

## ACTIVE PARTICIPATION: Tools for Your Engagement Tool Kit

"It's not what you say or do that ultimately matters... It **IS** what you get the students to do as a result of what you said and did that counts."

- 1) **Choral responses** - all say it together-wakes kids up -gives thinking time - very helpful to provide a cue such as holding your hands up - then drop to signal it's time to respond
  - ✓ cue students to show you they are ready...e.g. "thumbs up when you know..."
  - ✓ non-verbal choral responses too, "touch the word... put your finger under..."
  - ✓ provides a safe way to practice academic language together - e.g. repeating a model sentence
  
- 2) **Partner responses** - one of the most potent strategies we have to increase active language use, attention, higher order thinking, etc. during instruction.
  - ✓ teacher chooses partners - alternate ranking based on literacy/social skills
  - ✓ assign roles - A and B, one and two ("A's tell B's 2 things we have learned about...")
  - ✓ specific topic - "what do you predict\_\_\_\_; two things we've learned about\_\_\_\_")
  - ✓ short time periods - 15 seconds, 1 minute, etc.
  - ✓ monitor individual students, provide feedback & scaffolding as necessary

**\*\* Be sure to structure** the academic language (e.g. sentence starters, "I predict that \_\_\_\_\_.")
  
- 3) **Written responses** - especially as you move up the grades (3 and above)
  - writing first increases thinking, accountability, focus etc.
  - provides the teacher with concrete feedback (e.g. "do I need to clarify this?")
  - connects written language to oral language, provides practice w/syntax & grammar
  
- 4) **Randomly call on students** (or "faux randomly!!) - **Whole Group Discussion**
  - ✓ **NO** hand raising questions ("Who can tell me \_\_\_\_\_?") - If it is worth doing ALL students need to be "doing the doing" of learning - NOT just watching others!
    - increases accountability, attention, focus, involvement and it is more fun/lively & effective!

### Explicit Academic Language Teaching

- Provide students with the language tools (vocabulary and syntax) necessary to competently discuss the topic ("One consequence of the invention a was rise in \_\_\_\_\_.")  
e.g. Sentence Starters: Model for students fluent use of a sentence starter and have them repeat the model sentence chorally BEFORE rehearsing their sentence w/a partner

### Multiple benefits of structured thinking & partner rehearsal BEFORE Whole Class Discussions Include:

1. increases number of students actively "doing the doing" of learning - actively responding
2. all students get feedback/clarification/support from their partners - no practicing of errors
3. more time to think and rehearse - encourages reflection & thoughtfulness
4. students likely to be more confident and willing to share with the group
5. all students provided the scaffolding to confidently utilize target academic language (vocab & syntax)
6. increases the odds students are attentive, engaged in the instructional conversation
7. teacher has written/spoken "evidence checks" of learner engagement
8. provides the teacher w/informal assessment - teacher can listen in or "dip stick" 2 or 3 pairs