

Chalk Talk



Looking at the topic or question written on chart paper:

- What ideas come to mind when you consider this idea, question, or problem?
- What connections can you make to others' responses?
- What questions arise as you think about the ideas and consider the responses and comments of others?

purpose

This routine asks learners to consider ideas, questions, or problems by silently responding in writing both to the prompt and the thoughts of others.

Introducing
& Exploring
Ideas

PURPOSE

What kind of thinking does this routine encourage?

This routine asks learners to consider ideas, questions, or problems by silently responding to both the prompt and the thoughts of others. It provides flexibility to move from one idea to another in a nonlinear way, to formulate questions as they arise, & take time needed to think through the collective information produced.

APPLICATION

When and where can it be used?

Use this routine:

- Using single words, phrases or questions related to a topic of study. Questions generate a richer level of discussion and interactivity.
- Can be used as a reflection on learning at the end of a topic or unit of study

ASSESSMENT

How can I use this routine as an assessment?

Look for relevance of the contributions students are making.

- Are the contributions related to the big ideas or are they peripheral connections?
- Are students able to put forth their own ideas & original thinking, or do they hang back & echo the responses of others?
- Do the questions posed go to the heart & substance of the topic or are they tangential?
- How are students responding to the postings of others?
- Are they building understanding by incorporating ideas & wonderings stated by others, or do they find it difficult to integrate ideas of other students?

LAUNCH

What are the steps needed for starting and using this routine?

1. **Set up** → Write each prompt on a large sheet of chart paper & place on tables around the room. Place markers at each table or pass them out to individuals.
2. **Chalk Talk Prompt** → Invite learners to think about their reactions to the prompt & record their ideas & questions. Encourage learners to read & add to each other's responses with additional comments & questions.
3. **Circulate** → After providing time, have students circulate silently to another prompt/ chart, reading & adding to the prompts and responses as they build. Continue as needed.
4. **Facilitate** → You may need to prompt the group about types of responses they can make as they read: connecting ideas, elaborating on others ideas, commenting on what others have written, asking others to respond with more detail and so on. There is no reason why you cannot be an active participant & model responding, questioning & adding insights and wonderings.
5. **Share the thinking** → If students rotated as a group allow them to return to their original starting place to read the contributions of others. All time for the group to review the various chalk talks. Ask the group
 - What themes emerged?
 - Where were common issues & reactions seen?
 - What questions surprised you?
 Debrief the process itself, asking the group how their thinking developed during the Chalk Talk.