

Types of Student Discussions

Strategy	Description	Decision
Critical-analytic		
Collaborative reasoning	In this strategy, “the teacher poses a central question deliberately chosen to evoke varying points of view. Students adopt a position on the issue and generate reasons that support their position. Using the text, as well as personal experiences and background knowledge, students proceed to evaluate reasons, to consider alternative points of view, and to challenge the arguments of others.” (Murphy et al., 2009, p. 742)	<input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Not Appropriate
Philosophy for children	Students share reading, listening, or viewing with their teacher and devise their own questions. They choose one question that interests them and, with the teacher’s help, discuss it. The teacher encourages students to welcome the diversity of initial views and then involves them in questioning assumptions, developing opinions with supporting reasons, analyzing significant concepts, and applying good reasoning and judgment.	<input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Not Appropriate
Paideia seminar	This strategy fosters critical and creative thinking through seminar dialogue, intellectual coaching, and mastery of information. It usually involves three steps: a preseminar content preparation, a seminar to discuss the ideas, and a postseminar process to assess participation and application of ideas.	<input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Not Appropriate
Efferent		
Questioning the author	This strategy aims to engage students deeply in the process of deriving meaning from text and in questioning the author’s position as an expert. The teacher encourages students to pose queries to the author <i>while</i> reading a given text rather than after reading. The queries may look like “What is the author trying to say?,” “Why does the author use the following phrase?,” or “Does the author explain this clearly?”	<input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Not Appropriate
Instructional conversation	This strategy resembles a paradox. It is instructional and aims to promote learning but is also conversational in quality, with natural and spontaneous language interactions free from the didactic characteristic of language normally used for teaching. In the instructional conversation, the teacher listens carefully, makes guesses about students’ intended meanings, and adjusts responses to help students better construct knowledge.	<input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Not Appropriate

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Junior great books	Students work with complex ideas and rigorous texts to develop skills in reading, thinking, and communicating. They use interpretive discussions and construct inferential and thematic meanings from the text.	<input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Not Appropriate
Expressive		
Literature circles	A group of four students selects a book to read. The teacher assigns each member one of the four roles: (1) discussion director, (2) literary luminary, (3) vocabulary enricher, and (4) checker. In this way, all students are involved deeply in the process.	<input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Not Appropriate
Grand conversation	This strategy involves authentic, lively talk about text. The teacher initiates the discussion with a big, overarching question or interpretive prompt. The talk pattern is conversational, and the teacher provides authentic responses to students' statements.	<input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Not Appropriate
Book club	Students choose what to read and establish their own schedule for reading and discussing books. The key for this strategy is having students read for the sheer joy of it.	<input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Not Appropriate

Source: Adapted from Murphy, P. K., Wilkinson, I. A. G., Soter, A. O., Hennessey, M. N., & Alexander, J. F. (2009). Examining the effects of classroom discussion on students' comprehension of text: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 101(3), 740–764.