The Accountable Talk Toolkit provides resources for implementation, including what it looks like in the classroom, lesson examples, and scaffolds. The Toolkit entries come from a variety of sources, e.g., internet and teachers who use Accountable Talk in their classrooms.
Questions to consider while planning for Accountable Talk

☐ What are the key concepts I want my students to learn in this lesson?
☐ What are the big ideas I want them to grapple with?
☐ How do these ideas relate to what we've just done?
☐ What instructional task will support the accomplishment of the purpose?
☐ Will this question or problem work best as a whole group discussion, as small group work, or as partner work?
☐ Should I set this topic up with a whole group discussion and then stop at a certain point and have the students turn and talk with partners? If so, precisely when should I tell them to do partner talk? What question should I have them think about with their partner? What classroom management issues do I consider?
☐ How will I keep the group or partner talk meaningful?
☐ What response stems are appropriate for the context and content of the lesson?
☐ What expected student responses should I prepared for and how will I address them?
**Essential Features of Evidence Based Accountable Talk**

**Moving from Teacher Control to Student Centered**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range of Variations</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Essential Features</strong></td>
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<td>Learners hold each other accountable for understanding.</td>
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**Possible Prompts: Focus Questions and Response Stems**

- What evidence do you have to support that? Based on my evidence, I think ___. Where did you find that evidence? Clarify what you mean by ___.
- How could you prove that? What is your line of evidence?

| **Learners link or expand their talk to what others say** | Teacher uses appropriate Focus Questions and/or Response Stems to link or expand on student’s statements OR asks whole group, small groups, partners or individuals to expand on a student’s statement. | From modeling, students use Focus Questions and/or Response Stems to link or expand on student’s statements – showing they can apply cards in an appropriate place. | Students select Focus Questions and/or Response Stems to link or expand on another student’s statement – showing they listened, understood, and can build on knowledge. |

**Possible Prompts: Focus Questions and Response Stems**

- I want to add to what ___ said ___. An example of ___ is _____.
- The relationship between ___ and ___ is ___.
- Your evidence is the same/different because ___.
- How can you apply what you know about ___ to this new situation?
- The evidence is supported by ___.

| **Learners demonstrate skepticism, holding others accountable for thinking.** | Teacher asks whole group, small groups or partners questions related to the strength of the evidence using appropriate Focus Questions and/or Response Stems. | From modeling, students ask questions of other students or make comments, related to the strength of the evidence using appropriate Focus Questions and/or Response Stems. | Students select appropriate Focus Questions and/or Response Stems to ask other students questions or make comments related to the strength of the evidence. |

**Possible Prompts: Focus Questions and Response Stems**

- I disagree with that because ___.
- I disagree with the use of that evidence because _____.
- Compare your evidence with the evidence from another group.
- I agree with _____ because _____. Where did you find that evidence?
- I still have questions about _____. I don’t know what you mean by ___.
- Based on my evidence, I think ___. Compare the risk/benefit of _____.

_Script = scaffolds_
Accountable Talk sharpens students' thinking by reinforcing their ability to build and use knowledge. Teachers create the norms and skills of Accountable Talk in their classrooms by modeling appropriate forms of discussion and by questioning, probing, and leading conversations.

Accountable Talk Within a Classroom Setting

Classroom Environment:

- Students' talk is appropriate in tone and content to the social group and setting and to the purpose of the conversation.
- Students allow others to speak without interruption.
- Students speak directly to other students on appropriate occasions.
- Students listen attentively to one another.
- Students actively participate in classroom talk.
- Each student is able to participate in several different kinds of classroom talk activities.
- When appropriate, students make references to previous speakers.
- A high percentage of classroom talk is by and among students.
- Students test their own understanding of concepts.
- Students redefine or change explanations.
- Students ask questions that test the definition of concepts.
- Students draw comparisons and contrasts among ideas.
- Students identify their own bias.
- Students indicate to what degree they accept ideas and arguments.
- Students feel safe to express ideas.
- Students participate in various forms of Accountable Talk, such as instructional discussions, whole class discussions, small group work, peer and student-teacher conferences, presentations, and interviews.
Accountable Talk Within a Classroom Setting

Common Language around Accountable Talk:

1. Students make use of specific and accurate knowledge.
   - Students make specific reference to a text to support arguments and assertions.
   - Students make clear reference to knowledge built in the course of discussion.
   - Examples or claims using outside knowledge are accurate, accessible, and relevant.

2. Students provide evidence for claims and arguments.
   - Unsupported claims are questioned and investigated by discussion participants.
   - Requests are made for factual information, elaboration, rephrasing and examples.
   - Students call for the definition and clarification of terms under discussion.
   - Students challenge whether the information being used to address a topic is relevant to the discussion.

