Participate in an Evidence-Based Discussion

Classroom copy · 2 November 2026

Learners will use an accurate detail from one or both paired texts, explain what it supports and what remains uncertain, and make a fair response or question that engages a different idea. They may contribute through speech, writing, typing, dictation, AAC or another established communication method, or a facilitator-read note. The rubric scores evidence and reasoning, not speaking frequency or agreement.

A discussion move: detail → reason → limit

Use a three-part chain. Name a detail accurately and identify which text it comes from. Explain how it bears on the question. Then name a limit: what the detail does not show, or what more you would need to know. A detail is not a complete argument by itself. You may support, question, or revise a proposal; the rubric scores how you use evidence and reasoning, not which proposal you choose.

Paired text A — Keep a choice window

Fictional instructional scenario; people, setting, slips, counts, and observations are invented.

A fictional student note from Talia

Ridgeview Middle School is deciding how to use the final 10 minutes of one weekly 30-minute Grade 6 reading block. The first 20 minutes are quiet reading. In 24 fictional anonymous choice slips from one advisory group, 12 students selected quiet reading for the last 10 minutes, 8 selected a partner book talk, and 4 said either option was fine. The slips asked what students preferred; they did not ask which routine helped students understand or remember a book.

I would keep the last 10 minutes as a choice: continue reading quietly or use a short partner talk. The slips show that students in this one group did not all choose the same option. A single routine for everyone could miss that range. In notes from one Wednesday trial, at least one partner in 8 of 10 observed pairs used a book detail while recommending a book. That suggests a talk can make room for text details, but it does not show that every pair did this or that the talk improved reading.

Try the choice window for four Wednesdays. Ask the group the same anonymous question afterward and collect one example of a book detail students used. That would help the group see how the options were used. It still would not prove which routine caused better understanding; the slips and brief notes answer different, limited questions.

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Paired text B — Try a guided book talk

Fictional instructional scenario; people, setting, slips, counts, and observations are invented.

A fictional student note from Jordan

Ridgeview Middle School is deciding how to use the final 10 minutes of one weekly 30-minute Grade 6 reading block. The first 20 minutes are quiet reading. In 24 fictional anonymous choice slips from one advisory group, 12 students selected quiet reading, 8 selected a partner book talk, and 4 said either option was fine. The slips show stated choices in this group; they do not tell us what students learn from each routine.

I would use the last 10 minutes for a guided partner book talk, with a written response or quiet-reading option for anyone who does not want to talk. In notes from one Wednesday trial, at least one partner in 8 of 10 observed pairs used a book detail while recommending a book. That is a reason to test a prompt such as, “Which part of the book led you to that recommendation?” The note is closer to the question of whether pairs can refer to a book than the choice slips are.

The observation covers only 10 pairs on one day. It does not show that all students prefer a talk, that every partner contributed, or that talking improves reading. Try the guided prompt for four Wednesdays and invite each student to share by voice, note, or another available route. Then review whether students used accurate details and ask which format helped them take part. A short trial would give the group more information, not a final proof.

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Model: detail, reason, and limit

Read the model response. Mark the exact detail, the reason it fits the question, and the limit. Then name one question the model could ask before the group decides.

> The notes say that at least one partner in 8 of 10 observed pairs used a book detail during one Wednesday trial. That is relevant to whether a guided talk can create an opportunity to refer to a book. It does not show that every partner contributed or that talking improved reading. I would test a short guided prompt and ask each student which response route helped them contribute.

Guided comparison

With a partner or in writing, compare the two texts. Choose the best detail for (a) what this advisory group said it preferred and (b) whether pairs referred to books during one trial. Explain why each detail fits that question. Name one limit for each detail. A different defensible comparison is welcome if you explain it.

Record, dictate, or sketch your evidence and reasoning

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Choose a participation route

Every route has the same learning goal: use a detail from a text, explain your reasoning, and engage with another idea. Choose a route that lets you contribute both an idea and a reply or question. You may speak with a partner or small group; write or type two linked notes; dictate or use AAC or another established communication method; or ask the facilitator to read your exact note with your permission. You may listen first, record a detail from another person, and then respond by voice or note.

You do not have to make eye contact, speak quickly, or speak more often than anyone else. None of those is scored. If you choose a written or facilitator-read route, your notes are your discussion contribution. You may disagree with a proposal while treating its author respectfully.

Discussion prompts

Main question: How should Ridgeview use the final 10 minutes: keep a choice window, try a guided book talk with alternatives, or test another plan? Use one or both texts to explain your thinking.

