



Conversation Compass[©] How to Promote Talk among Peers

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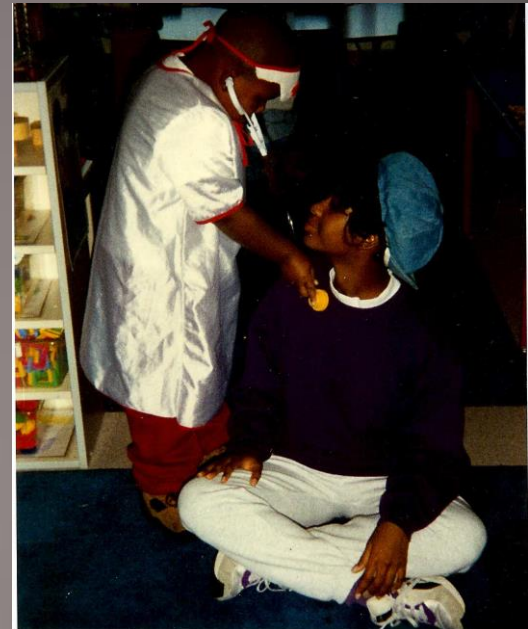


My Background

Rutgers University, Bloustein School & Graduate School of Education

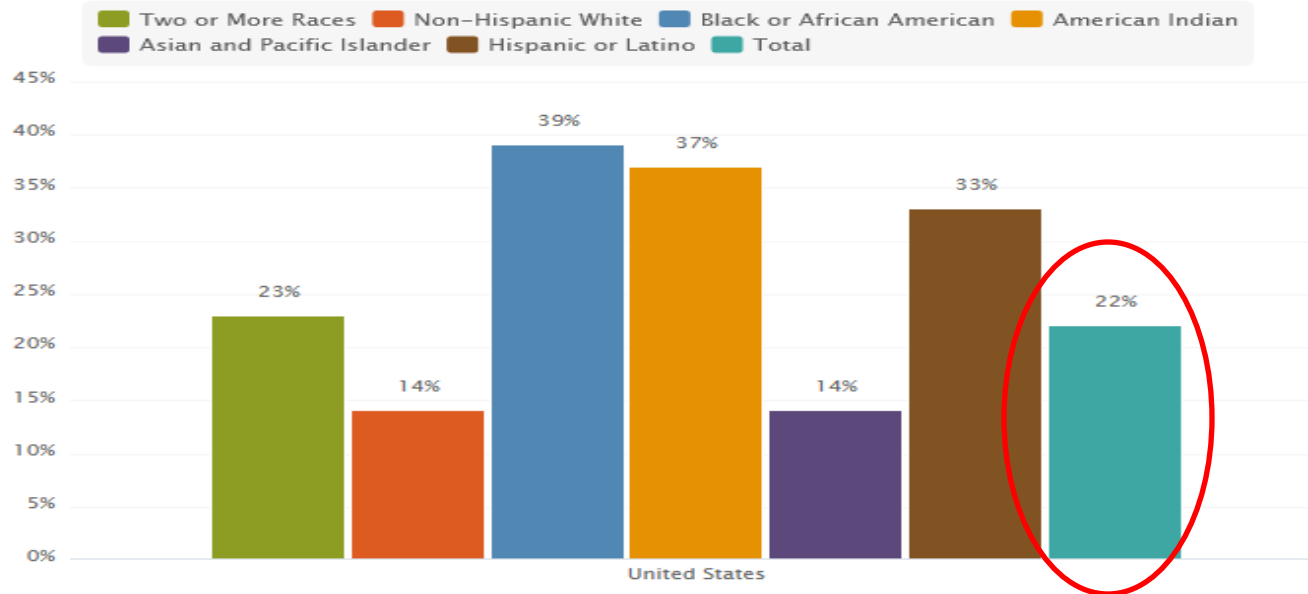
National Institute of Early Education (NIEER)

Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, Department of Pediatrics





Focus on Children Living in Poverty



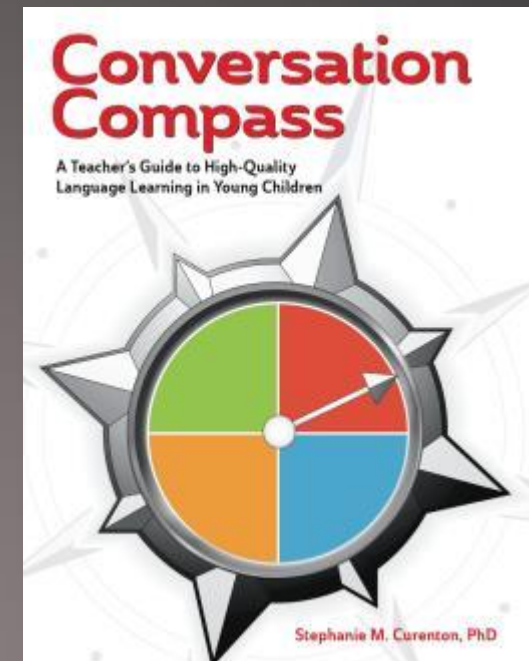
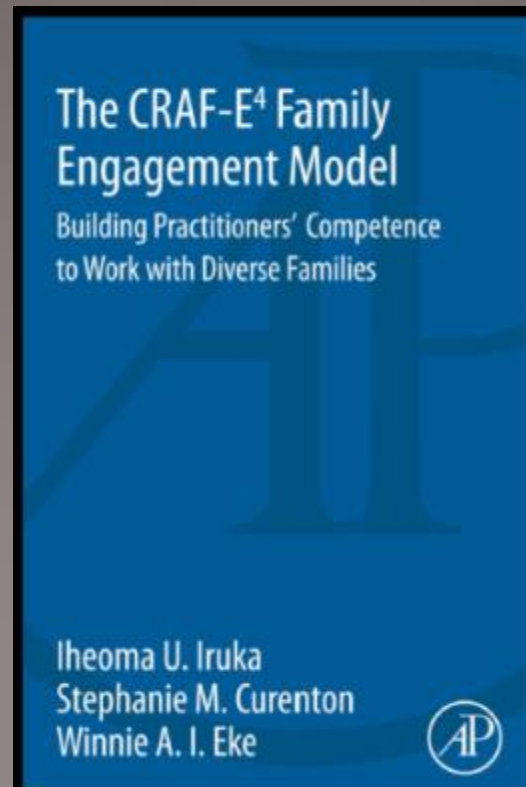
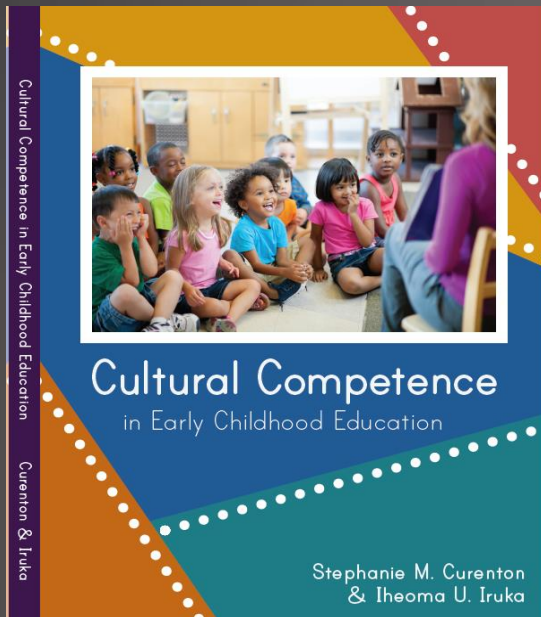
CHILDREN IN POVERTY BY RACE AND ETHNICITY: ALL (PERCENT) - 2013

National KIDS COUNT
KIDS COUNT Data Center, datacenter.kidscount.org
A project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation

22 percent of children across the nation lived in homes experiencing poverty

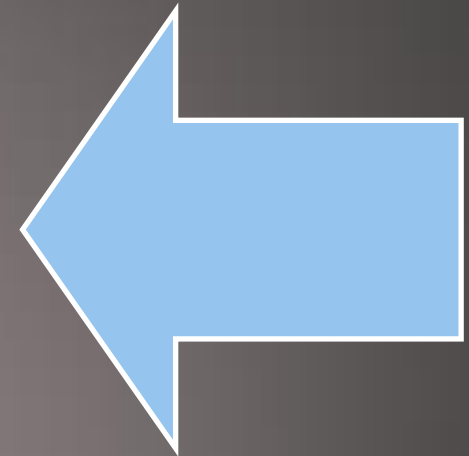
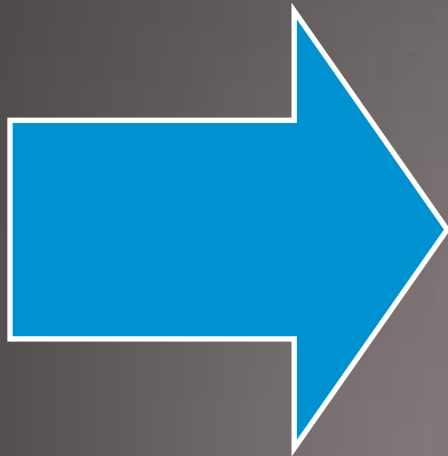


Commitment to Building Cultural Competence in the Workforce





Fostering Peer Conversations in Classrooms



Small Group Activities
Peer Play Activities

Learning Outcomes for the Session

LEARNING MODULE 1

Strategies for facilitating culturally-responsive Peer-to-Peer instructional conversations: Conversation Compass[©]

- ✓ Think about how children are unique
- ✓ Think about how to group them together in fun learning activities
- ✓ Think about how to get them talking using open-ended questions

“THOUGHT” ACTIVITY



Think about the best conversation you witnessed between two (or more) children



Why Do We Need PD on Conversations?



Why We Need PD on Conversations

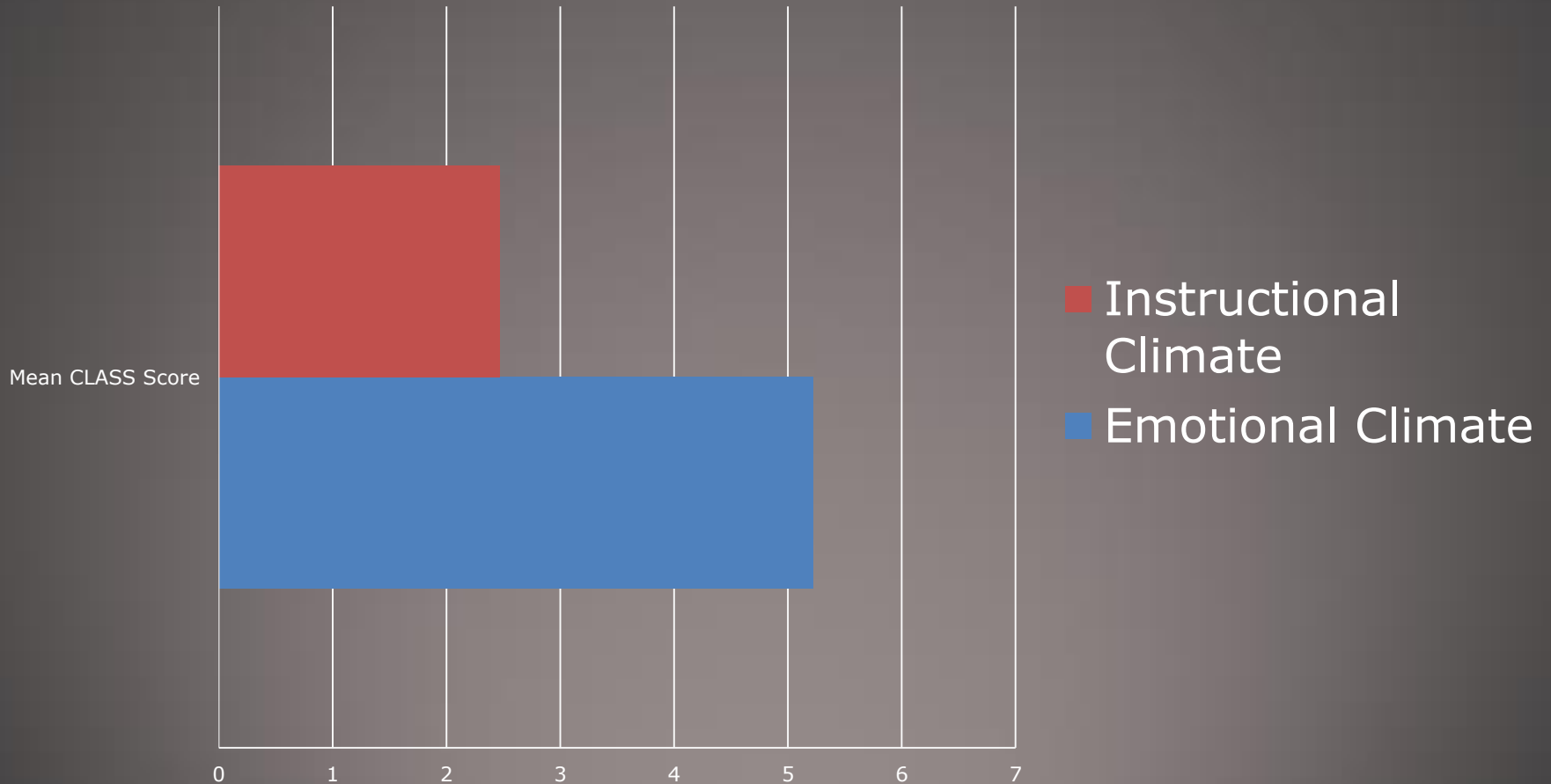
- Teachers spend the day talking to children
- Teachers “teach” students how to talk to each other





