

# Instructional Strategies that Support Implementation of Disciplinary Communication in Hybrid Classrooms

## Focus Questions

*What are some examples of instructional strategies teachers can use to implement the teaching practices in the Disciplinary Communication Frame?*

*How are these strategies similar to or different from ones you currently use in your teaching?*

*What is one way you could use one of these strategies in your classroom?*

Disciplinary communication incorporates a broad range of student products from spontaneous responses (think-pair-share, quick writes) to more polished, over-time products (debates, essays). Consequently, teachers can use many different instructional strategies to help build their students' oral and written communication skills. The instructional strategies we are highlighting represent the middle ground of that continuum and serve a number of purposes: (1) to deepen your understanding of the practice by looking at it through the lens of each element, (2) to see the need for purposeful planning, and (3) to acknowledge that it takes time to instruct and have students apply the skills of disciplinary communication.

**Disciplinary Communication—Element 1:** Provide multiple and supported opportunities for students to produce and fortify original disciplinary oral communication appropriate to task, purpose, and audience

*Instructional Strategy—Hot Seat (Wilhelm, 2002):* Hot Seat is a role-playing activity that builds students' comprehension while providing structured opportunities to produce original oral communication. Students assume the roles of characters (historical or literacy) or concepts (e.g., red blood cell, volcano, integer) and take turns being interviewed by classmates while sitting on a chair designated as the "hot seat." It is called Hot Seat because students have to think quickly and respond to their classmates' questions and comments.

Why Use This Strategy: Students need many opportunities to produce original oral output related to the content they are studying. This strategy helps students practice their speaking skills, analyze motivations of a character, and use critical thinking skills to formulate questions and answers.

When to Use This Strategy: Teachers use this strategy when they want students to have a deep understanding of the subject matter and the ability to communicate about it orally. It leads students through a structured series of steps in which they dig deeper into content while developing questioning skills and supporting opinions with evidence.

How to Use This Strategy: Generate a list of four characters or concepts related to the book or

topic you are studying. (For this example, we will assume it is a book.) Students choose or are assigned a character until each student has one. Students meet in like-groups to discuss character traits and prepare responses to questions about their character that other groups might ask. Then students return to their seats and generate two questions for the other characters. The questions need to be higher-level questions that cannot be answered yes or no. Have students get into groups of four, each student being a different character. Announce which character is on the hot seat. Students have five minutes to ask their questions while you circulate to provide feedback. This continues until all four students have been on the hot seat. As an extension, student volunteers form a panel of characters and take questions from the entire class. To conclude this activity, have students reflect on how it felt to step into the character's shoes, any new insights they gained about the character, and what they learned about formulating questions.

#### Primary Grade Example Lesson:

1. Explain that some questions help us think and learn more than others. Have a student come to the front of the room or select a student from Zoom and project on the screen. Ask a literal level question like 'What is your favorite sport?' Then ask, 'Why is X your favorite sport?' Have students discuss which question generated more information. With students, create an anchor chart that lists age-appropriate question stems that require in-depth responses.
2. To demonstrate the activity, take the hot seat while students ask you questions. Alternate between students who are in the classroom and those on online. Reinforce questions that generate an in-depth response by pointing to the anchor chart whenever a student asks one. Then let students take turns being on the hot seat.
3. After reading Paper Bag Princess by Robert Munch, have students generate questions they would like to ask each character. Reference the anchor chart as necessary. Write these questions on the whiteboard in Zoom or Google Meet.
4. Then take the hot seat as one of the characters and have students ask the questions they generated. Answer the questions as a think aloud to help students see that the answers were not literally stated in the book but are ones that must be inferred from the character's actions.
5. Next, either have a student take on a different character and assume the hot seat or continue in the role yourself if you believe the students need more support. Continue doing the whole class hot seat until you feel the students are ready to perform hot seat in small groups.