Prompts to move the discussion:
• Which detail best fits the question you are answering? What does it support?
• What can the choice slips tell us? What can the one-day observation tell us?
• What does a piece of evidence not establish?
• What is a fair question or response to a different proposal?
• What could the group try or check next, and what result would matter?

You may keep, change, or qualify your view. Agreement with either writer is not scored.

Prepare and take part

Prepare one idea for the main question and one reply or question that engages a different idea. Use your preparation sheet. In the discussion, use your chosen route to contribute both. Then complete the reflection on the sheet: name a detail and explain whether another idea changed or qualified your thinking. You may keep your view if you explain why. Do not count turns; make the quality of the evidence and reasoning visible.

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Discussion preparation and response sheet

Before the discussion, read both texts, then prepare one point and one reply or question using evidence from one or both texts. During the discussion, listen for one different idea and make your response visible through your chosen route. Afterward, complete the reflection. Notes, typing, dictation, AAC, or a facilitator-read note count as contributions when they contain your own thinking. Continue on extra paper or use your chosen communication route if you need more space.

My route: speak / write or type / dictate / AAC or other established method / facilitator reads my note / another agreed route

_____

My idea or recommendation for the final 10 minutes

_____

_____

Specific detail and text it comes from

_____

_____

Why this detail matters; what it does not prove

_____

_____

A different idea I heard or read

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_____

My fair reply, connection, or question with a reason

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_____

Afterward: Which detail or idea did I reconsider? Did my view change, stay, or become more qualified? Explain why and name what evidence might matter next.

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Discussion rubric — 0 to 2 points per criterion

Your teacher will use the same rubric for spoken, written, dictated, AAC, and facilitator-read contributions. The score reflects the quality of evidence, reasoning, engagement with another idea, and clarity in the chosen route. Turn count, volume, speed, accent, eye contact, posture, and agreement are not scored. A missing contribution is marked “not enough evidence yet,” not treated as proof that a learner cannot do the skill. If your reply was not captured or you had no chance to give it, ask for another opportunity. A submitted response that does not engage another idea can receive 0 for engagement.

Evidence use

2 — Names an accurate, specific detail and its text/source.
1 — Gives a relevant detail that is partly accurate, broad, or incompletely attributed.
0 — Gives no relevant detail or substantially misrepresents the evidence.

Reasoning and limits

2 — Accurately explains the detail’s link to the question and names a relevant limit.
1 — Gives only one of those two elements accurately.
0 — Gives neither accurately.

Engagement with another idea

2 — Responds to, builds on, questions, or fairly challenges a different idea with a relevant reason or detail.
1 — Acknowledges or repeats a different idea but adds little response.
0 — No identifiable response to another idea yet, or misrepresents it.

Clear contribution in the chosen route

2 — The idea and connection are clear to the intended reader or listener.
1 — The main idea is partly clear; a prompt or clarification is needed.
0 — The contribution cannot yet be interpreted from the available evidence.

Fictional paired text created for Participate in an Evidence-Based Discussion; scenario and numbers are invented.

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Teacher directions

Audience: Grade 6 ELA. Grade 6 learners practicing evidence-based discussion with spoken and non-spoken contribution routes.

Prerequisites: Learners can read a short informational text or use a supported reading route. Learners have practiced identifying a claim and a supporting detail, or the teacher will model the distinction during this lesson.

Materials: One learner packet per student, including the paired texts and preparation sheet. Optional board or display; the teaching slides are optional because the packet supplies all required texts, prompts and rubric. Pencils or another way to annotate; optional device/AAC or agreed response materials. A way for each learner to exchange or submit one evidence-based point and one response/question.

Estimated preparation: 8 minutes. Basis: Planning estimate for copying the packet, previewing the two fictional texts, and selecting a note, typing, AAC, or facilitator-read contribution route

Estimated teaching: 45 minutes. Basis: Planned 45-minute sequence in the teacher directions; estimate only

Before class, print the learner packet and choose how learners will exchange or submit a point and a response. The slide deck is a teaching aid; all required texts, prompts, organizer fields, routes, and rubric are also in the editable packet.

Tell learners that Ridgeview Middle School, Talia, Jordan, the advisory, the 24 choice slips, and the 10-pair observation are fictional. These invented details are for practice and are not research or actual student data.

Post the main question: How should Ridgeview use the final 10 minutes: keep a choice window, try a guided book talk with alternatives, or test another plan? Make clear that learners may defend any plan if their evidence and reasoning support it.

Set the discussion norm: criticize an idea with a reason, not its author. Invite a pause, private note, or alternate communication route. Do not require public speaking, eye contact, a particular posture, or a minimum number of spoken turns.

