

Teacher Talk Tactics



Instigate

Present an idea or open up a new line of inquiry



- “ Let’s start the discussion by ____
- “ Has anyone considered ____
- “ Let’s think about ____

Invite: — Who would like to begin our discussion?
— Does anyone have another idea?
— Would anybody like to share a different point?

Probe

Dig deeper, ask for evidence or justification of ideas



- “ Why do you think ____?
- “ Could you provide an example of ____?
- “ How do you know that?

Invite: — Would anyone like to probe what X said?
— Who would like to ask a probing question?
— Does this remind you of anything we’ve learned before?

Challenge

Disagree or present an alternative argument



- “ Have you considered ____?
- “ You mentioned X but what about ____?
- “ What if ____?

Invite: — Would anybody like to challenge X’s idea?
— Does anybody have a counter argument?
— Who disagrees with that point?

Clarify

Asking questions to make things clearer and check your understanding



- “ So are you saying ____?
- “ Let me get this right, what you’re saying is ____?
- “ Can you clarify what you mean by ____?

Invite: — Could anybody clarify what X is saying?
— Would anybody like to ask a clarifying question?
— Could I just check your understanding X?

Summarise

Identify and recap the main ideas



- “ So far we have talked about ____
- “ The main points raised today were ____
- “ To summarise X’s idea?

Invite: — Can anybody summarise the main points so far?
— Could you summarise what X is saying?
— Who can recap the main ideas?

Build

Develop, add to or elaborate on an idea



- “ Building on X’s idea ____
- “ X’s idea made me think ____
- “ To develop X’s idea ____

Invite: — Would anybody like to build on X’s idea?
— Could you tell me more about...?
— Who can tell me why they might agree with X?

Additional moves*

Model

Articulate the thought processes underpinning talk



- “ I’m not sure I agree with that so I’m going to challenge X’s idea ____
- “ I am going to clarify X’s point to check I’ve understood correctly ____
- “ It would be a good idea to summarise the points so far to help us move forward ____
- “ I am going to refer to X to provide evidence for my point ____

Mark

Highlight an important idea or type of contribution



- “ That’s an important point.
- “ Did everyone hear what X just said? How does that help move us on?
- “ Did you notice how X just probed X’s idea?
- “ What did X say to challenge X’s idea politely?

* The additional teacher tactics are inspired by the 'Teacher Moves in Group Discussion' as set out in the Accountable Talk Sourcebook (Michaels et al., 2016)