3. Students identify the knowledge that may not be available yet which is needed to address an issue.
Accountable Talk Within a Classroom Setting

Classroom Situations:

Accountable Talk occurs during any phase of a learning sequence or lesson cycle, before, during or after students conduct investigations, solve problems, read or write about content.

1. Students synthesize several sources of information.
   - Students refer to a variety of texts as sources of information.
   - Students connect ideas within and between texts.
   - Students use previous knowledge to support ideas and opinions.

2. Students construct explanations.
   - Students acknowledge that more information is needed.
   - Students use sequential ideas to build logical and coherent arguments.
   - Students employ a variety of types of evidence.

3. Students formulate conjectures and hypotheses.
   - Students use "what if" scenarios as challenging questions or supporting explanations.
   - Students formulate hypotheses and suggest ways to investigate them.
   - Students indicate when ideas need further support or explanation.

4. Classroom talk is accountable to generally accepted standards of reasoning.
   - Students use rational strategies to present arguments and draw conclusions.
   - Students provide reasons for their claims and conclusions.
   - Students fashion sound premise-conclusion arguments.
   - Students use examples, analogies, and hypothetical "what if" scenarios to make arguments and support claims.
   - Students partition argument issues and claims in order to address topics and further discussion.

5. Students challenge the quality of each other's evidence and reasoning.
   - The soundness of evidence and the quality of premise-conclusion arguments are assessed and challenged by discussion participants.
   - Hidden premises and assumptions of students' lines of argument are exposed and challenged.
   - Students pose counter-examples and extreme case comparisons to challenge arguments and claims.

6. Classroom talk is accountable to standards of evidence.
Accountable Talk Within a Classroom Setting

Responsibilities/Roles:

- Students' body language/eye contact shows attention.
- Speakers' comments are connected to previous ideas.
- Students avoid multiple conversations.
- Students’ interest is in the whole discussion, not only in their own turn taking.
- Students elaborate and build upon ideas and each others' contributions.
- Talk remains related to text/subject/issue.
- Related issues or topics are introduced and elaborated.
- Talk is about issues rather than participants.
- Students work toward the goal of clarifying or expanding a proposition.
- Students summarize, paraphrase each other's argument(s)
- Students make an effort to ensure they understand one another.
- Students clarify or define terms under discussion.
Accountable Talk Response Stems
Examples

I disagree with that, because ____ .

I agree with ____ , because ____ .

I still have questions about ____ .

I want to add to what (name) said about__. 

Based on my evidence, I think ____ .
I don’t know what you mean by ___.

Compare the risk/benefit of_____.

I disagree with the use of that evidence, because ____.

A question I have is _______.

An example of ___ is _______.

Your evidence is the same/different, because ___.

The relationship between ___ and ___ is ____.

This reminds me of ____.

I predict _____, because ______.

I understand __________.

When we _____, it helped me understand ______.
The big idea is ___________.

This is different, because _____.

This is the same, because ______.

I observed ____________.

I’m confused by ____________.

To expand on what ___ said __________.
# Accountable Talk Focus Questions

## Examples of Questions/Prompts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compare your evidence with the evidence from another group.</th>
<th>Clarify what you mean by _______.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What evidence do you have to support that?</td>
<td>How could you prove that?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How can you apply what you know about ____ to this new situation?</td>
<td>Where did you find that evidence?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How does the evidence support ____?</td>
<td>What is your line of evidence?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are some ways you can describe your method to us?</td>
<td>What tools will you need? How will they help you?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What information do you have?</td>
<td>What have you learned or found out today?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you match ____ with ____?</td>
<td>What is a counterexample?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you need to find out in order to solve the problem?</td>
<td>What strategies are you going to use?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What does the graph tell you?</td>
<td>If the ______ continues to ______, what will be the result?</td>
</tr>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>How did you reach that conclusion?</td>
<td>What if you had started with ___ rather than ___?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What assumptions are you making?</td>
<td>Have you thought of all the possible solutions? How can you be sure?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain the pattern you made.</td>
<td>Is that true for all cases? Explain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarize your findings.</td>
<td>What might be a more efficient strategy?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What can you do to test your idea?</td>
<td>What is the relationship between ____ and ____?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you think caused the ____ to _____?</td>
<td>How are ____ alike? How are they different?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Based on what you know, what can you predict about _____?</td>
<td>Do you agree? Why or why not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the best sequence for ____?</td>
<td>Why did you decide to organize your data/results like that?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Which idea would you reject? Why?</td>
<td>Design a new problem or investigation for _____.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagine what ____ would be like if there were no____.</td>
<td>From what we have learned, what other examples of ____ can you cite?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are some possible solutions to this problem?</td>
<td>If the ____ continues to ____ what will be the result?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Accountable Talk in a 5E Lesson**

