

Prompt Students to Share Insights With One Another

Discussions allow students to process and analyze content and to make connections between what they already know and what they are learning. They require students to reflect on the ideas being presented in course content as well as the ideas shared by their classmates. It is this cycle of reading, reflecting, considering, and making connections that actually changes the knowledge structure inside the learner’s brain. Often it is only when students are responding to a question or to another student’s ideas that they begin to know what they think they know—or sometimes, more importantly, what they do not know (Boettcher & Conrad, 2016). Encouraging students to share insights, questions, and thoughts with their peers is a powerful way to ensure that your students are doing the talking and the learning!

Use the following chart to encourage peer-to-peer connections in live sessions.

Stance	Purpose	Examples
Confirming	Ask other students to confirm or comment on the previous student’s response or comment.	“Maria, do you agree with what Hassan said?” “Becca, what do you think about that?” “Sharice, when you heard Tracy make that comment, what were you thinking?”
Checking	Ask students to confirm or refute another student’s stance.	“Sherry, do you agree with Mercy? Why or why not?”
Restating	Ask a student to restate a classmate’s answer.	“Who can restate Diana’s idea?” “Diana, did they get it right?” “Josh, can you please share what you heard Rebecca say?” “Rebecca, is that what you meant, did he hear you correctly?”
Redirecting	Direct student questions back to the class or to a specific member of the class.	“What a great question! Who would like to tackle that?” “I am pretty sure Amanda talked about something very similar in her pre-work. Amanda, would you be willing to share?”

Source

Boettcher, J. V., & Conrad, R.-M. (2016). *The online teaching survival guide: Simple and practical pedagogical tips* (2nd ed.). Jossey-Bass.