#### Intermediate Grade Example Lesson:

1. Explain to the students that they are going to be doing an activity called Hot Seat that helps them think more deeply about a character's motivation, perspective, and behavior. They are going to use the story of the three pigs to learn how to do Hot Seat and deepen

- their understanding of character perspectives.
2. Remind students about the Question Answer Relationship questions (right there, think and search, author and me, and on my own) they have been using throughout the year (Raphael, 1986). The focus of their questions for hot seat will be the ‘in your head’ section.
  3. Have students individually or in pairs in Zoom breakout rooms, take a few minutes and write down two “in your head” questions for each of the four characters: pig 1, 2, 3, and the wolf.
  4. Have a student volunteer be one of the characters as a model. Remind the student that he is to stay in character. Have the class ask that student their questions. Take questions from in the classroom and online. Emphasize the responses that show character perspective or motivation. Next, have the students get into groups of four in breakout rooms- each being one of the characters - and perform their own hot seat.
  5. Read the True Story of the Three Little Pigs by Jon Scieszka. Review how the perspectives in this version of the story differ from those in the traditional version. Have a discussion about how that would change some of the characters’ responses.
  6. Explain that they are going to apply what they have learned about perspective from the Three Little Pigs hot seat to their study of California missions and ranchos. Assign students roles, mission Indians, Franciscans, Presidio soldiers, and Mexican settlers. Working individually, students generate two questions they would ask the other groups to get their perspective of California life during this time period. Students are then placed into breakout rooms with like-groups to prepare responses to questions about their character that other groups might ask.
  7. Finally, students jigsaw into groups of four in breakout rooms with each student representing a different role. Announce which role is on the hot seat and give students five minutes to ask their questions while you join the breakout rooms and provide feedback. This continues until all four students have been on the hot seat.
  8. After all students have been on the hot seat, close the breakout rooms and bring the class back together to reflect on the activity and their new learning.

**Disciplinary Discussions—Element 2:** Provide extended and supported opportunities for students to produce and fortify original disciplinary written communication appropriate to task, purpose, and audience

*Instructional Strategy—3-2-1 Bridge* (Ritchhart, Church, & Morrison, 2011): This strategy activates prior knowledge before beginning a unit of study or a lesson and provides students with opportunities to produce original written output related to the topic. Students first brainstorm three words or thoughts that come to mind when they think about the topic being studied. Then they write two questions about the topic followed by one metaphor or simile. After completing the unit or lesson, students respond to the same prompts and reflect on what they have learned. The bridging part of the strategy is designed to help students synthesize

their prior knowledge, questions, and understandings with new ideas they develop as instruction progresses.

Why Use This Strategy: 3-2-1 Bridge is an instructional strategy in which students generate ideas, ask questions, and elaborate on ideas using writing as the primary means of communication. By helping students recognize and reflect on their own learning, it fosters the development of the metacognitive processes and strategies all learners need to be successful.

When to Use This Strategy: This strategy can be used in all subject areas to develop student understanding of a new topic or to uncover surprising or new knowledge about a familiar topic. It can also be used as a formative assessment. The bridging aspect of this strategy is most effective when your instruction takes student thinking in a new or different direction.

How to Use This Strategy: Distribute the graphic organizer (see Appendix A page XX) for students to record their responses. Ask students to generate three words or thoughts that come to mind when they think of the topic. Tell students not to overthink it! You are looking for their initial reactions. Then ask students to generate two questions that quickly come to mind as well as their own metaphor or simile for the topic. Teach the lesson or unit of study. Have students return to their graphic organizer and repeat these steps. Students can then work individually or with a partner to identify the 'bridge' between their initial learning and new learning. Facilitate whole class sharing of the bridges.

