

Dialogue method

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introduction

- **A dialogue is a forum that draws participants from as many parts of the community as possible to exchange information face-to-face, share personal stories and experiences, express perspectives, clarify viewpoints, and develop solutions to community concerns.**
- **The word dialogue means “the word between us”.**

Meaning of dialogue method

- Dialogue-based learning, recognizes the unique life experiences each learner brings to the learning interaction. It learns new knowledge, attitudes, or skills best when the information presented is relevant to their life experiences.
- “Dialogue teaching” means using talk most effectively for carrying out teaching and learning. Dialogue teaching involves ongoing talk between teacher and students, not just teacher-presentation.
- Through dialogue, teachers can elicit students’ everyday, ‘common sense’ perspectives, engage with their developing ideas and help them overcome misunderstandings.

What does it look like in practice?

- **In dialogic classrooms children don't just provide brief factual answers to 'test' or 'recall' questions, or merely spot the answer which they think the teacher wants to hear. Instead they learn and are encouraged to:**
 - **narrate • explain • analyze • speculate • imagine • explore • evaluate • discuss • argue • justify • ask questions of their own**

In learning, as in life, all these forms of talk are necessary. To facilitate the different kinds of learning talk, children in dialogic classrooms also:

- Listen**
- Think about what they hear**
- Give others time to think**
- Respect alternative viewpoints**

Many of the teachers in the dialogic teaching development projects have negotiated ground-rules for talk along the lines above, and these are frequently reviewed with the pupils. In dialogic classrooms teachers consciously use discussion and scaffolded dialogue, as well as the other kinds of teacher talk.

meaning of ‘scaffolded dialogue’?

Discussion entails the open exchange of views and information in order to explore issues, test ideas and tackle problems. It can be led by one person (the teacher or a pupil), or it can be undertaken by the group collectively. Scaffolded dialogue involves:

- Interactions which encourage children to think, and to think in different ways
- Questions which require much more than simple recall

- **Answers** which are followed up and built on rather than merely received
- **Feedback** which informs and leads thinking forward as well as encourages
- **Contributions** which are extended rather than fragmented
- **Exchanges** which chain together into coherent and deepening lines of enquiry
- **Classroom organization, climate and relationships** which make all this possible.

Again, all of these have their place: no one form of interaction on its own will suffice for the varied purposes, content and contexts of a modern curriculum.

What are the principles of dialogic teaching?

Whatever kinds of teaching and learning talk are on offer, and however the interaction is organized, teaching is more likely to be dialogic if it is:

- Collective-Participants address learning tasks together.
- Reciprocal-Participants listen to each other, share ideas and consider alternative viewpoints.

- **Supportive-Pupils** express their ideas freely, without fear of embarrassment over ‘wrong’ answers, and they help each other to reach common understandings.
- **Cumulative- Participants** build on answers and other oral contributions and chain them into coherent lines of thinking and understanding.
- **Purposeful-Classroom** talk, though open and dialogic, is also planned and structured with specific learning goals in view.

Advantages

- **Speaking and listening skills.**
- **A respectful, humane way of relating to pupils.**
- **Engagement and motivation.**
- **Democratic preparation.**
- **A means of learning.**
- **Developing argumentation and critical thinking.**