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Tools for Engaging Reticent Contributors in Class Discussions of Texts

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Lead the Way to Literacy Webinar 9.17.19



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ALL Students are AEL: Academic English Learners

- Academic English is not a natural language that we acquire through extensive listening and social interaction.
- Academic English-- including vocabulary, syntax, grammar and register distinctions-- must be explicitly and systematically **taught**, not just **caught**.




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Long-Term AEL Student Reflections

"The class where I think I am a passive person is my English class because I can't express what I want. I can't say as many things as I want to say. Yes, I do say a little bit, but not how I would like to. I don't feel like participate because I am afraid to say something wrong or pronounce a word badly. I don't like to be wrong, and I think it is better to be silent than to be wrong. That's why I think I am a passive learner in English class, because I don't want to be shamed."

Consuela, 9th grade, in U.S. schools since 3rd grade




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The Neglected "R" in Instruction for Academic English Learners

Which "R" is frequently missing from lessons for AEL students?


- **R**igor
- **R**elevance
- **R**elationships
- **R**esponses



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Which of these frequently reticent lesson contributors do you serve?

- a) Struggling readers
- b) English learners
- c) Learners with special needs
- d) Introverted learners
- e) Learners from low-income households
- f) Many or all of the above



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Key CCSS for ELA/Literacy (Grades 3-12) Academic Interaction Standard:

■ Speaking/Listening/Collaboration

- **SL1:** Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations (one-on-one, in groups, teacher-led) with varied partners on grade **(3-12)** topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.



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Types of Academic Interactions (Career-College Readiness Standards)

- **Discussion:** exchanging ideas on an assigned topic with a classmate or group
- **Collaboration:** working together with a classmate or group to achieve or create a joint response, text, solution or project
- **Debate:** a formal, competitive argument on a specific topic between classmates with a goal of demonstrating reasoning



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Throughout K-8 schooling, scholars have been directed to:

- Share with your neighbor.
- Think-Pair-Share.
- Turn and talk.
- Whisper to your friend.
- Buddy buzz.
- Talk to your partner.



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Conversation: Defined

- **Conversation:** an informal oral exchange of news, ideas and opinions between two or more people
- **Synonyms:** talk, chat, gossip, confab, gabfest, heart-to-heart, chit chat
- **Goals:** getting to know someone, catching up, showing interest, unwinding, easing tension, killing time



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Informal Conversations are Characterized by Use of...

I like summer. Um...cause I get to do fun stuff. Like no homework. And hang out with my cousins. Have barbecues. Go to new places.

- brief phrases and sentence fragments
- imprecise, everyday word choices
- incorrect grammar
- fillers: *yeah, like, um, well, you know, so, OK*
- limited elaboration; reliance on context



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Formal Academic Interactions are Characterized by Use of...

Summer is my favorite season. I appreciate the time off from homework. I always enjoy playing sports and going camping at Big Bear Lake with my cousins. Like my classmate Alex, I also look forward to barbecues with close family friends at our local park.

- complete and varied sentences
- precise words: topic-focused & high-utility
- correct grammar
- elaboration
- demonstration of attentive listening



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Academic Language to State an Opinion

Everyday English

- I think ___. I don't think ___.

Academic English

- I think ___ because ___.
- I (firmly, strongly) believe ___.
- In my opinion, ___.
- From my perspective, ___.
- I am convinced ___.



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Academic Language to Compare and Contrast

Everyday English

- Mine's the same. Mine's different.

Academic English

- My idea is similar to ___'s (Monica's).
- My idea is much like ___'s (Eric's).
- My idea is different than ___'s (Ken's).
- My idea differs from ___'s (Angela's).



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Academic Language to Build Upon Ideas

Everyday English

- Yeah, but also...

Academic English

- My idea builds upon (Name's).
- A point well taken. I would add that ___.
- I see where (you/Name) are coming from, but I also think that ___.
- I agree, and I would point out that ___.



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Response Frames to Promote Use of Academic Register

- What challenges do recent immigrants face?
- One challenge recent immigrants face is ___ (verb + ing) *learning a new language*.
- Another common challenge many recent immigrants experience is ___ (verb + ing).

Precise Word Bank:

VERBS: finding, understanding, having, making, earning
NOUNS: school, friend, job, culture, home, salary



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Sentence Starters ≠ Response Frames

- **Sentence Starter:** One productive way is ___.
- **Response Frame:** One productive way to respond to a school bully is to ___ (**base verb:** tell, avoid, try, ask).
- **Model Response:** One productive way to respond to a school bully is to **confide** in a friend.



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Echo-Reading ROUTINE: Goals

- **Echo-Reading:** Phrase-cued choral reading of a text sentence or brief model response to build 1) accurate oral fluency and 2) reading fluency.

One productive way... to respond to a school bully...is to confide...in a friend.



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Partner Interaction: Discuss



- **Share your response with your partner.**
 - 1) **Say** it first to rehearse.
 - 2) **Say** it again with expression, like a scholar.
 - 3) **Restate** your partner's idea.

So your example is _.

Yes. That's right.



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Partner Interaction: Discuss



- **Discuss your response with your partner.**
 - 1) **Say** it once using the frame.
 - 2) **Say** it again with expression.
 - 3) **Elaborate** with a (reason, example, text evidence).
 - 4) **Restate** your partner's idea.