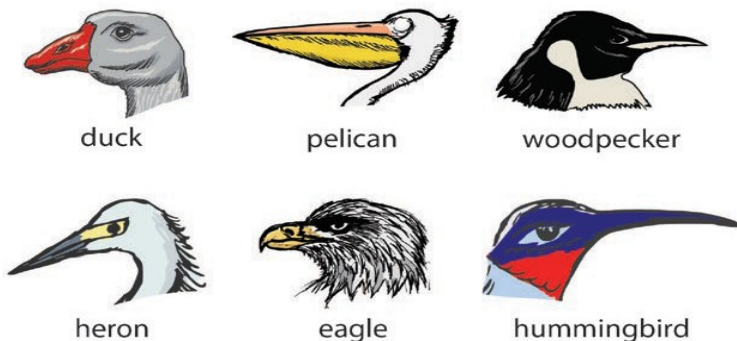
Primary Grade Example Lesson:

1. Teach similes to your students using mentor texts such as Quick as a Cricket by Audrey Wood, My Heart Is Like a Zoo by Michael Hall, or My Best Friend Is as Sharp as a Pencil by Hanoch Piven.
2. Distribute the 3-2-1 Bridge graphic organizer. Project a number of pictures of different bridges. Ask students to write into the chat three words that come to mind when you say the word bridge.
3. Then ask them to write into chat two questions about bridges.
4. Finally, ask students to write a simile on the Zoom whiteboard: A bridge is like a \_\_\_\_\_. For students who cannot write independently, you can create a class 3-2-1 Bridge and have student record their answers.
5. Teach your unit on bridges based on these Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS): K-2 ETS1-1 & 2: Before beginning to design a solution, it is important to clearly understand the problem. Develop a simple sketch, drawing, or physical model to illustrate how the shape of an object helps it function as needed to solve a given problem.
6. Have students return to their graphic organizer, and make sure this is in their learning packets, and repeat the three steps.

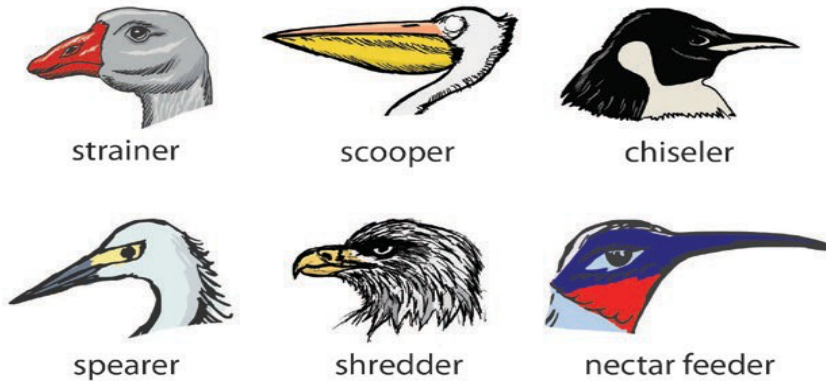
7. Ask students to compare their initial responses to their new responses. Ask the class what they have learned and record responses on the whiteboard.

Intermediate Grade Example Lesson:

1. Teach similes and metaphors. Use mentor texts to teach metaphors and similes like You're Toast by Nancy Loewen, Crazy Like a Fox by Loreen Leedy, Skin like Milk, and Hair of Silk by Brain Gabe, or Owl Moon by JanYolen. Play the metaphor game by asking students to write three random nouns on separate pieces of paper, put them in a hat, and pull out two. Then brainstorm with the class things they have in common. Have pairs of students pick two from the hat and create their own lists.
2. This is an introduction to a unit for NGSS 4-LS1-1: Construct an argument that plants and animals have internal and external structures that function to support survival, growth, behavior, and reproduction. Display a picture of different bird beaks (see figure 2) and ask students to turn to the correct page in their learning packets with the graphic organizer. Review the prompts with the students and ask them to write into that three words or thoughts that come to mind when they look at the bird beaks and two questions about the bird beaks. Then ask each student to write a metaphor or simile on the Zoom whiteboard.



3. Now display a picture of bird beaks that show their use (e.g., insect catcher, grain eater, nectar feeding). (See figure 3.) Ask students to repeat the three steps on their graphic organizer.



4. Prompt students to think about what they originally thought about the bird beaks. Then ask them to complete the bridge by writing into an online document how their thinking has changed based on the second picture.
5. Have students work in a breakout room with a partner and discuss the bridge to their new learning from the initial pictures and then have a few volunteers share their bridges with the entire class.
6. Begin the lesson or unit of study.

