



The **Constructive Conversation** is an instructional activity in which students use the Constructive Conversation Skills to build content knowledge, academic vocabulary, use complex sentence frames to address rigorous prompts, own content, and use academic language.



<https://bit.ly/3swYV9X>

The skill of **CREATE** requires students to:

- articulate their initial thinking
- listen to the initial thinking of others
- use their prior knowledge and make new connections to express original ideas about discipline
- synthesize ideas

The skill of **NEGOTIATE** requires students to:

- propose an additional idea that opposes or competes with the first idea
- strengthen opposing ideas and together negotiate the ideas
- combine ideas into a new idea
- agreeing to disagree, or conceding to the new idea
- understand that all ideas, even if they are contrasting perspectives, are explored and valued

The skill of **CLARIFY** requires students to:

- know when to prompt a partner to clarify
- know when to clarify one's own ideas, and how to do so with different partners
- understand the skill of clarifying is as much on the listener as it is on the speaker
- represent the ideas in multiple ways, such as analogies and metaphors
- use elaboration, explanation, and paraphrasing

The skill of **FORTIFY** requires students to:

- support or fortify ideas with evidence
- identify and evaluate multiple examples of evidence to fortify ideas
- find the sufficient and relevant evidence that supports the idea
- evaluate the effectiveness of an idea and its support

Adapted from work by Zwiers, O'Hara, & Pritchard, 2014



Guided by a prompt, **Maximizing Academic Language Exchanges** provides students with structured opportunities to engage in academic discussions, build on their ideas, and gain new language and knowledge based on the content. The exchanges encourage conversations and sharing of ideas with diverse partners.

Lines of Communication

Lines of Communication support students in solidifying, sharing their thinking multiple times, and listening to the thinking of others. Students form two parallel lines. Teacher poses a question and gives think time.

Option 1: Teacher poses a question, Line A first shares their thinking, Line B listens actively to what their partner is saying. Then on teacher's signal, Line B shares their thinking while Line A listens actively to what their partner is saying.

Option 2: Teacher poses question, students participate in a Constructive Conversation with their partner as they share and build upon their ideas.

On the teacher's signal, students stop. First person in line A will move down the row to the end and the row moves up. Everyone will have a new partner. The process continues for three additional rounds.

Ask yourself:
Does the prompt guide students' sharing and building up their ideas?

Does the exchange support the lesson outcome?



Zwiers, J. & Crawford, M. (2011). Academic Conversations. Portland: Stenhouse Publishers



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Stronger and Clearer

Stronger and Clearer is an academic discussion to support students in building strong arguments for their opinions or positions by listening to others' ideas and revising their own thinking. The exchange uses a graphic organizer to assist students in organizing their thinking based on a relevant prompt. Students respond to the prompt with their initial idea in the **Pre-Section**. They have three additional opportunities to meet with various partners, actively listen to one another, share their thinking, and make their ideas stronger each time with additional evidence and explanations. With each exchange, students reduce the use of their notes. In the **Post-section**, students share new learning about the topic from the academic discussion.

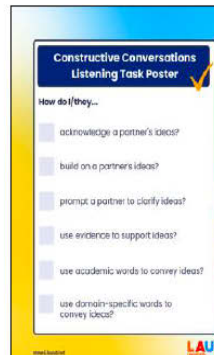
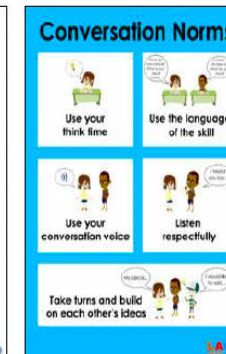
Ask yourself:
Is the prompt thought-provoking?

Does the prompt guide students in identifying textual evidence?

Does the prompt lead to critical thinking?

Prompt:
My 4 Ideas
Partner 1
Partner 2
Partner 3
Partner 4
New Learning

<https://jettawiers.org>



Companion Cards are available in: Arabic, Armenian, Farsi, French, Korean, Mandarin (Simplified), Mandarin (Traditional), Russian, Spanish, and English. These and other resources can be accessed at lausd.org/mmed.

