

## Getting Started with Talk;

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HOUSTON **A<sup>+</sup>** CHALLENGE

# Getting Started with Talk

## Introductions

### **Houston A+ Challenge**

- 1997; non-profit dedicated to teaching and learning

### **Jen Mascheck, Learner**

- Classroom Teacher 10 years, Coach 7 years

### **Focus**

- What is the role and value of Discourse?
- Work on develop a skill set for facilitating discourse

## **Getting Started with Talk**

- Not just that the students talk-it is what they talk about
- This does not occur naturally in a classrooms

# Getting Started with Talk

## Starting off Ground Rules

- Your turn to talk is when no one else is speaking
- Great things are in your head; our goal for the session is to make those things loud
- I will ask questions and do my best to NOT talk, so that you can
- Listen to each other and be ready to comment on other thinking than you own
- Ideas will come into your head-share when relevant or let them go

# **Getting Started with Talk**

## Characteristics of Learning Experiences

- Think of a time when you engaged in a professional learning experience that you found useful
- Remember as many details as you can and describe it to your neighbor
- After both share, tease out the common characteristics we can share whole group

# **Getting Started with Talk**

Characteristics of Learning Experiences; Share out

# Getting Started with Talk

## Teacher Moves to Facilitate Whole Group

1. Write relevant student statements, vocabulary, and/or representations on white board or on technology board—make language and diagrams, tables, etc. visible for all learners
2. Have students turn and talk to a partner to explain the idea or representation and be able to explain the idea/representation to the entire group
3. Ask clarifying questions to the presenter
4. Ask members of the group to explain, restate, or paraphrase what was just said or demonstrated BEFORE agreeing, disagreeing or adding to the idea and BEFORE expressing another idea. In other words, the community works to keep one important idea in play until all members of the class can engage in the conversation.

# Getting Started with Talk

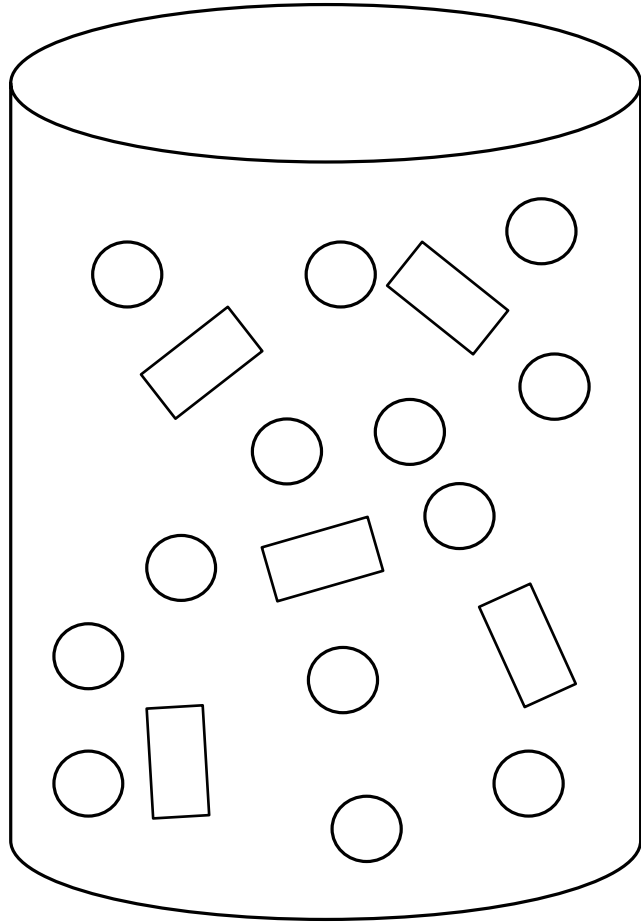
## **An Environment for Talk; Social Norms and Clear Expectations**

1. Teacher states explicitly that she expects students to listen to one another's ideas and be able to question or comment once a speaker is done.
2. Students are expected (or taught) to look at the speaker and to refrain from raising their hands while someone else is speaking.
3. Teacher states explicitly that she expects students who are talking to articulate their thinking clearly so others can understand and assists them to do so.
4. Teacher interjects to focus in on meaning and clarity when students' explanations are vague or meaning is implied.
5. Teacher holds students to the standard to speak loud enough for others to hear and does NOT repeat or restate for students when they cannot be heard, but gently nudges them to try again.
6. Teacher explicitly states she will call on a student whether or not they raise their hands and uses techniques to ensure equity (e.g. cards, popsicle sticks with student name on each stick).
7. Teacher calls on another student to paraphrase what was stated and then to take a stand in relation to the idea under discussion or to ask about or add to the idea.