### **Disciplinary Communication—Element 1 and 2: Disciplinary Oral and Written Communication**

*Instructional Strategy—CSI: Color, Symbol, Image* (Ritchhart, Church, & Morrison, 2011): This strategy engages students in identifying and distilling the essential ideas from reading, viewing or listening by using a color, symbol, and image to represent the ideas. It is an effective tool for supporting synthesis of big ideas and provides a structured protocol for oral and written communication.

Why Use This Strategy: Using visuals as a way to represent the big ideas students identify helps them think, speak, and write metaphorically about those big ideas. It also enables students to make deeper connections with the content and promotes oral and written communication skills as students explain and support their representations of the big ideas. These nonlinguistic representations also enable students who are less proficient in English to demonstrate their understanding more easily.

When to Use This Strategy: This strategy can be used after reading, viewing, or listening as a way to promote oral and written communication, facilitate the discussion of a text or event, and increase comprehension. It can also be used to reflect on previous learning.

How to Use This Strategy: Distribute the graphic organizer. (See appendix A page XX.) Ask students to think about what they read, listened to, or viewed, and then choose three things

they found interesting, important, or insightful. (For this example, we will assume students read a text.) For one of those things, each student chooses a color that he/she feels best represents or captures the essence of that idea. Using crayons or colored pencils, students color the top half of the “Color” column of the graphic organizer. Under their color students explain why they chose it. Depending on grade level and language proficiency, the explanations may be a word or two up to a paragraph in length. Then students choose a symbol and an image to represent the other two ideas, sketch them in the “Symbol” and “Image” columns, and write an explanation for each. With a partner or in groups, students share their thinking citing evidence from the text.

#### Primary Grade Example Lesson:

1. Teach a few colors (green, yellow, orange, blue, red) and symbols (peace sign, flag, heart, lion, horseshoe, diamond) to your students using an anchor chart that can be added to throughout the year. My Many Colored Days by Dr. Seuss could be used to look at color in another way while Quick as a Cricket by Audrey Wood could be used to consider attributes of people or things as symbolism.
2. Read aloud a favorite story such as Ira Sleeps Over by Bernard Waber. Ask students to think about their favorite parts of the story. Write those on chart paper that is projected or the Zoom white board. Ask students to think what color would represent that part, e.g., orange for happiness, yellow for warmth, red for love and friendship.
3. Next, ask students to think about a symbol that could represent the story. What should emerge are the themes of friendship and being true to yourself, so perhaps a heart or a happy face would be appropriate.
4. Ask students what image depicts the big idea. You can explain that an image is like a snapshot of the story.
5. After reading a number of books on penguins, ask students to do their own CSI and online students can hold theirs up to the camera to share. Primary grade students might not write very much for their explanation, but you should give them an opportunity to capture and share some of their thinking.

#### Intermediate Grade Example Lesson:

1. Use an anchor chart to teach your students the meaning of colors to capture mood or tone. Begin with five or six basic ones (e.g., red, green, blue, orange, purple, or grey) and add to the chart throughout the year as students come across other examples.
2. Use another anchor chart to teach your students about symbols. Begin with symbols they know such as a stop sign, peace sign, or heart, and have students tell you what they represent. For example, a heart is often used as a symbol of love. You can also have them use symbols that are found on a keyboard.
3. Read a piece of text. It can be an historical speech, a picture book, a short story, a movie,

a piece of music, or a piece of art. Have students create their CSI in an online document noting their reasoning for choosing what they did. They can also use Jamboard (<https://jamboard.google.com>) to do this. To elicit responses from students who may need additional support, prompt with questions such as “How does your symbol represent the big idea?” or “How is your image connected to the big idea?”

4. With a group in a breakout room, have students discuss each of their choices and explain why they chose them.
5. Share out as a whole class.

