

A Conversation About Teaching and Learning, Leading to an Opportunity for Marty to *Put Ideas on the Table*

Tracy: “Looking back at the lesson that you observed for me, I’m excited by the kids’ engagement during the group work.”

Marty: “So you’re energized by the group work participation.”

Tracy: “I am. It’s not Cooperative Learning, but I’m not seeing the need for all that structure. To my eye, it looked as though every student was engaged in the groups. The flexibility of group work allows students more open choices.”

Marty “So... Your view on group work is that it seems to increase student engagement without the necessity of the structures of Cooperative Learning.”

Tracy “Yeah, less planning with more flexibility – and look at the engagement we saw!”

At this point, Marty might *Put an Idea on the Table* by:

Stating a Focus

“Viewing the importance of actively engaging students in their learning, I’m wondering about strategies for guiding the focus of the conversation.”

Explaining His/Her Reasoning

“Seeing how engaged students can become when they get to talk with their peers, I’m realizing the importance of defining tasks and roles that will yield information to guide where the teaching goes next.”

Identifying Her/His Feelings

“Actually, I’m concerned about the flexibility in group work – in contrast to the organization and focus that Cooperative Learning structures offer.”

Revealing a Perspective

“I’m looking at this through the eyes of an assessor – thinking of that suggestion that Wiggins and McTighe make that we learn to “think like an assessor.” What do we learn from a group activity, specifically about the students’ levels of mastery?”

Framing the Wider Context Around the Topic

“Considering how precious instructional time is in classrooms, all that we’ve looked into as a staff about effective assessment for learning, and the evidence that we’ve considered about the effectiveness of Cooperative Learning in contrast to group work...”

Offering Concrete Examples

*“Picturing structures like **Rally Robin**, **Fan ‘n Pick**, or **Timed Pair Share** it seems that students’ roles are defined, that they get opportunities to work with peers so that a teacher can observe results, and that what students know and still have to learn becomes visible to them and a teacher.”*