Lesson Concept: Chemical changes cannot be separated by ordinary means. Physical changes can be separated by ordinary means.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Does</th>
<th>Student Does</th>
<th>Accountable Talk</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guides review from previous lesson.</td>
<td><strong>Small Group</strong></td>
<td>Ask students to review and Think-Pair-Share: Organize the pictures to show the events/sequence that occurs during evaporation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shows a pictures of a large puddle and then the same area with no puddle. Prompt: Place the picture cards of water cycle in a sequence that explains where the water has gone. Ask: Where does the energy to evaporate all that water come from? What is the source of the heat? Explain how you know.</td>
<td><strong>Organize</strong></td>
<td>Question: Compare your sequence to groups around you. Do you notice similarities/differences?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain that energy from the Sun, called solar energy, provides the energy to change liquid water into water vapor. We have seen the impact of heat energy on water. Today we are going to compare how heat energy affects solid matter as well. Review that the term Earth materials refers to nonliving substances that make up the Earth (e.g. water, rocks, minerals, sand, gravel, air)</td>
<td><strong>Compare</strong></td>
<td>AT Stem: Their sequence is the same/different, because _____. We notice _____.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Display a few types of matter and tell them that each type has a different rate of absorbing heat energy. Some heat-up faster than others and some retain heat longer than others. Prompt: Predict some possible outcomes for the soil and water temperatures as they are placed in the sun. Display the prompt/response stems on the board. Chart predictions for students. Explain that they will now have the chance to test their predictions. Ask students to measure water and soil in cups and place a thermometer in cups. Record starting temp and place in the sun for 30 minutes. Record temp every three minutes for 15 minutes and record on data sheet. Place in shade and wait for 30 minutes. Record temp every three minutes and record on data sheet. Discuss I&amp;E: same amount of solid and liquid matter, tools for measurement, time intervals, recording sheet, qualitative and quantitative data</td>
<td><strong>Predict</strong></td>
<td>Please clarify why you have this here. Share out whole group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss I&amp;E: same amount of solid and liquid matter, tools for measurement, time intervals, recording sheet, qualitative and quantitative data Model how to set-up an accurate plot graph: title, time intervals, units of measurement, key, how to draw lines Graph results. Discuss and analyze the data from the graphs. Ask students to discuss Focus Questions. Next Step: Over the next few weeks, we will be learning about weather. The experiment that you conducted today will help us to understand why we have different weather patterns on the Earth.</td>
<td><strong>Conduct experiment</strong></td>
<td>Distribute samples of earth materials, water and soil, and ask students to make general observations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Whole Group</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Questions/Prompt: Predict which you think will happen when water and soil is placed in the sun. How might the temp. of the water and soil compare when they are in the sun and the shade? AT Stem: I predict _____, because _____. The temp will be the same/different, because _____.</td>
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<td>Record on data sheet. AT Stems/Questions: The thermometer shows/measures _____. I am confused by ________. How do you come to that result? I notice _____. (Listen for qualitative and quantitative responses).</td>
</tr>
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<td>After graphing use Focus Questions in pairs: How does the data on water compare with the data on soil? Which material heated up the fastest? How does your evidence support what you thought would happen? What is your evidence that _____?</td>
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<td>AT Stems: The rate of soil/water temp. increase/decrease, because ______. The rate of soil/water temp. is the same/different, because ______. We notice ______. Please clarify _____. Based on my evidence ______. I want to add to what _____ said ______. A question I still have is ______.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from FOSS, Water Planet, 2007 CA Edition

K-12 Alliance/WestEd 6.07

P05b: Accountable Talk II
## Levels of Questions

### INPUT
- complete
- count
- define
- describe
- list
- locate
- match
- name
- observe
- recite
- select
- tell

### PROCESS
- analyze
- explain
- sequence
- compare
- analogy
- summarize
- estimate
- arrange
- separate
- combine
- invent
- relationship
- distinguish
- produce
- report
- classify
- infer
- cause/effect
- construct
- plan
- use
- arrange
- group
- show
- contrast
- organize
- synthesize

### OUTPUT
- evaluate
- expand
- extrapolate
- project
- discuss
- imagine
- judge
- predict
- decide
- apply
- build
- choose
- create
- generalize
- principle
- model
- speculate
- forecast
- recommend
- hypothesize

Excerpt from: K-12 Alliance/WestEd 6.07
P04a: Questioning
# Template for Including Accountable Talk

**Accountable Talk Notes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Does</th>
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P05b: Accountable Talk II