*Instructional Strategy—Explanation Game (Ritchhart, Church, & Morrison, 2011):*

This strategy focuses initially on identifying something interesting about an object or idea: “I notice that...” It then follows that observation with the question: “Why is it that way?” or “Why did it happen that way?” The other people in the group try to answer the question or propose possible explanations and reasons. As these students share their ideas, the person asking the original question follows up by asking, “What makes you think so?” Student questions and explanations become visible to the class as they are shared. Responses to the routine also can be written down and recorded so that there is a class list of evolving ideas.

Why Use This Strategy: This strategy gets students to closely look at parts, features and details of an object or event and generate multiple explanations for why something is the way it is. This can get students thinking about causal explanations or explanations of purposes or both.

When to Use This Strategy: This strategy can be used with content that has various parts and functions what would allow for closer examination. They can include science phenomena, historical events, geographical images, art, or mathematical models. Students can work alone, in pairs, small groups, or whole class.

How to Use This Strategy: This strategy helps students see how the parts or features of something work together to create the whole. If it is a familiar object or idea, tell students not to name it. They are to look at the features or parts that they notice. Once they have exhausted all that they notice, they move to explaining it with these questions: What is the purpose of that feature? Why is it that way? Then students answer the question What makes you think so? The first time the routine is used, you may need to take an active role in scaffolding the conversation and modeling how to ask explanation and clarification questions. Over time, students can begin to emulate the conversational moves and questioning they have seen modeled.

Primary Grade Example Lesson:

1. In your study of community helpers, project a picture of a fire engine for all the students to see. Tell them not to say what it is, but to look at different parts that make it what it is. You may want to frame the different parts to help students focus on the features.
2. Record all the features or parts the students are observing (e.g., I notice a hose, I notice a



- number, I notice an ax, I notice lights, I notice two doors) on the projected screen.
3. Once students have identified all the parts or features, move them to the explanation step. What is the purpose or role of the ax? Are there any other ways it could be used? You can then ask them to provide reasons with the questions What makes you say that? or What is the purpose of the number?
  4. Continue having the students explain the purpose of all the features they observed and why they say that.
  5. To conclude, ask the students to think about what they now know about a fireman and how his fire engine helps him fight fires and save people.

#### Intermediate Grade Example Lesson:

1. Teach this strategy as whole class a few times before doing it with small groups.
2. You are teaching a unit on the earth's system, NGSS 5-ESS2-1. Develop a model using an example to describe ways the geosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere, and/or atmosphere interact. ESS2.A: Earth Materials and Systems
3. Project an image of the Bingham Canyon Mine landslide in Utah. [http://www.standard.net/image/2013/08/02/970xa16-9\\_b0\\_q100\\_p1/Mine-Slide-19.jpg](http://www.standard.net/image/2013/08/02/970xa16-9_b0_q100_p1/Mine-Slide-19.jpg)
4. Place students into breakout rooms and ask them to look at the image and say what they notice. Assign a recorder to record the features or parts the students are observing on the graphic organizer that is in their packet. For example, students may say I notice mountains, I notice clouds in the sky, I notice a parking structure, I notice snow on the ground, I notice a huge hole.
5. Once students have exhausted their observations, have them explain and record why it is that way or explain the function. Some responses could be the large hole is where they have taken something out of the earth, the terracing of the land was how they kept getting deeper without the land coming down, the parking lot is where the workers parked.
6. Now have students connect what they observed to the four spheres of the earth's system. Once they have completed that, have them discuss the interaction among the system and record their observations.
7. Have students discuss as a class how seeing the parts helped them generate causal relationship.

#### **Conclusion**

In this chapter, we have presented instructional strategies that can be used to implement the elements of the Disciplinary Communication practice. Our goal in sharing these strategies was twofold: first, to deepen your understanding of the Disciplinary Communication practice and its elements and, second, to provide you with concrete examples of approaches teachers are currently using in their classrooms to implement the SOAR Teaching Frames. It is important to

note that these are just examples. By considering how these strategies are similar to and different from ones you currently use in your classroom, you will be able identify and develop additional ways to engage students in oral and written communication around grade-level content.

Issue: Should Animals Be Kept in Zoos?

Title of essay \_\_\_\_\_

This essay is for the issue.

This essay is against the issue.

Examples	Reasons

