

# Discussion Strategies for Online Learning (ELA)

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## Essential Question(s)

- What does discussion look like in an online ELA classroom?
- What does active engagement in discussion look like online?

## Summary

Discussions are a natural, common practice in ELA classrooms. It is a daily challenge to engage students face-to-face, but engaging students online can feel especially difficult. This presentation introduces strategies that can effectively spark ideas for both face-to-face and virtual discussions: First Turn/Last Turn; Chalk Talk; Collaborative Word Cloud; and I Think/We Think. Teachers can use these four discussion strategies either synchronously or asynchronously to promote student participation. Learn effective ways to encourage conversation in the classroom.

## Learning Goals

Participants will implement a variety of synchronous and asynchronous discussion strategies to improve and enhance substantive student conversations.

## Attachments

- Chalk Talk Strategy Slide—Discussion Strategies For Online Learning ELA.pptx
- Group Strategy Slides—Discussion Strategies for Online Learning ELA.pptx
- I Think We Think Graphic Organizer—Discussion Strategies For Online Learning ELA.docx
- I Think We Think Graphic Organizer—Discussion Strategies For Online Learning ELA.pdf
- In Person Session Presentation Slides—Discussion Strategies for Online Learning ELA.pptx
- Note Catcher—Discussion Strategies for Online Learning ELA.docx
- Note Catcher—Discussion Strategies for Online Learning ELA.pdf
- Strategy Reflection Slides—Discussion Strategies for Online Learning ELA.pptx
- Virtual Session Presentation Slides—Discussion Strategies for Online Learning ELA.pptx

## Materials

- Computers with internet access
- In-Person Slides (attached)
- Virtual Session Slides (attached)
- Note Catcher (attached)
- I Think/We Think Graphic Organizer (attached)
- Chalk Talk Strategy Slide (make a forced copy)
- Group Strategy Slides (attached)
- Strategy Reflection Slides (attached)
- Polling Source (Mentimeter, Google Form, or other)

# Engage

### Facilitator's Note

Have the **Note Catcher** handout available for participants. Before the presentation, choose a polling source and set up the polls for the beginning and end of the session. If any codes are needed for the polls by the participants, consider including the codes in the slide presentation.

Welcome participants and briefly introduce yourself and the professional development session.

Open the **In-Person** or **Virtual Presentation Slides**. Use the slide deck that is most appropriate for the session.

Go to **slide 3**. Show the infographic and give directions for a "Quick Poll." Read the question on the slide, "*On a scale of 1-5, how much do you identify with this image?*" Explain the scale and provide the participants with access to the pre-created poll. Give them an opportunity to respond:

- 1= I do not relate at all.
- 5= I relate completely.

Review the results of the poll with participants. Ask for volunteers to discuss their responses.

Display **slide 4.** After participants have discussed their place on the scale of 1-5, introduce the strategy, This Session Will Be a Success If . . . . Ask participants to respond candidly to the question: "*What would make this session successful for you?*"

### Virtual Options

If delivery is virtual, provide participants with a link to the Note Catcher attachment.

For a virtual meeting, you may have participants share out loud, put their responses in the chat, or add this question to the pre-created poll. Other virtual options would be to have the whole group type responses into a shared Google Doc or discussion board.

Show **slide 5**. Review the Essential Questions that will guide the session. If there is discussion, ask a participant to scribe the responses.

Show **slide 6.** Review session objective to provide a roadmap of where you will go together during the session. At this point in the session, let participants know what to expect from the session.

Show **slide 7** to review the cognitive load consideration.

# Explore

**Embedded video**

https://youtube.com/watch?v=oqVTr8MZicQ

Show **slide 8**. Introduce the video and let participants know that they will be asked to respond to the video in a group activity later in the session. Show the video "Teacherless Online Classroom-Discussion Bored (sic)".

Show **slide 9**. When participants have watched the video, briefly introduce the four strategies that they will explore in the session:

- Collaborative Word Clouds
- Chalk Talk
- I Think/We Think
- First Turn/Last Turn

### Facilitator's Note

See instructions for Virtual Session Presentation below in the **Virtual Option** block.

Show **slide 10**. Break participants into four groups (or more, depending on the size of the whole group). Assign each group to a different strategy to explore. Provide each group with a copy of the strategy directions (**Group Strategy Slides)**. Ask participants to complete the activity in their groups, using the video as their "text."

- Group 1 will complete a Collaborative Word Cloud activity (Group Strategy Slides, slides 1-4).
- Group 2 will complete a Chalk Talk activity (Group Strategy Slides, slides 5-8).
- Group 3 will complete an I Think/We Think activity (Group Strategy Slides, slides 9-11).
- Group 4 will complete a First Turn/Last Turn activity (Group Strategy Slides, slides 12-13).

Let groups know that they will be sharing out their thoughts about the assigned strategy with the whole group after the activities are completed.

### Technology Note

Each group will need different materials to complete their activities.

- Group 1: Computers with internet and wordart.com.
- Group 2: Computers with internet and the Chalk Talk Google Slide.
- Group 3: Computers with internet, I Think/We Think graphic organizers, and a shared Google Doc.
- Group 4: Computers with internet and document of transcription (text) of the video.

Provide time (about 10-15 minutes) for groups to explore their given activity. Give groups a five-minute and two-minute warning so that they can wrap up their thoughts. Ask groups to choose someone from their group to lead the share out.

