Academic Language Scripts for Accountable Talk

Instructions: Use the following language starters in order to guide the conversation, offer new insights, and encourage all participants to contribute.

Clarifying/Summarizing
- Could you repeat that?
- I'm not sure I understand. Could you give an(other) example of that?
- I have a question about that: _____?
- Could you please explain what _____ means?
- When you say _____, do you mean _____?
- So, do you mean _____ ?
- What did you mean when you said …?
- I think what _____ is trying to say is_____.
- Thank you for your comment. Can you cite for us where in the text you found your information?
- What I think I hear you saying is _____.

Probing for Higher Level Thinking
- What examples do you have of _____?
- Where in the text can we find _____?
- I understand your point about _____, but I wonder about _____.
- How does this idea connect to _____?
- If _____ is true, then how do we account for _____?
- What would happen if _____?
- What is another way to look at _____?
- How are _____ and _____ similar?
- Why is _____ important?

Expressing an Opinion
- I think/believe/predict/imagine that _____. What do you think?
- In my opinion _____.
- It seems to me that _____.
- Not everyone will agree with me, but _____.

Building on What Others Say
- I agree with what _____ said because _____.
- You bring up an interesting point, and I also think _____.
- That's an interesting idea. I wonder _____.
- I thought about that also, and I'm wondering why _____?
- I hadn't thought of that before. You make me wonder if _____? Do you think _____?
- _____said _____. I agree and also think _____
- Based on the ideas from _____, _____, and _____, it seems like we all agree that _____.

Interrupting
- Excuse me, but _____ (I don't understand.)
- Sorry for interrupting, but _____ (I missed what you said.)
- May I interrupt for a moment?
- May I add something here?

Disagreeing
- I don't really agree with you because _____
- I see it another way. I think _____
- My idea is slightly different from yours. I believe _____

Inviting Others into the Dialogue
- Does anyone agree/disagree?
- What gaps do you see in my reasoning? What am I missing?
- What different conclusions do you have?
- _____ (name), what do you think?
- Who has another idea/question/interpretation?
- _____ (name), what did you understand about what _____ said?
- We haven't heard from some people in the group. Could someone new offer an idea or question?