

Talk About It! Developing Discussion Tasks for Young Learners

SEL <https://casel.org/what-is-sel/>

Social and Emotional Learning encourages students to empathise with others; fosters tolerance and respect.

Look out for SEAS! (Silence / Embarrassment / Avoidance of eye-contact / Silliness)

Introducing the topic



Discussion questions

- Start with a general question
- Ask personalised questions
- Use present tenses, e.g. *Imagine you are (poor). What do you do?*
- Use a VTR to jump start the discussion

Visible Thinking Routines (Project Zero. Harvard University Graduate School of Education) <http://www.visiblethinkingpz.org/>

- See Think Wonder
- Step Inside
- Question Starts
- I used to think... But now I think...

Scaffolding the discussion

- Pre-teach vocabulary and phrases
- Provide multiple-choice options
- Model the discussion with the class (and recast where relevant)
- Use sentence starters and sentence frames
- Hang up posters with key language
- Display or hand out word banks

- Use graphic organisers

Dynamics

pair work - small groups - large groups - whole class

Give students thinking time before discussing with a partner or in small groups. Then move towards larger groups or whole class feedback.

Format of discussion questions

Display on whiteboard or screen / handouts for groups / online tool

Follow up tasks

- Graphic organisers (for written tasks)
- Sentence frames (for opinions and conclusions)
- Posters or leaflets
- Research
- Role plays
- Community action

To find out more:

Visible Thinking Routines:

- <http://www.pz.harvard.edu/projects/visible-thinking>
- Making Thinking Visible by Karin Morrison, Mark Church, and Ron Ritchhart (Jossey-Bass, 2011)
- <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/michelleworgan/visible-thinking/>

Using sentence frames: <http://www.k5chalkbox.com/how-to-use-sentence-frames.html>

Ali and the Long Journey to Australia: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wnEG8Pf5mL0>

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