

INCREASING STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

Through Discussion Intervention Strategies

Concern:

During discussions, there is often unequal participation. During lecture or discussion, a select few students tend to be the ones posing questions or providing answers. Relating to this, discourse is usually teacher-directed as opposed to student-directed.

Evidence that this problem exists:

- Not all students participate in the whole class discussions - it tends to be a select few always answering questions or posing questions
- Many of the students who aren't answering are clearly unengaged in the lesson - they are talking to other students, staring off into space
- There are also students that while not visibly unengaged, as evidenced by how they are tracking the talkers, seem to seldom participate.
- Later, students do not recall what was talked about during the discussion

Our Research Question

If students initiate line of inquiry and follow-up discussion is student-led in order to promote critical thinking, will equitable conversation occur?

Based on observations, our hypothesis as to roots of this issue:

- I am talking to them more than they are talking to me.
- They are just trying to give me the answers I want to hear, rather than having a meaningful discussion of the subject.
 - I hypothesize that this might be occurring due to the structure of their past science courses and other classes. For example, they might be used to the format where the teacher poses a question and calls on students until someone says the answer the teacher wants to hear.
 - In the past, students may not have been taught how to or been given talk move strategies in order to know how to have a meaningful discussion. They may not have been pushed to explain their thinking beyond just getting the correct answer or taught that it's okay to have argumentation/debate in the educational setting.

Based on observations, our hypothesis as to roots of this issue:

- They are not interested in the discussion for a multitude of possible reasons -they don't feel they have a role in it, lack of confidence, lack of interest in the subject, lack of opportunities to share.
 - In terms of lack of opportunities to share in past science courses, this may be the result of the aforementioned discussion strategy where the teacher asks a questions and the students try to respond with the correct answer. They may not have engaged previously in discussions where questions are more open-ended. In addition, previous science courses may also have heavily depended on lectures. The teacher may have instructed the new information without providing opportunity for students to ask questions or engage in meaningful discussion.
 - Lack of confidence in sharing ties back to the fact that students may not have been taught how to have a meaningful discussion and debate using respectful talk moves. Students may have been ridiculed for sharing the wrong answer in class before or not feel that the sharing environment in the classroom is safe/comfortable.
 - Students may not feel they have a role in the discussion, or have confidence, if they are used to other students in the classroom always dominating the discussion. It may be hard to jump into a discussion where the same few kids are always talking.



THE INTERVENTIONS

Katie – Third Grade

I collected qualitative data and anecdotal notes on student participation over the course of five weeks to track progress towards my end goal.

DATE: 2/13/18	ACTIVITY: Engineer in a bag INTERVENTION STRATEGY: using think pair share and group before whole class
STUDENT NAME:	# OF TIMES PARTICIPATED IN DISCUSSION:
[Redacted]	
[Redacted]	
[Redacted]	
[Redacted]	
[Redacted]	
[Redacted]	
[Redacted]	
[Redacted]	
[Redacted]	
[Redacted]	
[Redacted]	
[Redacted]	
[Redacted]	


- great argument
- students who don't normally participate in whole class discussion did more
- everyone participated in TPS
- small group discussions were productive on task

Reader Response Checklist, © Karen Haag, www.LikeToRead.com, for use by classroom teachers, 3/12

Reader Response Checklist
(One sheet per group. Choose a leader and a recorder.)
Date Feb 5-9

Leader: [Redacted]
Recorder: [Redacted]