Minutes 0–3 — Frame the fictional decision and name the evidence goal. Learners may preview the route choices before reading.

Minutes 3–10 — Learners read both notes and mark one detail, what question it can help answer, and one limit. Read the texts aloud or offer chunked reading when useful; keep the same reasoning target.

Minutes 10–17 — Model Model. Think aloud: the 8-of-10 note is a one-day observation about observed pairs using a book detail; it is not a measure of preference or improved reading. Ask learners to point out the detail, link, and limit.

Minutes 17–24 — Guided task: compare the choice-slip detail with the pair-observation detail. Learners may answer with a partner, on paper, or by dictation. Use the key to clarify which question each detail fits and its limits.

Minutes 24–29 — Learners complete the preparation sheet. They select one evidence-based point and one fair reply or question. Pair rehearsal is optional. Check that a non-spoken route is ready where requested.

Minutes 29–37 — Run two short discussion rounds. In the first, learners exchange a point and its source detail. In the second, each learner responds to or asks about a different idea. They may speak,

exchange notes, type, dictate, use AAC or another established method, or ask you to read their exact note with permission. Allow think time; do not reward more turns.

To make individual evidence visible in a large class, collect each learner’s preparation and reply fields or use an exchange card. A teacher does not need to tally every spoken turn. If a learner chooses an oral/AAC contribution, note the evidence/reasoning or ask them to capture it on the reflection sheet.

Minutes 37–42 — Learners complete the reflection independently. Invite them to keep, change, or qualify their view; agreement and position change are not goals.

Minutes 42–45 — Use the four-part rubric on the learner page and teacher key to review the point, evidence/reasoning, reply, and reflection. If an individual contribution is missing, mark ‘not enough evidence yet’ and offer a later route to show the skill rather than inferring inability.

Shortened 32-minute option: read both texts before class or use a supported read-aloud (6 minutes); model the evidence-link-limit chain (5); prepare one point and reply (5); exchange the point and response in pairs, on paper, or by another route (10); complete the reflection (4); collect/check evidence (2). Keep both paired texts and the response requirement; shorten the number of exchanges, not the thinking target.

Score the contribution against the rubric regardless of format. Do not score turn count, volume, speaking speed, accent, eye contact, posture, spelling, handwriting neatness, or agreement with a position. Use a temporary ‘not enough evidence yet’ note where there is no scorable contribution.

Rubric boundary guidance: for evidence use, distinguish a recognizable but partly inaccurate detail (1) from evidence that is substantially replaced or no relevant detail (0). For reasoning and limits, score the two elements separately: clear accurate link plus relevant limit earns 2; only one clear accurate element earns 1; neither earns 0. A missing whole contribution is still recorded as not enough evidence yet, as described above; a scorable contribution with a missing criterion element uses the rubric. When a reply was not captured or the learner had no opportunity to give it, record not enough evidence yet and provide another opportunity. A submitted response that does not engage another idea may receive 0 for engagement.

Model — intended evidence: Learner identifies a specific source detail, links it to the decision question, recognizes a limit, and proposes a relevant next question.

Guided practice — intended evidence: Learner matches the 24 choice slips to stated preference and the 8-of-10-pair observation to observed text references; explains why each fits and limits each to the one advisory group/one day.

Practice task — intended evidence: Learner contributes a relevant point grounded in an accurately represented detail, explains what it supports and a limit, and makes a fair, reasoned response to another idea through a chosen route; reflection gives individual evidence of reasoning.

Answer keys

— key for Model

The model selects the one-day observation: at least one partner in 8 of 10 observed pairs used a book detail. It connects that detail to whether a guided talk can create an opportunity to refer to a book, then limits the claim: one day and ten pairs do not show that every partner contributed or that reading improved. A relevant next question asks which route helped each student contribute, or how accurate details and explanations appear across a longer trial.

This response distinguishes the observed action from a stronger learning claim, ties the detail to the question it can address, and stays within the described sample. The learner may suggest another useful next check if it responds to the limitation.

The 8-of-10 note fits whether observed pairs referred to a book on that Wednesday; it does not measure preference or improvement.

Accept another specific limit or relevant next question. Do not treat the recommendation to test a prompt as proof that talks work.

Scoring criteria: Criterion 1, Criterion 2

— key for Guided practice

For what this advisory group said it preferred, use the 24 choice slips: 12 selected quiet reading, 8 partner talk, and 4 either. They directly record stated choice in one fictional group; they do not establish which format improves reading or what other groups prefer. For whether pairs referred to books in one trial, use the note that at least one partner in 8 of 10 observed pairs used a detail. It records what was noticed in those pairs that day; it does not show every pair member contributed, all students were observed, or that comprehension improved.