### Virtual Option

For online/virtual modification, please see the virtual session slide presentation and follow these instructions:

**For slides 10-25**, read through the information on the slides, which provides an overview of each strategy, an example of the strategy being used, and how the strategy can be used both synchronously and asynchronously.

**Slides 10-13** focus on Collaborative Word Clouds. Consider going to a collaborative word cloud website like wordart.com to show participants how to create a word cloud. If there is time, have participants create a group word cloud together using Mentimeter.

**Slides 14-18** focus on Chalk Talk. Slide 14 summarizes the Chalk Talk strategy. To practice this strategy, watch the video "Teacherless Online Classroom-Discussion Bored (sic)." Before showing the video, ask participants to think about what the big takeaway of the video is based on the title and opening image. Slide 15 reviews the strategy with participants before trying the strategy. Slide 15 includes a linked slide to the Chalk Talk strategy shared document. By making a forced copy for yourself, you can then open the edit settings and allow for collaboration by participants. Share the link with participants so that they can participate in a virtual Chalk Talk.

**Slides 19-22** focus on I Think/We Think. The **Graphic Organizer** for this strategy is included in the materials and can be shared with participants.

**Slides 23-25** focus on First Turn/Last Turn. It includes a video on the strategy to show participants.

### Optional Alternate Video

If the video in the slides does not work, here is a link to an alternate video: Whys and norms - K20 LEARN.

# Explain

**Facilitator's Note:**

The narrative below discussing slides 11-21 is consistent with the "In-Person" Presentation.

**For Virtual Presentation, the slide numbers are not consistent with the slides. Use the Virtual Option above to finish out the slide deck.**

Go to **slide 11**. Collaborative Word Clouds. (Virtual Presentation Slides: **Slides 10-13**).

Ask Group 1 to present on Collaborative Word Clouds. (If more than one group tried Collaborative Word Clouds, ask those groups to present as well.) After the presenters debrief with the group, go to **slide 12** and review how Collaborative Word Clouds can be used synchronously and asynchronously in the classroom.

Go to **slide 13**. Chalk Talk. (Virtual Presentation Slides: **Slides 14-18**).

Ask Group 2 to present on Chalk Talk. (If more than one group tried Chalk Talk, ask those groups to present as well.) After the presenters debrief with the group, go to **slide 14** and review how Chalk Talk can be used synchronously and asynchronously in the classroom.

Go to **slide 15**. I Think/We Think. (Virtual Presentation Slides: **Slides 19-22**).

Ask Group 3 to present on I Think/We Think. (If more than one group tried I Think/We Think, ask those groups to present as well.) After the presenters debrief with the group, go to **slide 16** and review how I Think/We Think can be used synchronously and asynchronously in the classroom.

Go to **slide 17**. First Turn/Last Turn. (Virtual Presentation Slides: **Slides 23-25**).

Ask Group 4 to present on First Turn/Last Turn. (If more than one group tried First Turn/Last Turn, ask those groups to present as well.). After the presenters debrief with the group, go to **slide 18** and review how First Turn/Last Turn can be used synchronously and asynchronously in the classroom.

**Facilitator's Note**

Slides 11, 13, 15, and 17 are to be used during each group presentation for the respective group. For slides 12, 14, 16, and 18, use the respective slide after the group presents to explain the use of the strategy in both synchronous and asynchronous settings.

Take a moment to ask participants to open up their Note Catcher handout to reflect on the instructional strategies explored. Participants may note how each strategy supports authentic instruction. These notes will be an effective reference tool they can take with them after the session.

Go to **slide 19** and review the reflection questions with participants.

**Virtual Option**

Review the reflection questions with participants on **slide 26** in the virtual session slide presentation.

# Extend

Show **slide 19.**

Ask participants to open up the **Strategy Reflection Slides**. Use the Chalk Talk strategy to add ideas to the slides to answer the following questions:

- *Which of these four strategies would you like to implement in your classes?*
- *Do you have a text or topic in mind?*
- *Do you plan to use the strategy synchronously or asynchronously?*

Give participants 5 minutes (or more depending on computer factors) to complete the activity.

Show the Strategy Reflection Slides to the whole group and ask volunteers to share out what they wrote/plan on what they will take back back to use in their own instruction.

# Evaluate

Go to **slide 20** (**Slide 27** in Virtual Slides) and revisit the "Quick Poll."

- Open the poll and examine the previous answers.
- Ask participants, "*After hearing some ideas for discussion strategies, have your thoughts changed?*" "*Do you feel this image will represent your class still?*"
- After conducting the new poll, discuss the results and debrief with the group.

**Virtual Option**

Revisit the "Quick Poll" with participants on **slide 27** in the virtual session slide presentation.

## Resources


- Darby, F. (2019). *Small teaching online: Applying learning science in online classes*. Jossey-Bass.
- Hedger, A. (2020, September 27). A tale of two Zooms [Digital Image]. Hedger Humor. https://www.hedgerhumor.com/a-tale-of-two-zooms/
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- Orlando, J. (2017, March 16). What research tells us about online discussion. Faculty focus. https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/online-education/research-tells-us-online-discussion/
- Robins, S. (2015, July 10). Teacherless online classroom - Discussion bored (sic) [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oqVTr8MZicQ&feature=youtu.be
- Young, J. (2020, October 1). Sudden shift to online learning revealed gaps in digital literacy, study finds. *EdSurge*. https://www.edsurge.com/news/2020-10-01-sudden-shift-to-online-learning-revealed-gaps-in-digital-literacy-study-finds