Book Title: The BFG ✓
Page we read to: _____
Pages in book: _____



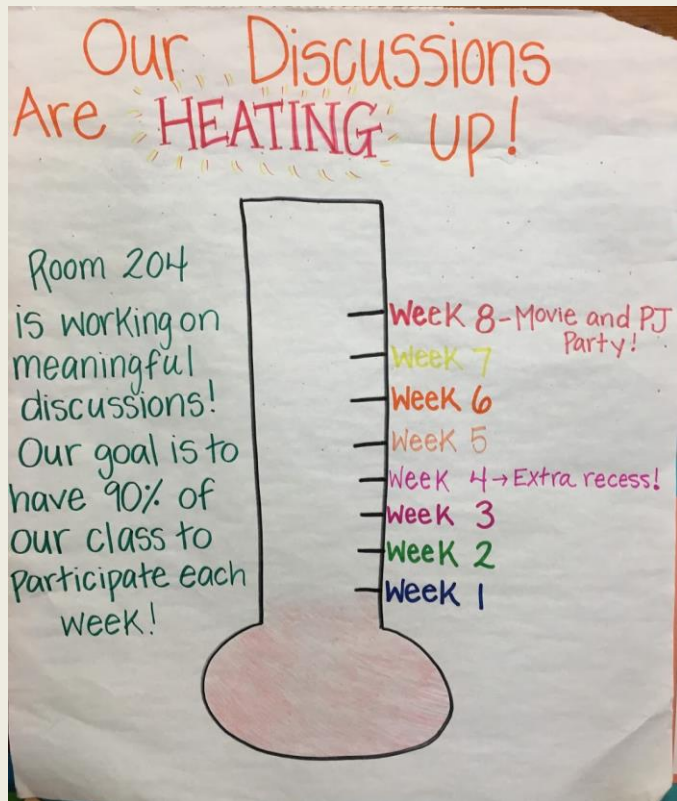
Names of Literature Circle Members	Lead Question	Follow-Up	Reference the Text	Compliment or Encouragement	TOTAL
[Redacted]		/			13
[Redacted]		/			11
[Redacted]		/			10
[Redacted]		/			8
[Redacted]		/			10
[Redacted]	/				8

The Goal:

Higher levels of student participation in discussion will concurrently lead to increased student inquiry, critical thinking, and confidence.

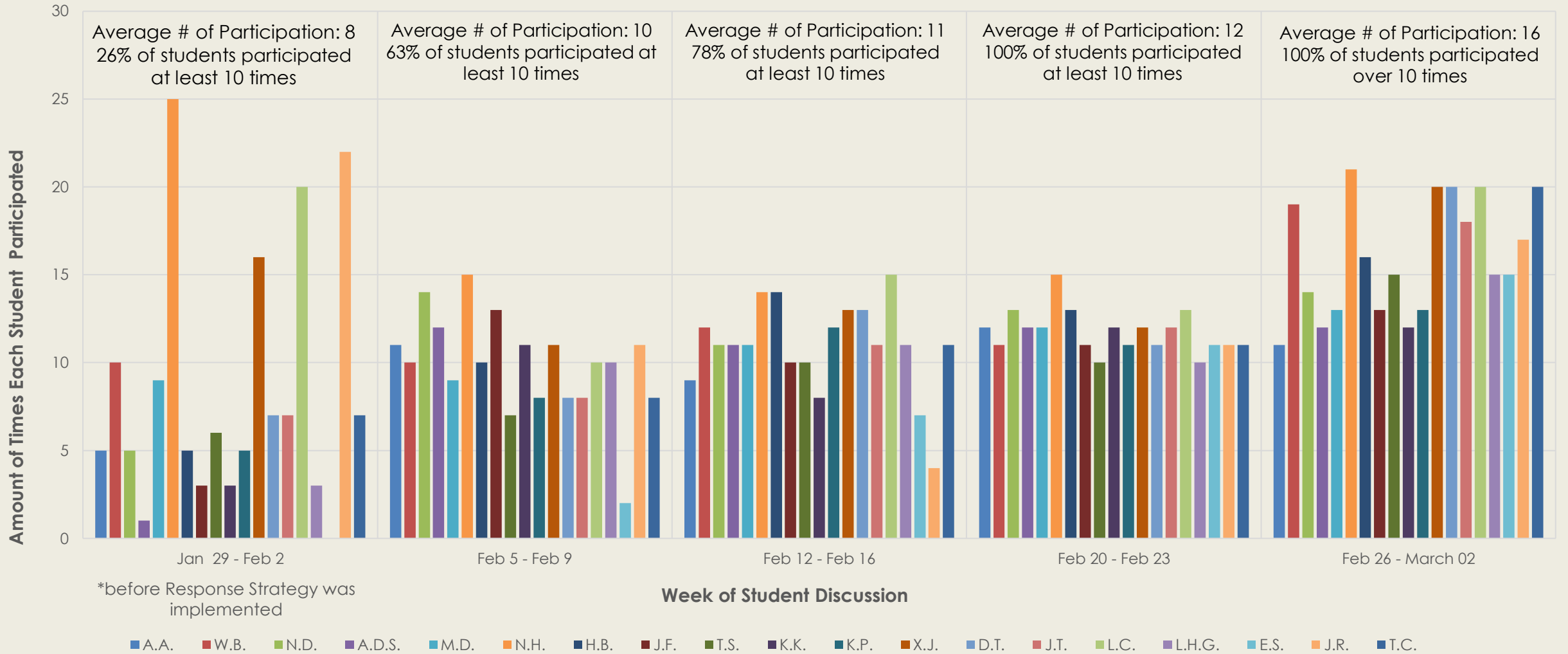
Implementing a “discussion manager” job in reading centers for each book club group. Each week, there will be a new discussion manager assigned for each group, who is required to come up with ‘thick’ (deep, meaningful, thought provoking) questions about their book for their book club group.

