

DiALoG Dimension: Co-constructing

As you use the DiALoG Tool in your classroom, you will determine if the following statement is Not Descriptive, Somewhat Descriptive, or Very Descriptive of the discussion you observe.

Students construct or refine their thinking in ways that build on what others had to say.

To help determine how well the statement describes the discussion you observe, you might also consider:

At the Very Descriptive level, students move beyond refining an individual idea. They consistently work together to construct and refine an idea that is based on or predicated on the contributions of multiple people. Rather than merely thinking of a new question to pose after listening to others, students work together to develop an idea and move it forward.

Possible student statements that indicate students are co-constructing:

- *Building on what ____ said,*
- *Kind of like what ____ said,*
- *Our group thought that*
- *I disagree with what ____ said because*
- *Earlier, people were talking about . . . , and I think that*
- *Now that you said that, it makes me wonder*

Useful teacher prompts to model or provide opportunities for students to demonstrate co-constructing:

- *Is there a way that we can combine these ideas?*
- *How does that relate to what others said?*

Responsive Mini-Lesson Summaries

The Responsive Mini-Lesson (RML) summaries below are intended to help you understand how the lessons help students build facility with co-constructing during a scientific discussion and to determine which RML is an appropriate fit for your students.

Not Descriptive

At the Not Descriptive level, students rarely build on ideas offered by other students and might be engaging in conversation in ways that inhibit co-constructing. This might indicate that students have yet to be introduced to co-constructing, and/or they have not had time to practice building ideas together.

To respond to a score of Not Descriptive, this lesson asks students to work with sentence frames in order to practice co-constructing ideas. Students discuss both everyday ideas as well as science ideas. This accessible content helps students identify and understand the importance of co-constructing ideas when working with others. The lesson concludes with pairs recording some of the co-constructed ideas they discussed and then sharing those ideas with another pair. The goal of this lesson is to help students identify and understand the importance of co-constructing ideas when working with others.

Somewhat Descriptive

At the Somewhat Descriptive level, students sometimes build on ideas offered by other students. However, they are not always consistent and/or self-reflective in this practice. For instance, they might not refine their own ideas as a result of what they have heard from others.

To respond to a score of Somewhat Descriptive, this lesson has students working in groups in which each group member reads different information about mosquitofish. Group members then share what they learned in order to evaluate claims and practice revising critiques to make them helpful for moving the conversation forward. The goal of this lesson is to help students co-construct complex ideas by sharing thinking and evidence.