So your response is __ because __.

That's right.

Not exactly. What I said was __.



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Repeated Sharing with a Frame Benefits for AEL Contributors

- Builds in verbal rehearsal for potential whole-class reporting
- Develops reading and oral fluency
- Improves vocabulary and grammar use
- Engenders greater verbal confidence
- Addresses more language domains: speaking, listening, reading, writing



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Repeated Sharing with a Frame Benefits for AEL Listeners

- Provides opportunities to accurately process the speaker's message
- Develops listening stamina
- Focuses attention on both content and language forms
- Builds in accountability for showing comprehension and providing feedback



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Academic Interactions Require A Scholarly Voice

- **Speak 2x slower** and **2x louder** than you normally speak.
- **Pause** after phrases.
- **Emphasize** key words.



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Class Discussion: Report



Speaking Tasks:

- Use your public speaking voice: 3x louder.
- Use the response frame to report your idea.

Listening Tasks:

- Listen for an interesting or original example.
- Compare and build upon ideas.

My idea is similar to __ (Name's).

My idea builds upon __ (Name's).




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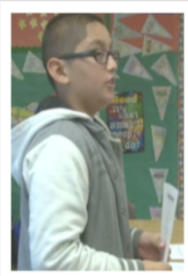
Attentive Listening Frames

An **interesting** example I heard was ____.

An **original** example I heard was ____.


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Whole Class Reporting



Public Speaking Voice:


- **Project** 3x louder than face-to-face.
- **Pause** after phrases.
- **Emphasize** key words.

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Public Speaking Voice Rehearsal

Drawing from the text, many students study a second language to **improve** employment opportunities.

In my experience, some students enroll in world language courses to **meet** graduation requirements.

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Structured, Accountable Discussions Engage ALL Students Not Just the "Professional Participants"



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Eliciting Diverse Responses: AVOID!

- Who knows...?
- Who wants to report out?
- What do you think, Name?
- Who can remind us/me...?
- Anyone else...?
- Can anyone tell me...?


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Prompt: **Brainstorm**

- What are potential downsides to relying upon habitual volunteers and random selection devices to enlist participation?

1) **Habitual Volunteers:** _____

2) **Random Selection** (Apps, Equity Sticks, etc.): _____

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Possible Downsides Equity Sticks & Random Selection Apps

Equity Sticks



- Students are preoccupied with and anxious about _____.
- Students perceive teacher is only after the _____ answer.
- Students _____ once they have contributed.
- A representative _____ of responses may not be _____.
- Volunteers not selected feel _____ and _____.

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Structuring Inclusive Participation: Preselected, Random, Voluntary

- Preselect 1-2 students to initiate class discussion.
- Invite a reticent participant with a strong response to contribute when you ask for volunteers.
- Encourage partner nominations.
- Invite all partner As/Bs, 1s/2s to stand and report.
- Randomly select 1-2 students using name cards.
- Allow a reporter to select the next (i.e., "popcorn").
- Ask for volunteers from sections of the classroom.

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Monitoring and Preselecting Initial Contributors



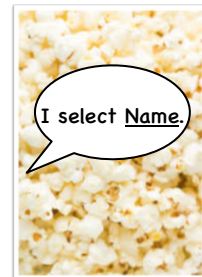
Preselect 1-2 Reporters:

- a student with an average, representative response, not an exceptional response
- a student who is less proficient or confident
- a student who needs an extra reason to engage

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"Popcorn" Response Frames: Student Selected Reporters

- I select ____.
- I nominate ____.
- I would like to hear from ____.
- I would appreciate a contribution from ____.



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Soliciting Volunteers AFTER Preselected & Randomly Selected

- "We have time for 3 additional contributions. I'd appreciate one from the front, center and back of the room. You have 3 options:
 - 1) Share your original response.
 - 2) Share something new you considered after hearing your classmates' responses.
 - 3) Share your partner's response but acknowledge that it is different and your partner's contribution.

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Elicit Responses Productively from English Learners and Reticent Readers

- Kinsella, K. (Mar. 2015). Fostering Academic Interaction. *Language Magazine*, 24-31.



Alternatives to “Share Your Idea”

- Who can ___ (add/offer/contribute/share) (a different/an alternative/an additional) ___.

response	point of view	example
contribution	perspective	reason
perspective	solution	explanation
interpretation	conclusion	reaction
analysis	approach	process



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Attentive Listening Frames



An **interesting fact** I heard was _

A **thoughtful response** I heard was _

A **relevant example** I heard was _



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Banned Words in K-12 Classrooms (Regularly Used by Teachers as Feedback)

- Good
- Nice
- Awesome
- Interesting
- Great
- Super
- OK
- Excellent



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Thoughtful Phrases to Comment on Discussion Contributions

- a relevant example
- a convincing reason
- an insightful observation
- a well-supported opinion
- a clearly explained process
- very appropriate content
- very precise vocabulary use



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Precise Adjectives: Providing Feedback

Your response was (very, quite, particularly) _

Adjectives

- original
- unique
- thoughtful
- creative
- insightful
- thought-provoking
- articulate
- detailed

Meanings

- new and different
- special, not like anything else
- showing careful thinking
- showing imaginative thinking
- showing deep understanding
- stimulating, making others think
- using precise, artful language
- including many facts



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The End

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