During small center discussions with me, instead of my asking all of the prompting questions, the discussion manager will pose the questions. A different person in the group will have the role of ‘recorder,” and their job during each book club meeting will be to record who has been giving input or adding to the discussion.



Students were given an incentive to motivate their classmates to participate –if 90% of the class participates each week, they are working towards whole class rewards! This encouraged students who rarely spoke to speak up, and those who overpowered discussions to step back and give others a chance to speak.

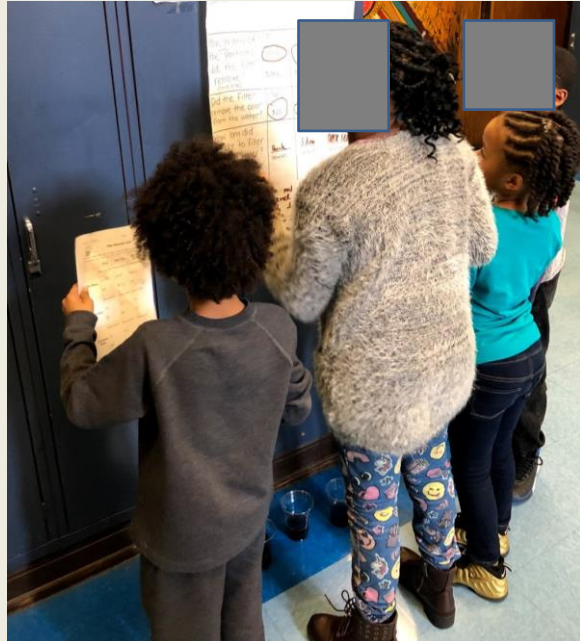
Book Club Discussion Implementing Reader Response Strategy