The two details answer different questions. The slips are more directly relevant to reported preference; the observation is more directly relevant to whether a book detail appeared in a talk. Both are narrow, one-group instructional examples, not general or causal evidence.

A learner may say the slip results are useful for a local choice but the observation is more relevant to practice using text details, if the learner explains the distinction.

Accept other well-supported detail/question pairings. The task assesses relevance and limits, not which data point is more important overall.

Scoring criteria: Criterion 1, Criterion 2

— key for Practice task

Responses vary. A strong response names a precise detail from Text A or B, explains how it bears on the final-10-minute decision, identifies a limit, and fairly engages with a different suggestion. A final reflection identifies a peer idea or source detail and explains why the learner kept, changed, or qualified a view; a reasoned decision not to change is valid.

Use all four criteria. Evidence and reasoning must be visible in the chosen communication route. Judge accuracy, relevance, reasoning, engagement, and clarity; do not grade the learner’s conclusion, speech frequency, volume, speed, accent, eye contact, or posture.

“The slips show that 12 of this group’s 24 respondents chose quiet reading, but they do not show what helps readers understand. Jordan’s one-day note makes a short trial worth testing, while Talia’s choice window could preserve options. I would compare both for four weeks and ask students which route let them explain a book detail.”

Many positions and formats are defensible. Do not require agreement, a changed opinion, a fixed number of spoken contributions, or one exact wording. If there is no evidence yet, offer another opportunity before assigning a skill score.

Scoring criteria: Criterion 1, Criterion 2, Criterion 3, Criterion 4

Scoring criteria and extensions

Criterion 1 — scoring criterion

Evidence use — 2 — Names an accurate, specific detail and its text/source. 1 — Gives a relevant detail that is partly accurate, broad, or incompletely attributed. 0 — Gives no relevant detail or substantially misrepresents the evidence.

“The choice slips recorded 12 quiet, 8 partner talk, and 4 either from one group of 24.”

“The one-day observation noted a book detail in 8 of 10 observed pairs.”

Accept a precise paraphrase. A quotation is not required. Score source accuracy and relevance, not the learner's recommendation.

Criterion 2 — scoring criterion

Reasoning and limits — 2 — Accurately explains the detail’s link to the question and names a relevant limit. 1 — Gives only one of those two elements accurately. 0 — Gives neither accurately.

The slips fit a question about stated choice, but not about which routine improves understanding.

The observation fits whether some pairs used a detail that day, but not whether talks improve reading.

Accept another defensible question/detail match if explained accurately. Do not require the learner to support one option. Award 2 for both an accurate clear link and relevant limit, 1 for only either element, and 0 for neither. A full clear link without a limit earns 1, as does a relevant limit without a clear link.

Criterion 3 — scoring criterion

Engagement with another idea — 2: responds to, builds on, questions, or fairly challenges a different idea with a relevant reason or detail; 1: acknowledges or repeats a different idea but adds little response; 0: no identifiable response yet or misrepresents the idea.

“I hear Talia's concern about the 12 slips; would a four-week trial also record how the 8 talk choices use book details?”

“Jordan's one-day example supports testing a prompt, but I would keep a quiet option because the slips show a range.”

A spoken, written, dictated, AAC, or facilitator-read reply can meet the criterion. Do not score speaking frequency, volume, speed, eye contact, posture, accent, or agreement.

Criterion 4 — scoring criterion

Clear contribution in the chosen route — 2: the idea and connection are clear to the intended reader or listener; 1: the main idea is partly clear and needs a prompt or clarification; 0: the available contribution cannot yet be interpreted.

A concise note that names the text detail and states why it matters.

A spoken or AAC response that identifies the point being answered and gives a reason.

Use the same standard across routes. Do not score handwriting neatness, spelling, accent, volume, speed, eye contact, posture, or number of turns.

Support (Practice task): For learners who face reading-load, processing-time, transcription, or speech-access barriers, chunk each note into claim/detail/why/limit; preview the two texts, read them aloud or allow available text-to-speech, offer wait time and paired rehearsal, provide the sentence stems ‘The text says…,’ ‘This matters because…,’ and ‘One limit is…,’ and accept writing, typing, dictation, AAC/established communication, or a facilitator-read note with permission. Keep the evidence, reasoning, limit, and response-to-another-idea criteria constant; the route changes access, not what is measured.

