

Guide to Talk Moves

Embracing Humanity means valuing who learners really are, not who they're expected to be. It involves seeing the humanity in others, our interdependence, and our contexts, histories, dreams, and emotions as important parts of us. It also involves recognizing how issues of power and oppression shape people's full experiences in the world.

What are talk moves? Talk moves are the pedagogical moves that educators make to facilitate and scaffold engagement in ISL among youth without being the one doing all the talking or decision-making.

This guide highlights pedagogical moves to create and sustain an equitable learning community. It serves as one example of how to enact the Core Equitable Practice (CEP) of Critically Being With, as described in the Embracing Humanity Insights 2.7 document.

Questions for Group Discussions

- How have I/we sought to embrace humanity in my/our program -- who youth are and what they bring -- their feelings, ideas, histories, hopes and fears?
- Have I/we been more successful in embracing humanity with some youth than others?
- What makes me/us uncomfortable with embracing humanity of youth? Why?
- From my/our own experience, what talk moves have I/we used or experienced to support embracing youth humanity?
- What are some ways embracing humanity talk moves might be combined with other practices (e.g., recognizing)?
- What talk moves have I/we already used? Which do I/we want to add? Which ones will be the most impactful to embrace humanity with youth? Which will be difficult?
- In the most recent lesson taught, how could I/we integrate these talk moves to transform who/what matters in STEM?

Things to Keep in Mind

This tool has been designed with partner educators. Themes include making space to help youth share how they feel, acknowledging and amplifying experiences, and sharing adult feelings.

Some talk moves can work for multiple practices. For example, questions to embrace humanity may also work to critically be with youth

This tool can be used alongside the Equity Compass tool to enhance discussions on talk move goals and outcomes.

Some of these talk moves may look like ones you are used to seeing, such as revoicing. However, **we call attention to when and how these moves are used to desettle what/who matters in STEM and what expertise is and can look like.**

Examples of Talk Moves

Making space to help youth share how they feel, are, and want to feel and be

Asking youth to share feelings and experiences from their lives

“How was your school day today?”

“How’s your day going? Thumb up, down, or sideways!” Followed by “Anybody want to share a story about your day with the rest of us?”

“What was the best part of your day?”

Asking youth to share feelings or experiences that emerge in ISL

“How do we all feel about that idea?”

“What do you think went well today/what did you enjoy? What was challenging about today’s project/activity?”

“Are there any moments in particular that you want to highlight?”

“What are you most proud of about today?”

Asking youth to share their hoped-for feelings and experiences in ISL

“What are some things we do here that help you feel like you belong? What are some things you wish we would do?”

“What kind of projects matter the most to you? Why?”

Supporting and Amplifying emotions and experience

Revoicing/ re-embodiment positive emotions and experiences youth express

“So, I am hearing you saying that ...”, followed by “How do we all feel/think about what [name] just shared with us?”

Body language is important. Educators can join youth in “happy dance” celebrations when things go right/problems are solved.

Multitasking can be seen by youth as adults only half-listening to them and only half-valuing their ideas. Conversely, when educators take a moment to pause, physically turn towards youth, make eye contact, and consciously nod while actively listening to youth ideas shared, youth will remember this.

Acknowledging and empathizing the feelings and emotions youth express

“Getting frustrated is totally OK. We’re all learning during this process together!”

[When youth share ideas and accomplishments] “That’s cool! How did you make that part move like that?”

Sharing educators’ own feelings when appropriate and helpful

Sharing educators’ own positive feelings and experiences

“I am so glad to learn with you about [the specific things the educator learned].”

“You all made my day. It is so exciting to see how you did [the specific activities youth did].”

Acknowledging educators’ own vulnerability

“I’m sorry I didnt notice [x] about you... Next time I will make sure ...”

“Oh wow, I don’t know. I’ll have to look that up and do some reading on that for next time!”