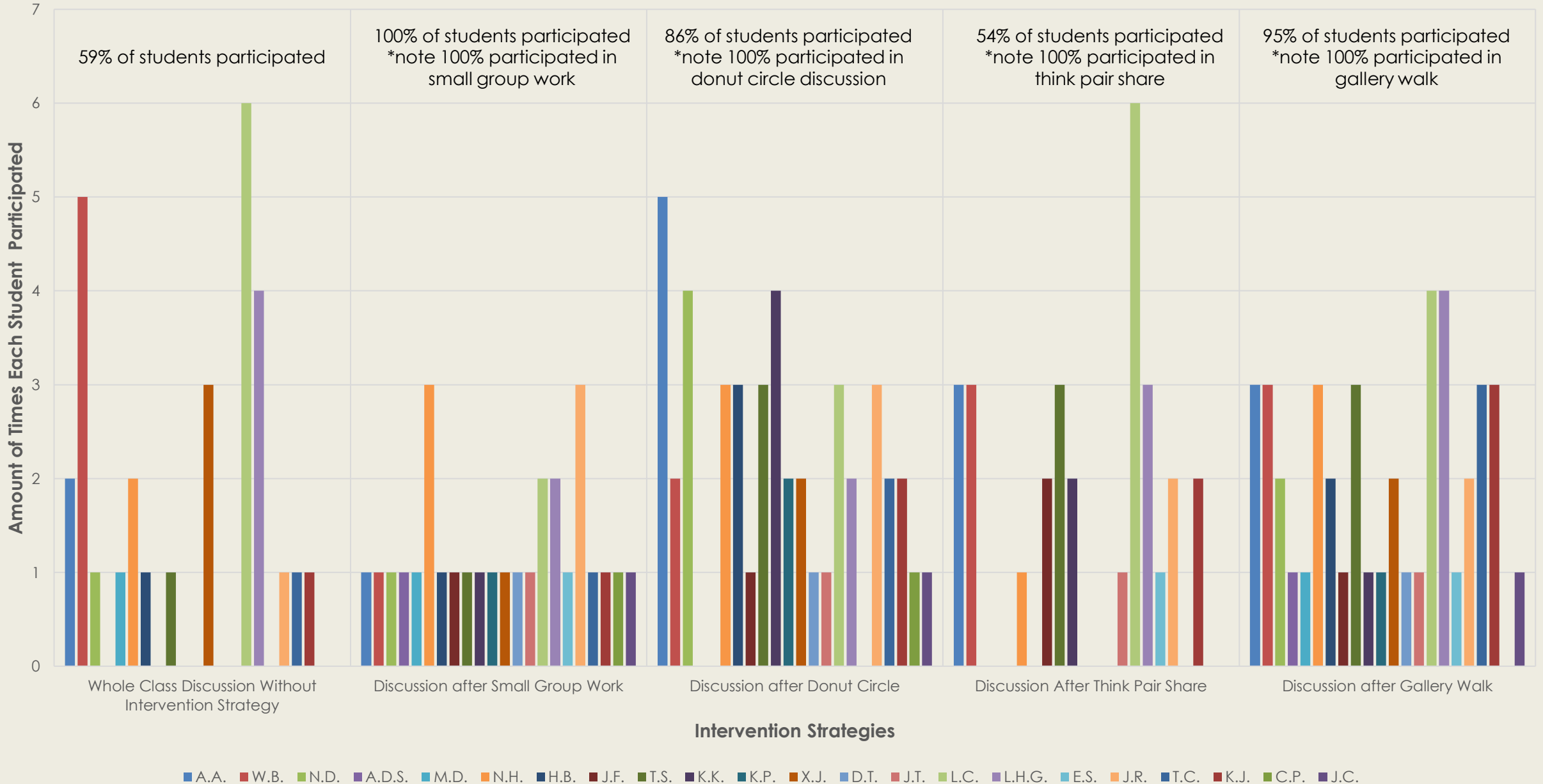
Changing the way class discussions are structured. Usually after students complete an experiment in science, the teacher will ask questions about it, to which the students volunteer answers. Then, students will write a conclusion to explain their thinking. One way to change this format would be to do different discussion strategies. By doing a discussion strategy such as donut circles (outer ring and inner ring of students where students rotate partners and discuss), students would have the opportunity to talk to multiple peers one-on-one. This would allow students to hear and discuss more ideas with their peers.

