Never Say Anything a Kid Can Say

Reinhart, Steven C.

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DESCRIPTION

"Never Say Anything a Kid Can Say," by Steven C. Reinhart, promotes student engagement and sense making through the use of effective questioning techniques. Asking the best possible questions not only provides for teaching better mathematics but also for teaching mathematics better.

The article encourages teachers to work toward continual, incremental growth in instruction. Selecting, practicing, and refining one or two strategies or skills before moving on to others promotes positive changes in teacher practice while making it easier for students to accept and adjust to the new expectations and standards being established.

Readers are encouraged to plan for teaching mathematics better by:

- Creating a plan
- Sharing with students reasons for asking questions
- Teaching for success
- Being nonjudgmental about a response or comment
- Trying not to repeat students' answers
- Not answering the question "Is this the right answer?"
- Not making participation optional

Readers are encouraged to use specific suggestions on a regular basis including:

- Never say anything a kid can say!
- Ask good questions
- Use more process questions than product questions
- Replace lectures with sets of questions
- Use wait time

Readers are encouraged to require all students to participate by strategies such as:

- Using a Think-Pair-Share strategy
- Allowing students to pose questions
- Requiring multiple responses
- Encouraging students to explain and defend solutions
- Using hand signals
- Never carrying a pencil

STAGE 1 LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

"Never Say Anything a Kid Can Say," by Steven C. Reinhart, supports stage 1 development of leaders working to develop and model knowledge about instructional strategies for improved student learning. After reading the article, make a plan for implementing the strategies described by the author. Plan to transform your teaching by implementing one or two strategies at a time and by practicing and refining the chosen strategies before moving on to others. Ask a colleague to be a sounding board as you reflect on your efforts and consider keeping a journal of the changes you make. Include in your plan a timeline and remember that change can be challenging as well as rewarding.

STAGE 2 LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

"Never Say Anything a Kid Can Say," by Steven C. Reinhart, supports stage 2 leadership development of specialists/leaders working to collaborate and implement the Teaching and Learning Principle. This article is a great tool for specialists to use with teachers in developing Indicator 3: *Every teacher participates in continuous and meaningful mathematics professional development and learning in order to improve his or her practice.* The author's description of his own metamorphosis of practice is a great starting point for the specialist to facilitate a discussion of how teachers' practice changes through experience. Share the quote below from the article and ask participants to discuss their reactions:

> *My definition of a good teacher has changed from "one who explains things so well that students understand" to "one who gets students to explain things so well that they can be understood."*

Continue discussing the article with expert groups or individuals sharing one of the five suggestions from the article:

- Never say anything a kid can say!
- Ask good questions.
- Use more process questions than product questions.
- Replace lectures with sets of questions.
- Use wait time.

In addition to sharing techniques, ask participants to share information both from the article and their own teaching experiences that illustrate the suggestions above. Discuss the techniques for promoting participation and ask teachers to share their thoughts on using these in their classrooms. Finally, plan together for using the suggestions and techniques in upcoming lessons and plan to share successes and challenges together in upcoming collaborative sessions.