

Indicators of Dialogic Teaching – What does the teacher do?

A. Does the teacher ask questions that require thought and an elaborated response?	
B. Does the teacher respond to pupils' contributions in a way that deepens thinking?	
C. Does the teacher encourage pupils to respond to each other's ideas? (Collaborative)	
D. Does the teacher give thinking time ?	
E. Does the teacher re-inforce good dialogue ?	
F. Does the teacher seek to maximise participation ? (Collaborative)	
G. Does the teacher encourage pupils to make connections ? (Creative)	
H. Does the teacher refer to / build on the pupils' ideas when returning to 'authoritative mode'?	

Indicators of Dialogic Teaching – What does the teacher do? (Elaboration)

- A. These questions might be open in the sense that there is more than one possible right answer. They could also be closed but be doing more than checking recall; they might elicit an explanation, for example.
- B. This might mean that the teacher resists evaluating the answer, but rather requests further elaboration or clarification, asks for examples, offers counter-examples, explores reasoning and evidence and so on. Teachers might find the examples of Socratic questions and question plans useful here. The teacher should show genuine interest in the pupils' thinking / understanding.
- C. Again, the teacher might resist evaluating answers and instead ask such questions as: Who would like to respond to X? Who agrees / disagrees with X? Does anyone have a question for X? Can anyone build on what X has said?
- D. This might include simply being willing to wait for an answer (for 30 seconds or more if necessary), explicitly asking pupils to spend a minute or so thinking about the question / the dialogue, or using techniques such as think, pair, share.
- E. This might involve the teacher in praising / drawing attention to good questions, useful examples, counter-examples and distinctions, the use of reasons and evidence and so on.
- F. This might not mean the teacher 'forcing' pupils to contribute, but might involve them bringing in different voices when contributions are offered. It might also involve asking questions such as: How many of you agree with that? Who thinks the answer is X? This will allow all pupils to get involved to some degree, if only by raising their hand. Opportunities for small group talk, think, pair, share etc. will also be useful.
- G. Making connections between abstract ideas and the pupils' experiences might help them to make meaning. This might involve making reference to the shared experiences the children have had in class (during practical sessions, for example) or asking for examples from pupils' lives outside school. Asking questions that encourage pupils to make connections between concepts (e.g. 'What is the relationship between photosynthesis and respiration?') might help to develop their deeper understanding.
- H. This might include the teacher building the pupils' explanations, examples, questions etc. into his or her own exposition, or indeed using them to inform future planning. Are the pupils' interests and misconceptions being responded to?

Indicators of Dialogic Teaching – What do the pupils do?

A. Do pupils listen attentively? (Caring)	
B. Do pupils support others to express their views? (Collaborative)	
C. Do pupils participate ? (Collaborative)	
D. Are pupils willing to speculate / try to express half-formed ideas? (Collaborative / Creative)	
E. Do pupils respond to each other’s contributions? (Collaborative)	
F. Do pupils make elaborated contributions? (Caring)	
G. Do pupils ask questions relevant to the developing dialogue? (Critical / Creative / Collaborative)	
H. Do pupils justify their ideas? (Critical)	
I. Do pupils offer appropriate challenge to each other / the teacher? (Critical / Collaborative)	
J. Do pupils search for alternative perspectives ? (Creative)	
K. Do pupils identify connections between concepts and between the dialogue and their experiences? (Creative)	
L. Are pupils open to changing their view ? (Critical)	

Indicators of Dialogic Teaching – What do the pupils do? (Elaboration)

- A. Do the pupils show interest and show that they are thinking about what is being said? Useful indicators will include body language and the responses they make to others.
- B. Do the pupils give time and perhaps active support to those who are struggling to articulate their views? Do they seem to value the ideas that others are trying to share?
- C. Not all pupils will be able to join every session, and some may be reluctant at first, but do a reasonable number of students contribute or offer to contribute to whole-class discussion? Does this number build over time? Are pupils active (not passive) in small-group discussion?
- D. Sometimes pupils will wait until they are confident that they have a correct answer before being willing to join a discussion. Are pupils willing to venture suggestions even when they are not confident that they are right?
- E. This might involve pupils referring directly to the ideas shared by others, perhaps by mentioning the names of others. The nature of the responses might include: agreeing, disagreeing, seeking more information, building on etc.
- F. Pupils might be moving beyond giving one word / very short responses. Are they willing to offer explanations?
- G. Questions from the pupils might begin to drive the dialogue. Is the balance of questioning shifting from teacher to pupils? Is the process becoming one of shared enquiry?
- H. Are pupils willing to share their thinking, making clear the reasons behind their position / the processes they went through to reach it? Do they refer to evidence to support their position? Do they offer examples of cases in which their ideas seem to work?
- I. This might involve the pupils asking for reasons and evidence, and offering counter-examples in which other pupils' ideas don't seem to work.
- J. It might be important that the pupils make an effort to break their own consensus. They might do this by asking questions such as: Is there another way of looking at this? What have we missed? What would someone who disagreed with us say?
- K. Pupils beginning to make connections (and draw distinctions) between related concepts such as freezing and melting or sounds and vibrations might be a sign of their construction of knowledge. Making connections between concepts and 'real life' experiences might support them to make meaning.
- L. It is important that pupils are not simply trying to argue their point during a session, but are actively trying to make better sense of ideas and are willing for their thinking to 'move on'. Is it possible to see signs of this during dialogues?