After this, we would debrief as a whole class so students could discuss their conversations. During the discussion strategies, I tallied the amount of times students participated and took anecdotal notes on their conversations during the donut circle.

- Small group discussion
- Donut Circles
- Gallery Walk
- Think-Pair Share



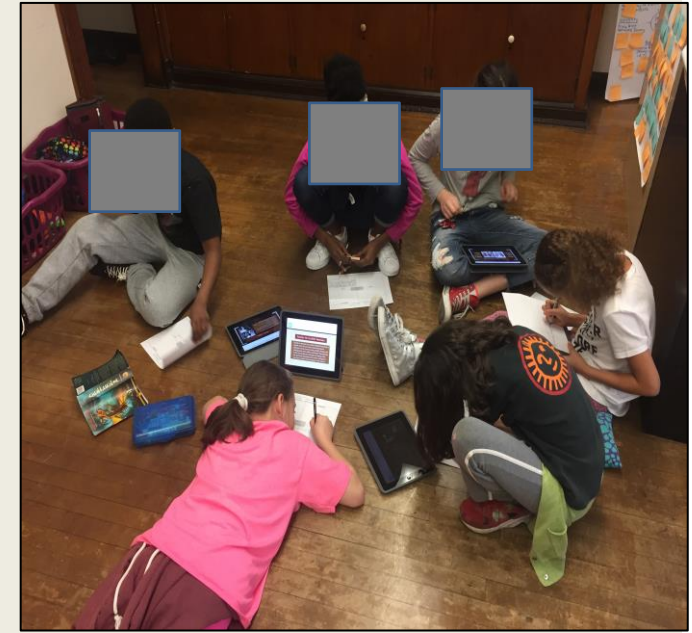
Science Discussions with Intervention Strategies



Emily – Fourth Grade

Jigsaw Puzzle

- To learn about the Harlem Renaissance, small groups became “experts” in a specific category (music, visual art, clothing, literature). They then were split into mixed “jigsaw” groups to share their findings.
- In the “expert” group, students researched facts together on provided websites.
- In the “jigsaw” groups, students discussed each category and wrote it down.



The Jigsaw Puzzle discussion strategy allowed for students to productively work with different classmates in two different settings. Students were excited to be experts and took it responsibly. When sharing with their “jigsaw” groups, each student had the opportunity to help their peers with completing the worksheet. This strategy allowed for all students to participate in the learning process.

Name: _____ 207

Music: tinyurl.com/ybg9sxov Literature/Poetry: tinyurl.com/y93fzrlg
 Visual Art: tinyurl.com/zhrndkt4 Clothing: tinyurl.com/y9asxkf5