Need for PD on Conversations

MEAN CLASS SCORES





CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT SCORING SYSTEM (CLASS)

Teachers Need Help with:

- ✓ Quality of feedback
- ✓ Concept Development
- ✓ Language Modeling
- ✧ Peer Conversations!!



Classroom Conversations

Spontaneous

- Occur without planning
- Topic initiated by children



Instructional

- Happen during planned lessons and activities
- Topic initiated by teacher—but still guided by children's responses!!

Peer

- Occur between children
- Usually spontaneous
- But can be planned!

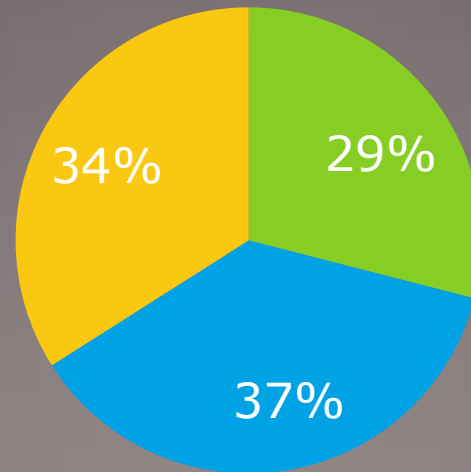
Curenton (2015)



Importance of Peer Conversations

Percent of Time

- Free-Choice
- Teacher-assigned
- Meals/Routines



Children spend most of their school day talking to each other!

Early et al. (2010)



Importance of Peer Conversations

- Children with lower language abilities have more language growth throughout the school year when they are enrolled in classrooms with peers who have better language skills



(Justice et al. 2014; Justice et al., 2011)



Example of a Peer Conversation

- What did you notice about how the two children navigated this language interaction?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wowJsEM7BIk>



What is an Instructional Peer Conversation?

A planned child-led conversation when children work or play together to solve problems, complete an activity, or talk about their experiences, opinions, or ideas. Teachers have learning objectives for these conversations and they use open-ended questions to get children talking



