

DiALoG Dimension: Critiquing

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 offer helpful critiques for arguments made by others.

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

At the Very Descriptive Level, students are consistently willing to call into question the ideas of their peers and to do so in a thoughtful and respectful manner.

Possible student statements that indicate students are critiquing:

- *I understand what you are saying, but*
- *If that was true, then wouldn't . . . ?*
- *Have you thought about . . . ?*
- *I see it in a different way. I think that*

Useful teacher prompts to model or provide opportunities for students to demonstrate critiquing:

- *Can anyone challenge the ideas offered?*
- *Does anyone have another way of seeing this?*
- *Do any of you disagree?*
- *Why do you disagree?*

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 critiquing 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 offer helpful critiques of arguments made by others. This might indicate that students have not yet been formally introduced to this practice and/or are providing unhelpful critiques of arguments made by others.

To respond to a score of Not Descriptive, this lesson has students define and identify helpful critiques as they analyze short examples of dialogue between students in a fictitious science class. At the conclusion of the lesson, students use a class T-chart to summarize both helpful and unhelpful ways to offer critiques. This accessible content helps students develop an initial understanding of offering critiques. The goal of this lesson is to provide students with an opportunity to define and practice identifying examples of both helpful and unhelpful critiques during science argumentation.

Somewhat Descriptive

At the Somewhat Descriptive level, students sometimes offer helpful critiques of arguments made by others; however, they are not doing so consistently. For instance, some critiques that are offered are not delivered in a respectful way.

To respond to a score of Somewhat Descriptive, this lesson has students discuss short examples of dialogue between students in a fictitious science class who are making scientific arguments. Each example contains both helpful and unhelpful critiques. Students revise unhelpful critiques in each dialogue in order to make them more helpful for moving the conversation forward. At the conclusion of the lesson, students use a class T-chart to summarize both helpful and unhelpful ways to offer critique. The goals of this lesson are to provide students with an opportunity to identify and practice revising both helpful and unhelpful critiques during scientific argumentation.