~Lucy West, Metamorphosis Teaching and Learning Communities



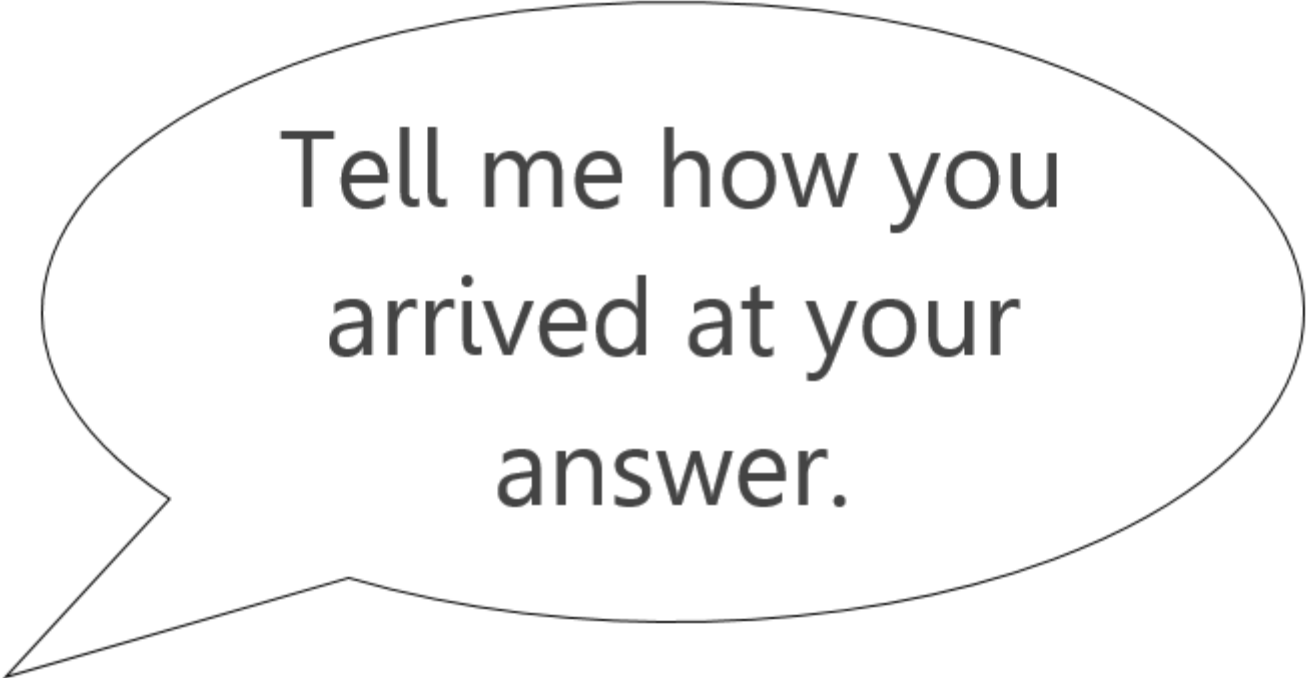
## Getting Started with Talk



### Candy Jar: Jolly Ranchers and Jaw Breakers

Suppose you have a large candy jar with the same ratio of Jolly Ranchers to Jawbreakers as shown. If the jar contains 100 Jolly Ranchers, how many jaw breakers are in the jar?

## Getting Started with Talk



Tell me how you  
arrived at your  
answer.

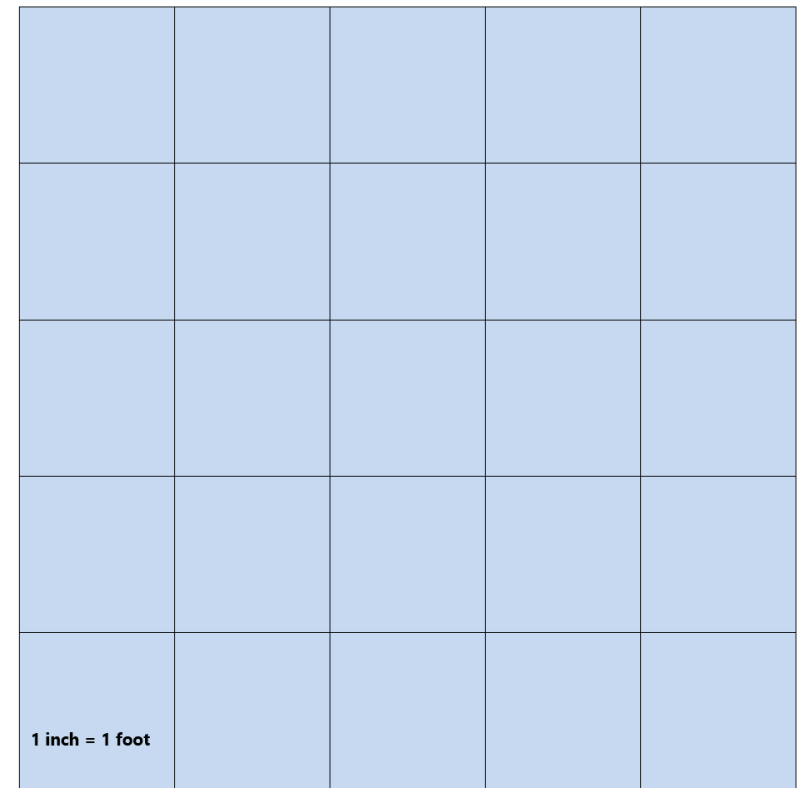
I arrived at my answer by...

