

Standard III **Element F**

LEVEL 4 AND LEVEL 5 PRACTICES

The result of successful implementation of the professional practices referenced in Element F will be students who are able to apply appropriate communication skills in various situations, form questions, explain their thinking, extend discussions, and invite others to participate.

STUDENTS:

6 *Apply clear and appropriate communication skills in a variety of situations.*

“These 8 tips can help you immensely with improving student communication skills. They can be adapted for most every kind of student from kindergarten to high school. Build better speakers and writers of tomorrow by challenging your students to think critically, listen actively, and work together.”

<https://globaldigitalcitizen.org/8-methods-improving-student-communication-skills>

“Effective spoken communication requires being able to express your ideas and views clearly, confidently and concisely in speech, tailoring your content and style to the audience and promoting free-flowing communication.”

<https://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/sk/communicating.htm>

7 *Formulate questions and explain their thinking.*

“Ideas to Help Students Develop Higher-Order Questions”

<https://www.amle.org/BrowsebyTopic/WhatsNew/WNDet/TabId/270/ArtMID/888/ArticleID/452/Ideas-to-Help-Students-Develop-Higher-Order-Questions.aspx>

“Students' questions: a potential resource for teaching and learning science”

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/03057260701828101>

8 *Extend and enrich the discussion.*

***NOTE:**

“Other than as expressly provided in this paragraph, no part of this book may be used, reproduced, or transmitted in any form or by any means whatsoever without the prior written permission of the Interactivity Foundation. Permission is hereby granted to reproduce, distribute, and use copies of this work for nonprofit educational purposes only, including for course packs and other course readings and materials, provided in each case that the copies are distributed at or below the actual cost of reproduction and that the author, publisher, and this copyright notice are included in each copy. This permission is in addition to the rights of reproduction and use, including brief quotations embodied in critical articles or reviews, that are granted under sections 107, 108, and other provisions of the U.S. Copyright Act.

“This guidebook offers suggestions for the use of a student-centered discussion process. In this approach, the teacher is an observer and an evaluator of the discussion rather than being the central figure in the discussion.”

<https://www.interactivityfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/Guidebook-for-Student-Centered-Classroom-Discussions.pdf>

[Click here to go back to the table of contents and view the resource guide in its entirety.](#)



COLORADO
Department of Education

9 **Invite others to participate.**

How to Get Students to Talk in Class

- Get them talking to each other, not just to you.
- Literally tell them to address their comments to each other.
- Try not to respond to every student comment; instead ask the class what they think about what has just been said.
- As an icebreaker, ask a question for which there is no single correct answer and go around the table with it. (Example: What is the first adjective that comes to mind when you think of the protagonist of this story? Or: On a scale of 1 to 10, rate the effectiveness of Allied military leadership in 1916.) With this strategy, you can begin the discussion with 100 percent participation, and you can subvert the usual hierarchy by inviting two or three of the more passive students to explicate their answers.
- If the discussion group is large, divide it into smaller units, each one dealing with the same or separate problems in the reading. Float from group to group, giving guidance and answering questions when needed. When the period is nearly over, leave about twenty minutes to reassemble the class and have the small groups report to each other.

<https://teachingcommons.stanford.edu/resources/teaching/small-groups-and-discussions/how-get-students-talk-class>

Classroom Examples

Elementary science: Students are working on Colorado Academic Standard 3: Earth Systems Science, Grade Level Expectation 2—Four major earth systems interact.

Students in a 4th-grade classroom are working with partners to create landforms from clay or through illustrations. Prior to students working collaboratively, the teacher models how he illustrated a landform based on its attributes. In his model, he uses the sentence stem, “The landform I illustrated is a _____ because a _____ is _____.” For example, “The landform I illustrated is a peninsula because a peninsula is surrounded by water on three sides. His explanation includes the academic language associated with a peninsula, as well as the language needed to explain his illustration. *(Provides clear directions to guide student learning and behavior. Articulates thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively.)* Students are provided sentence stems to communicate with one another about the landform they create. As he circulates during students’ group work, he continually questions students about their creation or illustration and uses prompts to support them in using the academic language modeled. *(Teaches students, with audience in mind, to articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively.)*

Middle school physical education: Students are working on the Colorado Academic Standard 1: Movement Competence and Understanding in Physical Education, Grade Level Expectation 1—Combine the critical elements of movement and skills concepts.

A physical education teacher is teaching a unit on basketball to 7th-grade students. As he models skills needed to play the game, he labels each skill, using the academic language associated with basketball (e.g., dribble, pass, guard, foul shot, defense, offense, and block). In this way, students learn not only how to play the game, but the terminology needed to label what they are doing. *(Articulates thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively. Provides clear directions to guide student learning and behavior.)* As students observe their peers playing a game, they use the language modeled by the teacher to provide feedback to their classmates. *(Teaches students, with audience in mind, to articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively.)* When students use everyday language instead of language associated with basketball such as bounce instead of dribble, the teacher prompts them to use the correct terms. *(Teaches students, with audience in mind, to articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively.)*



High school reading, writing, and communicating: Students are working on Colorado Academic Standard 3: Writing and Composition, Grade Level Expectation 1-- Style, detail, expressive language, and genre create a well-crafted statement directed at an intended audience and purpose.

A teacher tells his 12th-grade students they will be learning how to write persuasive pieces. He defines the term “persuasive” and asks students how this term applies to a type of writing. Student’ tasks are to complete a job application and write a cover letter to a potential employer. The teacher asks students to explain how the task connects to the learning objective. Prior to students beginning their task, the teacher models his resume and cover letter. ***(Articulates thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively.)*** During the model, he explicitly labels how he decided on the information to include based on his audience and purpose for writing. ***(Teaches students, with audience in mind, to articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively. Provides clear directions to guide student learning and behavior.)***

Planning/Coaching Questions

- How will you ensure that you are clearly and effectively articulating thoughts and ideas to all students?
- How will you teach students to consider their audience when articulating their thoughts and ideas with others?
- How will you plan for strategies that model and teach effective communication skills?
- What opportunities will you provide for students to communicate orally and/or in writing with others?
- What will be the academic language included in your model and instruction?
- How will you ensure students are able to utilize the academic language associated with the content and skill being taught?

[Click here to go back to the table of contents and view the resource guide in its entirety.](#)



COLORADO
Department of Education