



Teacher Moves That Promote Effective Student Discourse

Building a Community of Learners

A teacher's knowledge of students' social and academic needs supports the facilitation of mathematical discourse in the classroom. The decisions, planning, and specifically chosen teacher moves are all based on a teacher's level of familiarity with students' mathematical knowledge and learning styles. So, just how do teachers acquire deep knowledge of the social and academic needs of students? First and foremost, teachers have to choose to spend time at the beginning of the year building relationships with students in the classroom, getting to know each one while working toward effective discourse communities. To engage students in productive mathematics discussions, it is imperative to establish a learning environment that welcomes student involvement and includes expectations for *all* students to contribute to the discourse community.

Establishing classroom community norms and agreements at the beginning of the school year will support learning opportunities for everyone in the classroom—including the teacher—is paramount. Teachers can begin this process by sharing personal stories past learning experiences that the teacher believes will assist students in feeling comfortable to also share their stories. Through this agreement-making process, it is important to explore students' feelings about their past mathematical learning via conversations and journaling, always looking for