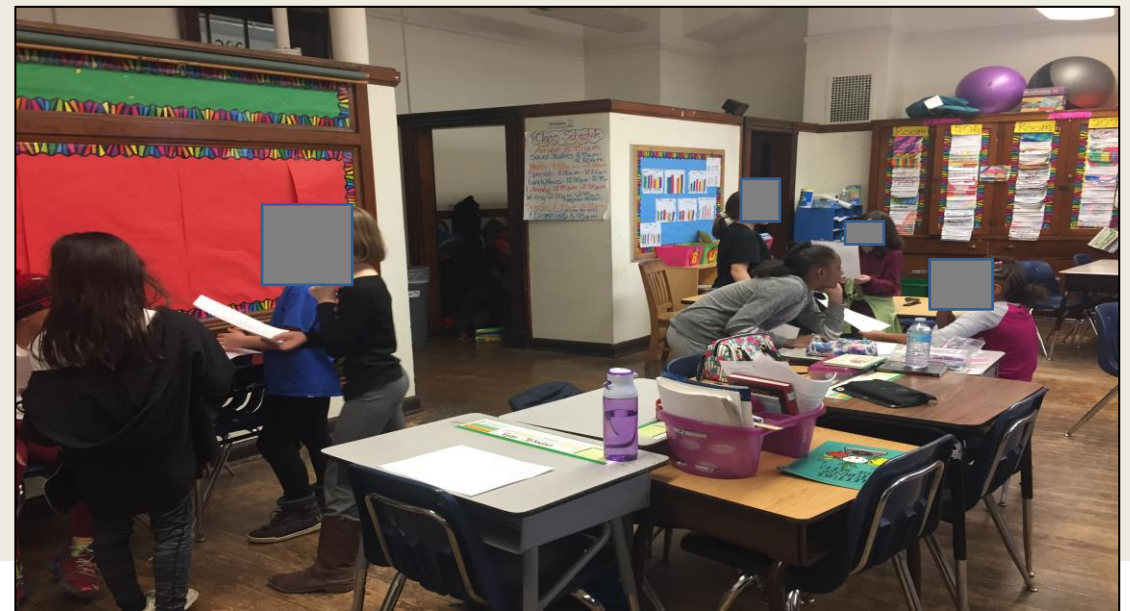
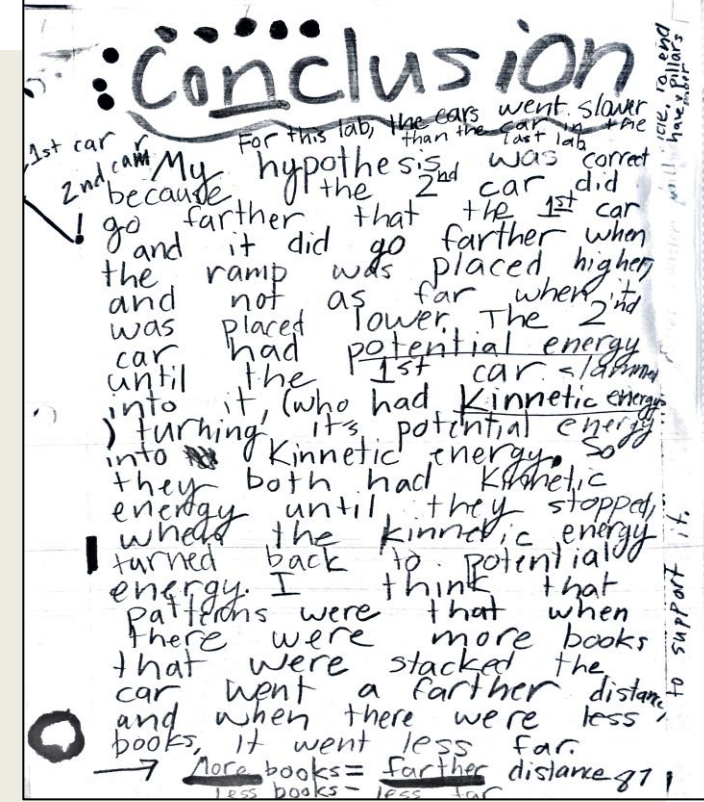
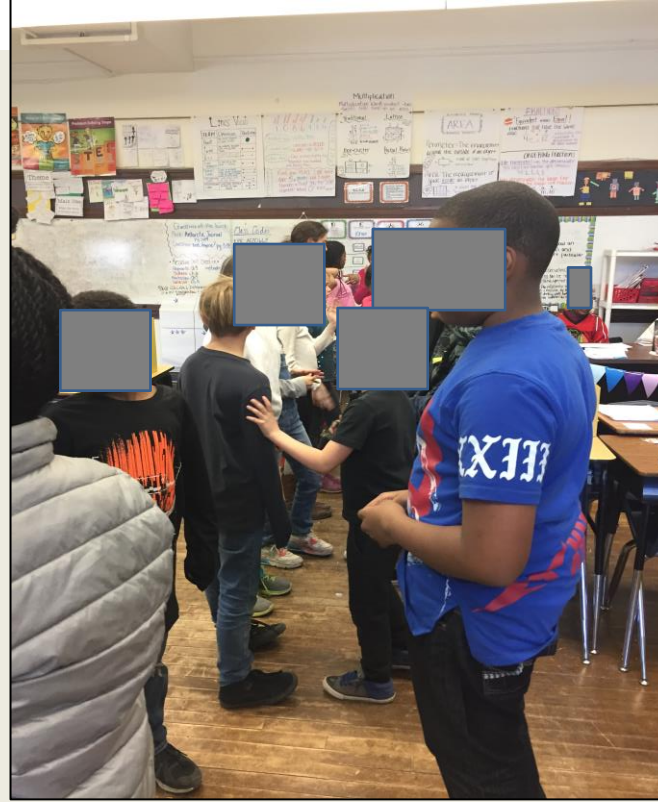
MUSIC	LITERATURE/POETRY
1. Wealthy blacks felt that jazz music was more acceptable than piano. 2. Duke Ellington started his own band in 1923. 3. Duke Ellington won over a dozen Grammy awards. 4. Fats (last name) was put into the Grammy hall of fame. 5. In 1915 “Jelly Roll Blues” was the first jazz composition.	1. Some African American writers and poets continued to write in traditional English literature. 2. But some made new styles that received critical praise. 3. Many of the African American writers were authors, poets, and journalists. 4. Though literature themes were diverse, they mostly focused on social pride. 5. The staff made in this era helped lay the foundation of the civil rights movement.
VISUAL ART	CLOTHING
1. Visual artists of the Harlem Renaissance attempted to win control of these representations of their art. 2. Many of these artists produced better world war one black painters and sculptors had rarely concerned them selves with African American matters. 3. In the 1920s New York became the center of art education. 4. The museum of modern art was founded in 1929. 5. Seven artists were selected to reflect the broad range of the art produced in painting, sculpting and photography.	1. dresses and clothing items were made to fit the body due to fact that people were dancing and staying active. 2. clothing was designed to express grace and elegance. 3. silk gloves and high heeled shoes were essential. 4. corset and flapper dresses with thin stone and embellishments were extremely popular. 5. cloche hats originating from France, and made out of velvet, satin or felt, became popular.

