Partner B sets timer for 15 seconds and recaps what they heard.

### 35. 1-3-6 Protocol

1: Students think and write independently to prompt/question

3: Gather in groups of three to share ideas;

Each person must share

Add to your own paper

6: 2 groups of 3 gather for final discussion

One from each small group shares

Negotiation of ideas

Spokesperson for whole group class debrief

### 36. Passing Notes

Student writes to prompt/question and sign their name and fold the paper. Student either passes to another student or teacher collects and redistributes. New student reads letter, and writes response to first letter and signs name. Repeat two or three more times. Letters are returned to original writer and student reflects on comments and debriefs with whole class.

### 37. Idea Wave

Participants lists 3-4 ideas about the topic:

A volunteer begins wave by sharing one idea

Participant on right shares another idea

Each participant to right shares until wave has gone around

### 38. Equity Sticks (Cards)

Write each student's name or # on stick and place in jar. Pull stick to call on student for response. Return stick to jar (so students may be called on repeatedly!)

### 39. Gallery Walk

Select important quotes, concepts, projects, etc. to post on separate pieces of paper on walls around the room. Students walk around room reading each piece and taking notes. Students return to seats and select one that intrigues them to write about for two minutes. Students share writing with partner or table groups.

### 40. Mystery Envelopes

Hand each group a "mystery envelope". Inside is an index card with a question for the group to answer.

- What is the single most important word from this reading?
- What do you think are the most controversial statements in the text?
- How can you connect the topics from today to previous topics discussed in class?

### 41. "Sole Mates"

Participants find partners based on similar footwear. They engage in a walk and talk about a topic, question or prompt. The walk is timed (no more than five mins) and partners can openly share thinking.

### 42. Philosophical Chairs

- Set up classroom chairs in a "u" shape, with only a few chairs perpendicular to the two longer facing parallel rows. One long row is for the pro side, one for the con side and the smaller row is for undecideds. (Or have students stand in a U=shape, based on their position on the topic.
- Present a statement to students and have them take a position in the U-either pro, con or neutral.
- Someone on the pro side begins by offering one reason they agree with the statement.
- Someone on the con side then presents a reason for disagreeing with the statement.
- Students in the undecided or neutral camp can ask questions or make statements anytime.
- The same person cannot speak twice in a row for their side. They must wait until at least one other person in their camp makes a comment.
- Undecideds or neutrals can move to the pro or con side as the discussion progresses.
- After the discussion has run its course, have students do a written reflection of the salient points and their ultimate position on the topic.

### 43. Tea Party

Tea party engages participants as they circulate around the room sharing phrases from a text they are about to read and then make predictions about it in small groups. To prepare, the teacher selects key sentences and phrases from the text the class is about to read, and write them on 3x5 cards. Students circulate the room, and as they share sentences and phrases, they are piecing together fragments of information together, developing schema for constructing the gist of the text.

#### 44. The Four A's Protocol

The group reads the text independently with these four lenses:

1. What ASSUMPTIONS does the author of the text hold?
2. What do you AGREE with in the text?
3. What do you want to ARGUE with in the text?
4. What parts of the text do you want to ASPIRE to?

#### 45. Lines of Communication

1. Form 2 lines facing each other. Designate as "A" line and "B" line
2. When prompted, partners share idea with each other.
3. When signaled, line "A" shifts one person to left. Line "B" remains in place.
4. Continue until all talking points are covered.

#### 46. Three Minute Review

1. Students should be sitting in pairs or small group.
2. At any point during instruction, prompt students that it is time for "Three Min. Review"
3. 1 min--pairs review what has been learned
4. 2 min--ask each other to clarify or extend learning
5. If desired, teacher can take additional minute to have groups share with whole class.

#### 47. Valley of Values/Take a Stand/Continuum

1. One end of the room is designated as "agree" and opposite is "disagree". The center is the "valley".
2. Teacher provides statement about content, character, issue, concept.
3. Students move to one of the sides of the room, if undecided move to valley.
4. Each side has an opportunity to get together and discuss why they decided to stand at that side.
5. Students share their reasoning.
6. Students in valley must make a decision to move to one side of the room.

#### 48. Wagon Wheel

1. Have students form an inner and outer circle facing each other. Can be divided into 2 or 3 smaller wagon wheels.
2. Pose a question and have students facing each other discuss their response.
3. The outside wheel "Turns" to the right.
4. Students either respond to same question with new partner or respond to new question.

#### 49. Socratic Seminar

Prior to the discussion:

- Students read the text and engage in activities/notes to check initial understanding
- Give students prompts/elements to begin to explore
- Teach the protocol for the discussion, modeling appropriate behaviors

During the discussion:

- Arrange seats in either a square or circle

- Review norms and expectations
- Pose a question to start the discussion or have a student pose one
- Questions/responses are addressed to the group, not the teacher
- Teacher or identified student tracks main points
- Teacher redirects if conversation gets off track

After the discussion:

- Debrief the process- how did we do with norms, keeping on track, citing evidence...
- Debrief the content- what major understandings emerged?

#### 50. Signal Cards/ Traffic Lights

- a. Distribute red, yellow, and green index cards to all students.
- b. Pose a question and have students rate their understanding or level of completion holding up one of the color coded cards (Red= didn't understand, didn't finish..etc... need help; Yellow = still have some questions; Green=I'm good to go)
- c. Depending on responses, either address issues whole group, if many have the same problem or pair students up to give feedback to one another
- d. Red cards can be pulled in to work with the teacher if needed, while greens and yellows work together or move on

#### 51. Wingman

- a. Set up groups of at least 3 or more.
- b. Delegate one student in each group as the Wingman.
- c. This student will serve as the active listener and note taker.
- d. Give the student a handout (see example) with explicit things to note about the discussion, for example:
  - a. Tally the number of times each student speaks (to check for equal opportunities and prevent one person from dominating)
  - b. Tally the number of times each person presents the desired information from the task
  - c. Note who is off task or topic
- e. Determine who makes the most compelling argument in the discussion
- f. Keep track of textual support given
- g. Wingmen then share findings with the class as the class debriefs each group's ideas.

52. \_\_\_\_\_

53. \_\_\_\_\_

54. \_\_\_\_\_

55. \_\_\_\_\_