**Think about how individual
children unique**



The Role of Cultural Identity



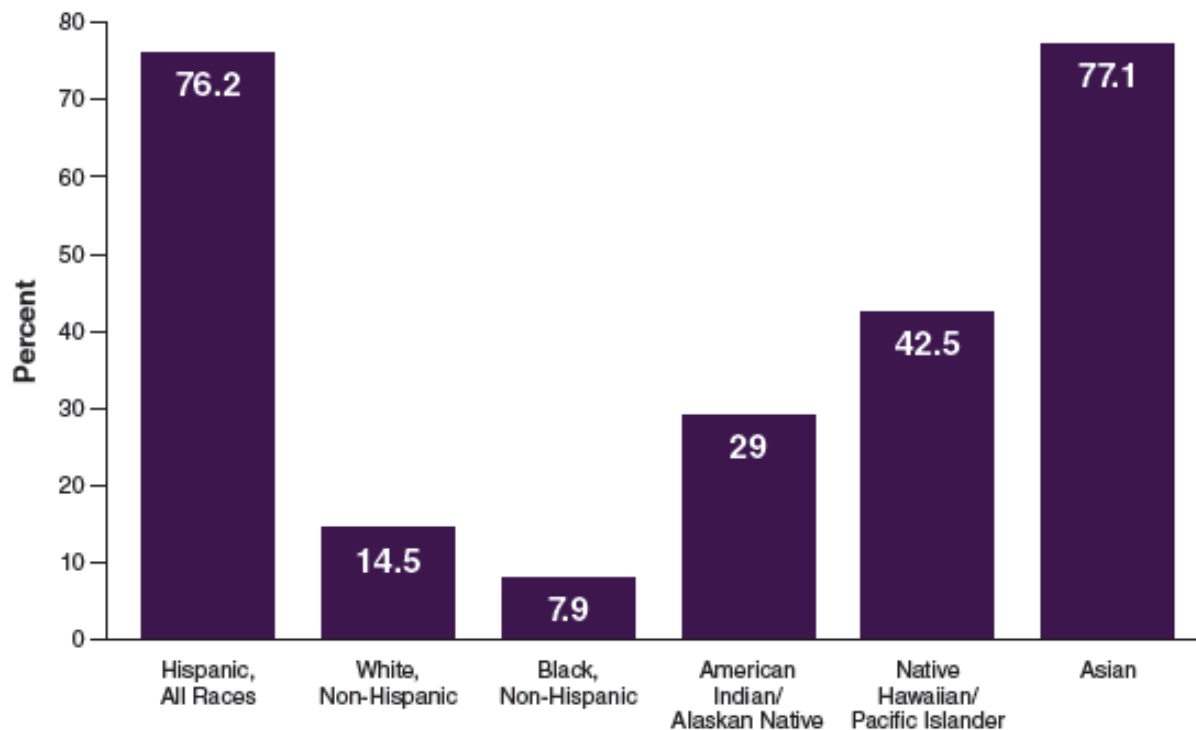
Each person's **cultural identity** comprises MANY social, heritage, geographic, and language traditions.



Diversity in Home Language Environments

Figure 1.3: Percentage of the Population Speaking Another Language at Home

What does this graph show you about the cultural makeup of the United States?



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.



Diversity in Home Language Environments

- Monolingual
- Multilingual
 - Bilingual
 - Bidialectal
 - Code-switching



Unique Conversation Styles

Social Talker



Brief Talker



Quiet Talker



Unique Storytelling Styles





Example of Cultural Stories

- Two examples of children talking about their experiences

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wkzzQgDE-q4>

-- Snotty Doctor

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ml611kSlJms>

-- He was injured



**Think about how we can get
children involved in fun
learning activities**



Learn how to “Juggle” a Conversation

- Allow children to call on each other and encourage them to answer each other’s questions
- Provide a speaking prop (toy, stick, ball)
- Pose open-ended questions to the group rather than to individual children and encourage children to do the same
- Deflect the conversation away from yourself by referring back to what children have said.



Peer Play Activity: Scavenger Hunt

- Activity: Scavenger Hunt
- Suggested Materials: Objects to find, maps, pictures of objects, baskets/containers
- Spin-off Activity: Teams report what they found in large group

***Show Video from Online Course



SHOW "REAL-LIFE" EXAMPLE VIDEO (3 MINUTES)





Examples of Other Activities

- Conducting Interviews
- Peace Making Murals
- Book Club Meeting
- Playwriting
- “Thematic” Pretend Play





