

Educator: Beginning of Year Goals and Planning

What Priority Practice will be the focus of your PLC's continuous improvement process?

This year, I will focus on the Priority Practice of Academic Discourse. I want my students to practice using evidence when they discuss historical events and civic issues, so they can learn to listen carefully, disagree respectfully, and back up their ideas with facts.

Describe your current practice specific to the Priority Practice identified above.

Right now, most student discussions in my classroom happen during whole-class Q&A or when I call on individual students. A few students are comfortable speaking up, but many are quiet or give short answers. I notice that even when students share ideas, they don't always reference evidence from the text or sources we study. I'd like to build more consistent routines where all students feel responsible for contributing and supporting their thinking.

What is your learning plan to improve upon your practice described above? What specific learning activities will you participate in? What resources will you need (Examples of learning activities/resources)

Goal Statement: *By May 2026, 70% of my students will demonstrate growth in citing evidence during class discussions, as measured by discussion protocols and teacher observation notes.*

Learning Plan:

- I will implement **Structured Academic Controversy (SAC)** at least once per unit to give students practice in examining multiple perspectives and using evidence in dialogue.
- I will participate in PLC discussions where we bring transcripts or notes from student discussions to look for patterns in how students are using evidence.
- I will ask colleagues who already use Socratic Seminar or debate in their classes to model or share strategies for preparing students.

Learning Materials/Resources:

- Teachinghistory.org resources on Structured Academic Controversy
- Sets of primary and secondary sources related to each unit
- PLC time to analyze student talk and share strategies for scaffolding accountable talk

In addition to student feedback, what evidence will you use to reflect, monitor, and adjust your goal? (Examples of sources of evidence)

- **Student Feedback:** I will collect short reflections after discussions (e.g., "One piece of evidence I used today was..." or "One way I grew as a speaker was...").
- **Discussion Observation Notes:** I will track how many times students cite evidence during SACs and note shifts over time.
- **PLC Review:** Our team will review samples of student discussion notes and artifacts each month.
- **Audio/Video Clips:** I will occasionally record discussions so I can reflect on participation levels and evidence use.