# Getting Started with Talk

## The Border Problem

In-ground pools are often surrounded by borders of tiles. The Custom Pool Company gets orders for square pools of different sizes. For example, the pool below has lengths of 5 feet.

How many border tiles do you need to surround a square pool?



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## The Border Problem



# Getting Started with Talk

## The Border Problem

### SCRIPT OF EXCERPTS FROM THE BORDER PROBLEM

**1:12:21**

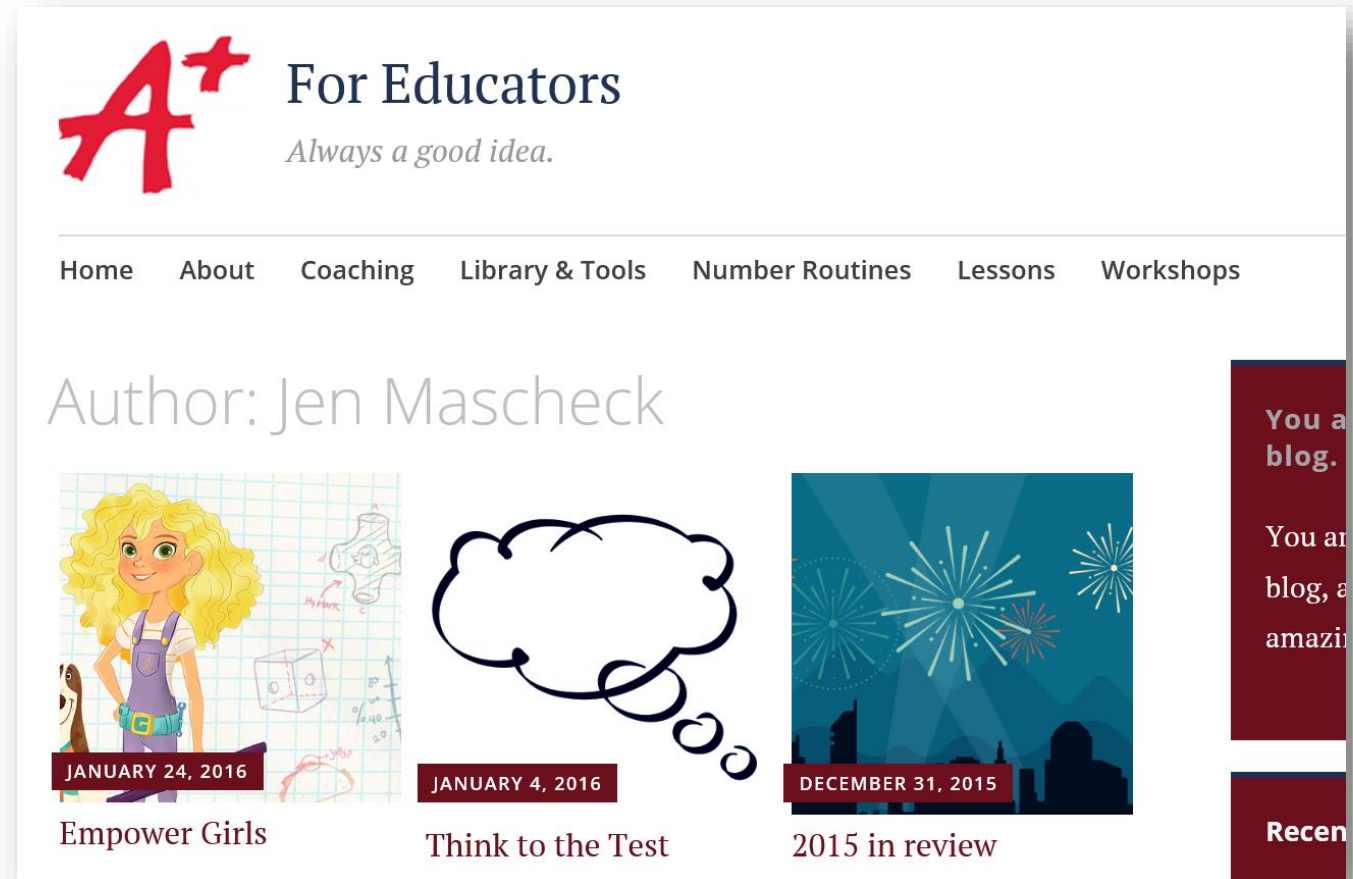
1. ...and can anybody tell me how many tiles you would need to put a border around the outside of this pool. Lulu.
2. [Lulu] I think you'd need 24
3. How'd you get that?
4. [Lulu] You need 5 tiles for each side and you need 4 for all the corners
5. OK, you want to come to the overhead use the overhead and show how you did that?....What do you guys think? You agree? You disagree? Mike
6. [Mike] I disagree. I think it's 20.
7. You think it's 20? Why?

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