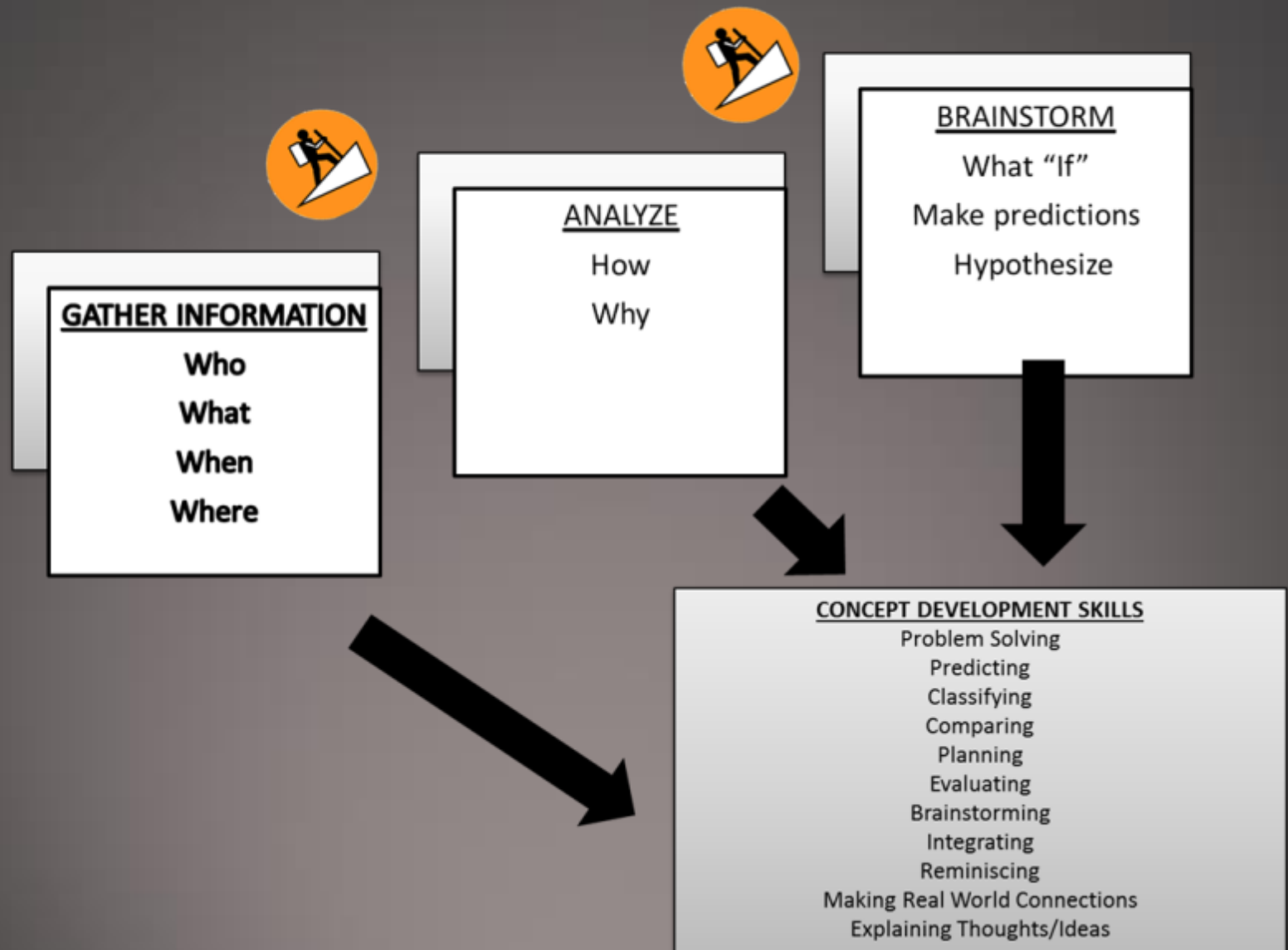
Think about how we can get children talking using open-ended questions



“The only reason children weren’t thinking at consistently high levels was that I hadn’t consistently asked and expected them to”

(Ellin Oliver Keene, *To Understand* (2008), p. 14)

Using Questions to Drive Concept Development





Wrapping It All Up!

