

Example 2 - Verbal Feedback - Asynchronous Learning

An assistant principal visited a 5th grade social studies teacher's Google Classroom and read the students' responses to the teacher's prompts over a week's period. It was clear the teacher and learners were beyond Stage 1 (students understand how to locate the reading assignments and use Google Classroom as they had been using it all year and are positively interacting with praise statements to each other). Nearly all are contributing some level of response to the prompts (Stage 2). The teacher is ready to think about how to improve the quality of the student "discussion board" and to move students into more dialogue and deeper thinking (Stage 3).

Information Gathered & Analyzed

1. Half the students are giving praise to each other, "I liked your post." or "I agree with James." 3 are providing this level of response only.
2. The teacher's prompts were thought-provoking and required more than surface thinking. The quality and length of the reading prompt responses varied with a majority only posting 1-2 sentences and not citing text evidence or examples to support their thinking. This also made it challenging for others to offer meaningful responses.
3. Many students are waiting until the day before or the due date to post responses to the prompt, so there were only 1-2 posted well ahead of time for student review/responses. This causes classmates to have little time to provide thoughtful responses or engage in "discussion" as intended. I wonder if some are seeing this just as a task to complete.

Potential Questions for their Zoom Chat

What are you noticing about your students' responses to the prompt? To each other?

What are your goals/what do you think they could achieve at this point in their responses and ability to sustain dialogue virtually?

What else do they need to be successful and to increase their level of thinking?

Do any students need specific academic support or resources because it is too challenging/ the asynchronous process is adding to the challenge?

Collaboratively Determined Next Steps

The teacher sees great value in these online discussions, so she immediately:

1. Included a note to the whole class and families in the weekly email suggesting earlier posting and reiterating the goal and benefit of the discussions and the expectations. She included a question to help identify technology, family, or schedule/time challenges that might exist and addressed those needs on an individual basis.
2. Created a quick screencast tutorial for responding and a single-point rubric, including some student exemplars, and sentence stems that could be used to build on ideas from others' posts.

Next week she will be:

1. Providing individualized feedback on student responses and support for those who need more in terms of strengthening their initial posts (working toward proactively providing resources or adapted materials)
2. Participating in the discussions and modeling expected responses