HARLEM RENAISSANCE

Donut Circle

- Several times in science and social studies, students engaged in the donut circle discussion strategy.
- In science, students did a donut circle after completing labs and before writing their individual conclusions. Students discussed the guiding questions that they would later use to write a conclusion (e.g. was your hypothesis correct, what would you change next time).
- In social studies, students did a donut circle to discuss the stanzas of Langston Hughes' "A Dream Deferred"

The Donut Circle discussion strategy enabled students to talk 1-on-1 with differing students. They were able to share their thoughts about the stated prompt and learn connections/ideas from their peers. In science, there were improvements in thoroughness in conclusion responses.



Reading Stamina Challenge + Think-Pair-Share

- Started Reading Stamina Challenge for read to self time – a timer was set for 10 minutes for students to practice reading stamina. I would observe students and mark them down each time I saw them look away from book (out of 10 points).
- Many students bought in to this and were excited when we'd do Reading Stamina.
- After Reading Stamina, students would discuss their reading content with their table groups.
- Then, students would share out to the whole class

Students were excited to share with their table groups and the whole class about their reading. Since everyone was reading, all students had content to share. I observed an increase in student participation during whole class discussion.

DATE: 3/12/18	ACTIVITY: Reading Discussion INTERVENTION STRATEGY: Reading Stamina Challenge
STUDENT NAME:	# OF TIMES PARTICIPATED IN DISCUSSION:
	11
	1
	absent
	11
	1
	1
	absent
	absent
	11
	11
	1
	11
	1
	11
	11
	111
	1
	absent
	absent
	11
	111
	11
	11
	1
	absent
Anecdotal Notes:	- 11/20 students participated in whole class. - all students on-task while confident sharing - most engaged with new reading genre