

Tracking Conversation Behaviors

Productive classroom conversations depend on our ability to engage silent students, make conversations safe for every participant, ask good questions, correct inaccurate thinking, and successfully navigate disagreements. Use this handout to spot these behaviors during our classroom conversations.

Discussion Behavior	Your Response
Engaging silent students: To get every good idea into our conversation, it is important to hear from everyone in our discussion. As you watch our conversation, record students who do a good job engaging silent students. What impact do these attempts have on our conversation?	
Making conversations safe for every student: Sometimes conversations are taken over by one or two students who talk so much that other students can't get involved. As you watch our conversation, record instances where this happens. What impact do these behaviors have on our conversation?	
Working to ask good questions: Good questions are essential to healthy conversations because they start new strands of discussion and challenge thinking. As you watch our conversation, record the best questions that are asked. What impact do these questions have on our conversation?	
Working to correct inaccurate thinking: Sometimes students will share ideas in our conversation that are inaccurate. To make our conversation meaningful, these inaccurate ideas have to be corrected. As you watch our conversation, record moments where inaccurate ideas <i>are not</i> corrected. What impact does this flawed thinking have on our conversation?	
Working through disagreements: In the best conversations, participants who disagree will work to understand—rather than argue—with one another. As you watch our conversation, record moments where participants who disagree with one another end up in an argument. What impact does their disagreement have on our conversation?	