

Kathy G. Short, 2017

STRATEGIES TO ENCOURAGE DIALOGUE

See *Creating Classrooms for Authors and Inquirers*, Kathy G. Short & Jerome Harste, Heinemann.

SHARING IDEAS AND CONNECTIONS

FREE WRITES

Before beginning a discussion, set a timer for anywhere from 5-15 minutes. During that time, write continuously about your thoughts related to a topic, experience, or book. If you run out of things to say, write "I don't know what to write" until you think of something else. In the group, one person begins by reading all or part of their free write aloud. The group discusses the ideas in that free write and then moves on to the next person. Instead of free writes, create a sketch of your thoughts about a topic.

LEARNING LOGS or POST-FULL THINKING

As you read or engage in an experience, stop periodically and write what you are thinking about. In the group, one person reads an entry. The ideas are discussed by the group until the conversation dies down and then someone shares another entry. Instead of writing in a log, use post-its and put a quick response or connection on the post-it to share in the group.

ANOMALIES - Write down questions or things that surprise you as you read or engage in an experience. Once you finish reading, look back over your questions to identify the ones that you are still wondering about or that you wonder how others would respond to that question. Discuss the questions and generate new anomalies.

MAKING A CONNECTION - Jot down stories or experiences that come to your mind. In the group, share your connections and talk about how they relate to the book or experience.

GRAFFITI BOARD

Put a big sheet of paper on the table. Each person takes a corner of the paper and writes and draws their thoughts about the book or experience in a graffiti fashion. The responses, ideas, comments, sketches, quotes, and connections are not organized in any way. The major focus is on recording initial responses during or immediately after the experience. When the group is ready to discuss, group members then share their graffiti. The graffiti can then lead to webbing or charting to organize the connections.

COLLAGE READING/TEXT RENDERING

Mark quotes that are significant to you as you read. In collage reading, group members read aloud quotes to each other. One person reads a quote and then someone else comes in with another quote and the reading continues in no particular order. Readers choose when they will read a particular quote in order to build off of what someone else has read. There are no comments about the quotes. Text Rendering is similar except that someone reads a quote and states why they chose it and then someone else reads a quote. There is no discussion about the quotes or the comments until after the text rendering is finished.

CONSIDERING MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES THROUGH LISTENING

SAY SOMETHING

Two people share the reading of a short story. The first person reads aloud a chunk of text (several paragraphs or a page) to the other person. When the reader stops, both "say something" by making a prediction, sharing personal connections, asking questions, or commenting on the story. The second reader then reads aloud a chunk of text and again stops and both "say something." The two readers continue alternating the reading of the story, commenting after each reading, until the story is completed.

WRITTEN CONVERSATION

Have a silent conversation by talking on paper. Two people share a piece of paper and a pencil and talk about a book or experience by writing back and forth to each other. No talking is allowed except with young children who often need to read what they have written to each other.

SKETCH TO STRETCH

After reading a book or engaging in an experience, make a sketch (a quick graphic drawing) of what the story or experience meant to you (not an illustration) - your connections. In the group, show your sketch, letting others comment on the meanings they see in the sketch before you share your meaning. Talk about your sketches with each other and discuss the different ideas people have raised in their drawings.

SAVE THE LAST WORD FOR ME

As you read, watch for passages or quotes that catch your attention because they are interesting, powerful, confusing, or contradictory and put the quote on the front of a 3 x 5 card. On the back, write your response or why you found that passage noteworthy. In the group, one person begins by sharing one quote. The group briefly discusses their response to that quote. When the discussion dies down, the person who chose the quote tells why he/she chose it. That person has the last word and the group then moves on to another person. Young children can show a page from a picturebook and the others in the group share their responses, letting the child who chose that page have the last word. This engagement can also be done with an artifact related to a particular focus, e.g. an artifact that represents prejudice. The same process is followed of others saying how they think an artifact reflects the focus and then the person who brought the artifact has the last word.

FOCUSING IN TO INVESTIGATE AN ISSUE

WEBBING WHAT'S ON MY MIND

After sharing initial responses to a book or experience, the group brainstorms a web of issues, themes, and questions that they could discuss from the book or experience. Using the web, the group decides on the one that is most interesting or causes the most tension to begin discussion. They continue by choosing from other ideas on their web. New ideas are added as they come up in the discussion.

CONSENSUS BOARD

A board is created with a circle in the middle and 4 sections. The circle contains the focus for the board - e.g. title of the book or a key theme or concept. In the individual sections, each person writes personal connections to that theme or book. After sharing individual connections, the group comes to consensus on the tensions, issues, or big ideas they want to explore further and put these in the middle of the board.

COMPARISON CHARTS or VENN DIAGRAMS

A chart or venn diagram is used when a group has discussed a set of books or experiences on concepts that they want to compare and look at similarities and differences. The categories for comparison are developed from these discussions, not given to students. The books or concepts are written on the side and the categories across the top of the chart. Both pictures and words are used in the boxes. A venn diagram (two circles that overlap in the center) focuses the comparison on one major issue at a time.

HEART MAPS

After an initial discussion of the book, the group chooses a character or a group of characters that they would like to think about further. On a big piece of paper the group maps that character's heart. The group discusses values and beliefs held by the character and what people or events are important to the character's life. These are mapped into a heart shape, with the group using spatial relationships, color, and size to show the relative importance of each idea and the relationships between ideas.