

Intervention Name: Math Talk

Grades: K-12

Description:

Teachers can promote greater student ‘risk-taking’ in mathematical learning when they cultivate a positive classroom atmosphere for math discussions while preventing peers from putting each other down.

Materials:

Problem-solving tasks

Steps:

- The teacher models behavioral expectations for open, interactive discussions.
- When students engage in interactive discussions, the teacher praises students for their class participation and creative attempts at problem-solving, and regularly point out that incorrect answers and misunderstandings should be celebrated – as they often lead to breakthroughs in learning.
 - The teacher uses open-ended comments (e.g., “What led you to that answer?”) as tools to draw out students and encourage them to explore and apply math concepts in group discussion.
- Students are also encouraged in a supportive manner to evaluate each other’s reasoning.
 - The teacher needs to intervene immediately to prevent negative student comments or ‘put-downs’ about peers.

Reference: Cooke & Adams, 1998