



Kentucky Department of **EDUCATION** *Discussion Facilitation Considerations*

The focus of this professional learning is to deepen educators’ understanding of each Evidence-Based Instructional Practice and to examine how these strategies can support students in reaching the intended learning outcomes within the *Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS)*. While it is recommended that this professional learning be structured in a professional learning community (PLC), it may be adapted for facilitation in small groups or during instructional staff meetings.

Participant Materials:

The following materials are integral parts of this learning experience:

- Overview video;
- General overview (defines evidence-based instructional practices and why they are important);
- Narrative introduction to EBIP # 4: Discussion;
- Content specific resources to support implementation.
 - Mathematics
 - Reading and Writing
 - Science
 - Social Studies

All materials are available at www.kystandards.org.

Facilitator Preparation:

- Review all materials prior to the professional learning session(s).
- Make adjustments based on timing, group size, local priorities, local norms, presentation format (in-person or digital learning environments) and facilitator’s personal presentation style.
- Determine strategies to engage participants in discussions around the Evidence-Based Instructional Practice resources. Possible strategies from the Thinking Collaborative are provided below. Facilitators should not feel tied to utilizing these specific strategies, but rather should consider how to best foster engagement with the resources in an authentic way.

Starting the Session: How might you structure the beginning of the session in a way that allows participants to focus on the session and activate their background knowledge?

Engage in a constructivist-learning experience working with a fresh topic Know, Think You Know, Want to Know	Activate background knowledge by linking new learning to a visual representation. Four Box Synectics	Generate energy and build community by interacting with others, and brainstorm information about a new topic. Give One, Get One
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Engaging in the Resources: How might you structure opportunities for participants to engage with the resources? For example, will there be time for participants to read and process information independently, or will participants engage in the resources collectively? How will the whole group process the new information?

Select, interpret, explain, synthesize text. Text Rendering	Prime the pump for full group conversation. First Turn, Last Turn	Acquire, summarize and communicate information collaboratively. Jigsaw Carousel
Engage in a constructivist-learning experience working with a fresh topic Know, Think You Know, Want to Know	Deepen understanding of concepts through a structured dialogue. Delve and Dialogue	Select and interpret information as it relates to individuals and the whole group. Focused Reading

Closing the Session: How might you structure opportunities for participants to prioritize “next steps” moving forward? How will participants reflect throughout each session? Is there a common idea of “next steps” or is each individual proceeding independently? Is more time needed in the future for additional learning around this topic or to explore related ideas?

Clarify the what, why and how of next steps Content Check	Interdependently synthesize information. 5 - 3 - 1	Members reflect on content and connect to their own work. Stoplight
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Possible Educator Self Reflection Questions:

Below is a list of possible reflection questions facilitators may use to help participants process their learning and begin to think about next steps. These questions may be used to stop and reflect throughout or at the end of the session. Facilitators do not have to use all reflection questions, may allow for participant choice, or may choose those questions that best meet the needs of the group and the local context.

Questions for teacher self-reflection related to **brain research and the need for discussion:**

- How is discussion typically arranged in my classroom (whole-group, small-group, pairs, one-on-one conferences, etc.)? Why or how do I choose these approaches for practice? Are there other discussion strategies and structures I might want to use in the classroom?
- Do I select discussion strategies according to the standard I am teaching? Is there anything I might want to shift about my current approach?

Questions for teacher self-reflection related to **explicit teaching of in-depth discussion skills:**

- What steps am I currently taking to help students connect to the content and foster relevant in-depth discussions in my classroom? Is there anything I might want to shift about my current approach?
- How do I currently use sentence stems to support classroom discourse? What might be some ways I might incorporate sentence stems to effectively support classroom discussion?

Questions for teacher self-reflection related to **engaging all students in discussion:**

- Which moves do I currently use to foster student responsibility and increase individual accountability?
- How do I currently set expectations for my students during classroom discourse using strong models students can see and hear? Is there anything I might want to shift about my current approach?
- What do I currently do to encourage students to reflect, self-monitor and set goals during classroom discussions? Is there anything I might want to shift about my current approach?
- What steps am I taking to offer students opportunities to actively engage and use their voice within my classroom? Is there anything I might want to shift about my current approach?

Questions for teacher self-reflection related to the **importance of intentional planning:**

- How do I use content, timing and grouping considerations to determine what is needed for my students?
- How in my planning do I ensure that the discussion protocols I select align with the intended purpose for learning? What steps am I taking to ensure all my students get the same opportunities to communicate and collaborate through classroom discussions using equitable routines, structures or protocols?
- Which student(s) do I typically call on to participate in class discussions? Is there anything I might want to shift about my current approach?
- How is discussion typically structured in my classroom (one-on-one conferencing, small-group, whole-group, etc.)? Are there other strategies and structures I might want to use during classroom discussion?

Questions for **discussion strategies to support formative assessment:**

- How do I currently use debates and Socratic seminars to assess student understanding? What might I want to shift about my current approach?
- What might be some norms, expectations or procedures that might need to be explicitly taught and practiced to support students as they engage in debates and/or Socratic seminars?
- How do I currently allow students to compare their past performance to their present performance? How might I intentionally incorporate opportunities for goal-setting conferences and/or video diaries to support students in monitoring and assessing their own growth over time?

Questions for **considering next steps**:

- Based on the research and content-specific connections I have explored, which resources do I plan to explore further?
- Is this further exploration something I want to pursue in a structured way with a partner/team/PLC?
- If I plan to explore independently, is there someone in my school, district or professional community I could use as a thought partner to support and process my learning?