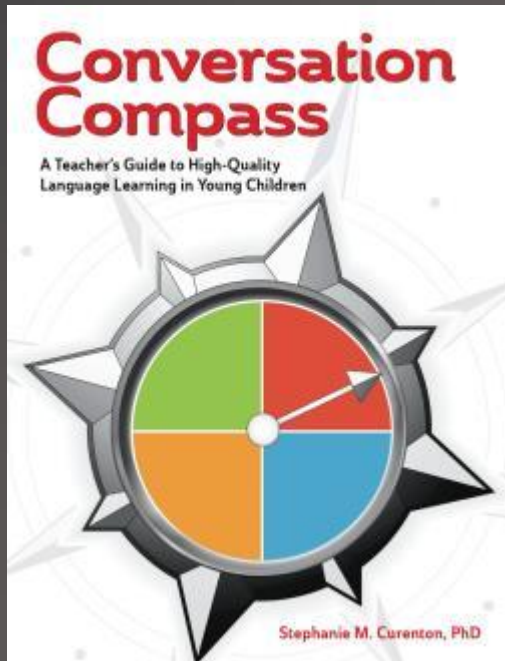


What is the Conversation Compass Approach?

a conversation-based instructional support approach used to promote young children's thinking and language skills in early childhood classrooms.

**Teacher's Workbook
&
Online Course
&
Web-based Trainings**

Conversation Toolkit



Conversation Compass Tool Kit



The Compass

The Compass is divided into four conceptual paths. These paths include Literacy Reasoning, Science Reasoning, Math Reasoning, and Social Reasoning. These conceptual paths were chosen because they map onto key skills children will encounter in kindergarten.

The arrow within the center of the compass contains the categories for the question trail—informing, analyzing, and brainstorming.



The Feedback Loop

The foundation of being a good conversation partner rests on knowing how to use a conversation feedback loop to keep the conversation going. The three important parts of a feedback loop are—asking open-ended questions, actively listening, and mirroring to expand and clarify what has been said.



The Map

The Map is a step-by-step planning form for writing down your instructional conversation plan. By using the Compass in conjunction with the Map you can be sure you are incorporating all of the key elements of the Conversation Compass approach into your plans. The more you use the map, the better you will become at leading instructional peer conversations.



The Question Trail

The foundation of the Question Trail is open-ended questions that allow children the opportunity to talk freely and to express their thought processes and opinions. Open-ended questions not only allow children to talk, but they also foster their thinking and creativity. The goal is not to be preoccupied with whether or not children answer the questions correctly. It is more important that children have the chance to talk about what they think and their ideas. Think about open-ended questions as falling into three categories—informing, analyzing, and brainstorming.



Tracking Peer Conversations

The Tracking Peer Conversations form is a note-taking tool to be used while observing children during small group and peer play activities.



If each and every day [children] are invited to talk about their ideas and experiences and to listen to those of their classmates, they will learn that conversation is a natural and important part of learning

--From Lisa Burman, *Are You Listening?* (2009, p. 47)

FOR ON-SITE & ONLINE TRAININGS ON:

- ❖ Cultural Competence for Early Childhood Professionals
- ❖ Conversation Compass Approach
(www.conversationcompass.com)

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Thank you!!

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www.conversationcompass.com

The Conversation Compass

The Ecology of School Readiness Lab

The Conversation Compass® is a conversation-based instructional approach designed to enhance classroom conversations. The W. K. Kellogg Foundation has funded the development of the Conversation Compass approach. The goal for the approach is to build teachers' ability to engage in culturally-responsive instructional peer conversations by fostering high-quality language learning environments and better teacher-to-child and peer-to-peer communication. For more information:

- ⇒ Browse www.conversationcompass.com
- ⇒ Purchase *Conversation Compass: A Teacher's Guide to High-Quality Language Learning in Young Children* (www.redleafpress.org/Conversation-Compass-P1339.aspx)
- ⇒ Enroll in the online course at www.conversationcompass.com/workbook-and-registration.html

Dr. Stephanie M. Curenton

Stephanie M. Curenton, Ph.D. is the Director of the Ecology of School Readiness (ESR) Lab. She was trained as a developmental and community psychologist, and her passion lies in promoting the health and education of young children by using research to inform culturally responsive teaching practices and socially equitable public policies.



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