

Say Something

Purpose

Say Something is a paired reading strategy developed by Agawa and Harste (2001) for constructing meaning from text-based information. This strategy incorporates incremental stopping points to check for understanding. Through structured exchanges, partners develop relationships between new information and what they already know or believe. This thinking out loud, supported by attentive listening, enhances individual and shared understandings.

Intention

This strategy focuses attention, even when energy is low or distraction is high. It provides a time efficient and balanced method for examining information. This strategy provides a foundation of shared information and an exchange of perspectives that, in many cases, illuminates thinking and clarifies understanding.

Instructions to Group Leader

1. Explain to group members that they will be reading individually to a designated stopping point and then engaging in a brief exchange of ideas. These might include a brief summary, a key point, an interesting idea, a new connection or a question.
2. Once each partner has reached the chosen stopping point, partners pause and "Say Something" to each other. Note: The statement should be fairly brief and succinct.
3. Partners continue this process until the selection is completed.
4. After the designated amount of time, widen the conversation (configure quartets, table groups or full group).

Logistics

Materials and Preparation

Choose and duplicate for each participant an appropriate piece of text and identify several stopping points.

Public timer

PowerPoint® direction slides

Time

Varies depending on the reading; generally 15-20 minutes

Grouping: Pairs



Tips

Choose a reading selection that is not too long, relevant to your group's work and lends itself to segmentation.

Be sure partners sit side-by-side so the text is a focusing point for their conversation and to minimize room volume.

Use a public timer to balance time, talk and task completion.

Variations

Have partners decide together how far they will read before stopping and exchanging comments.

Use this protocol with other focusing materials such as data, student work products, rubrics, lesson plans.