Extension (Practice task): Design a four-week comparison that would help the fictional advisory decide between a choice window and a guided book talk. State what each week would hold constant, how every learner could contribute through an equivalent route, which evidence would be collected, what the evidence could and could not establish, and what result would change the plan. Avoid treating a small preference count as a measure of learning or a short observation as proof of cause.

Original discussion routine and directions authored for Participate in an Evidence-Based Discussion.

Fictional paired text created for Participate in an Evidence-Based Discussion; scenario and numbers are invented.

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Rubric written for this resource; no outside wording is reproduced.

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Response teaching: Participate in an Evidence-Based Discussion

Contribute accurate evidence with reasoning/limits, respond fairly to another idea, and reflect through an accessible communication route.

Use after the Ridgeview discussion when a response offers a detail without its link/limit, agrees without engaging, or misstates another idea. First check whether the learner had access and an actual chance to reply; missing evidence is not inability. Model the drawing/poster contribution, marking detail, link, limit and fair reply. Guide a real exchange using the supplied prompt and an agreed route; the teacher can serve as partner using the printed proposal. Put practice away before C/D and reserve E/F for later. Do not supply the modeled answer during checks. Record whether the reply addressed a live partner or the supplied teacher-read proposal: a supplied comment can elicit response reasoning, but does not establish spontaneous group interaction or listening in a live group.

Planning estimates: preparation 5 minutes; model 4, guided exchange 8, fresh contribution/reply/reflection 8–12. A separate later opportunity may take 8–12. Reduce exchanges rather than removing the reply or reflection. All required texts and teacher-as-partner prompts are supplied; slides are optional.

Use the separate response-teaching, fresh-check and later-check files linked below. Keep the checks aside until the indicated stage. Read-aloud, dictation and other agreed routes can preserve the reasoning target; record the route. These tasks do not assess independent reading when read aloud, and are not validated equivalent tests.

Response teaching — model and guided practice

Reserve: different check after response teaching

Reserve for another occasion: later check

Response practice, fresh check and later check — answer guidance

A/B: accept any bounded plan. Nine of 15 replies favor drawing; four of five groups included at least one idea in a single poster session. Neither shows every member contributed, preferred the format, or learned more. A fair reply addresses the actual proposal and uses a relevant reason/detail; a useful next check records individual opportunities and contributions across routes.

C/D: 11 of 18 preferred writing and 7 speaking in this group; 6 of 8 recorded circle contributions contained a specific reason in one trial. Do not turn contributions into distinct people or assume the two members with no recorded contribution lack the skill. No writing comparison or full opportunity record exists. Accept retaining options, a bounded trial or another supported plan. The reply must address the actual partner idea (or printed proposal), for example preserving access while asking how noncontributors can respond. Reflection may keep the original view with reasons.

E/F: 14 of 20 posted in one board trial; 8 of 12 voluntary replies favored spoken time among 20 members. Six nonposters and eight nonrespondents have unknown reasons. Different measures cannot rank learning effectiveness. A fair reply can note that preference among respondents does not warrant stopping a board with recorded participation, while allowing a different justified plan. Seek opportunity, usefulness and access evidence. Use the existing four rubric criteria separately: accurate source detail; relevant link plus limit; reasoned engagement; clarity in the chosen route. Where nothing interpretable was captured or no reply opportunity occurred, record not enough evidence yet and offer another route. Do not assign ability labels or grade agreement, speaking frequency, volume, accent, speed, spelling or eye contact.

Fictional response examples — for teacher interpretation

These invented responses illustrate evidence to notice; they are not observations of actual learners or diagnostic ability labels.

Sound: “Nine of 15 replies chose drawing, so keep that option for stated preference, not because it proves better learning. Kai’s poster idea has some support in B, but one idea per group does not show everyone contributed. Could each person share an idea through either route? I still favor options but would check individual contributions next.” Shows detail, link/limit, fair engagement and reasoned reflection for guided practice. It does not prove broad discussion skill. Use C/D and record the actual exchange route.

Partial: “I prefer drawing because nine chose it. Kai wants posters.” Relevant choice detail and acknowledgment are visible; source attribution, limit and a reasoned reply are incomplete. Ask ‘What does that count not tell us? What question or reason responds to Kai?’ Guide those additions, then use C/D.

Plausible-error: “Kai is wrong and nobody wants posters because nine chose drawing.” Misrepresents the six poster choices and attacks a conclusion without engaging its evidence. Re-read both counts and Kai’s actual reason; model ‘I hear your point that…; this detail supports… but does not show…’. Have the learner make their own fair reply before C/D.