

Conversation Stems for Grades 9-12¹

If you want to express your ideas clearly...

Listener Prompt	Speaker Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do you think about ____? How did you answer __[the question]__? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the most important idea you are communicating? What is your main point? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall what I'm trying to say is ____. My whole point in one sentence is ____.

If you want to make sure you are listening carefully and clearly understand the ideas presented...

Listener Prompt	Speaker Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You said _____. Did I hear you correctly? I heard you say _____. Is that correct? Put another way, are you saying _____? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes/no. I said _____.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell me more about _____. or Say more about _____. I'm confused when you say _____. Say more about that. Give me an example. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sure. I said ____[restate what was said and add further explanation or examples]_____. An example is _____ because ____ [explain why]_____.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who can rephrase what X said? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> X said _____.

If you want to dig deeper and provide evidence to support your claims...

Listener Prompt	Speaker Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What in the text makes you think so? How do you know? Why do you think that? Explain how you came to your idea. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to the text _____. This means _____. If you look at _____, it says _____. This means _____. I think _____ because _____.

If you want to establish new ways of thinking by elaborating on or challenging the thinking of others...

Listener Prompt	Speaker Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who can add to what X said? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adding to what X said, _____.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who agrees/disagrees with X? Who wants to challenge what X said? Why? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I see it similarly/differently because _____. I agree/disagree with X's view that _____ because in the text, _____. I agree that _____, but we also have to consider _____. Although I grant that _____, I still maintain that _____. While it is true that _____, it does not necessarily follow that _____. On one hand I agree with X that _____. But on the other hand, I insist that _____. I agree/disagree with X's view that _____ because in the text, _____. Certainly _____, but _____, or Perhaps _____, yet _____.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does that idea compare with X's idea? What do you think about X's idea? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> X's point _____ is important/flawed because _____.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whose thinking has changed as a result of this conversation? How and why has it changed? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before I thought __, but now I think __ because ____. My new thinking is _____ because _____.

¹ Adapted from Michaels, S., & O'Connor, C. (2012). *Talk Science Primer* [PDF]. Cambridge, MA: TERC. Retrieved from https://inquiryproject.terc.edu/shared/pd/TalkScience_Primer.pdf and Graff, G., Birkenstein, C., & Durst, R. K. (2016). *"They Say/I Say": The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing* (3rd ed.). New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

- Now that you've heard __[summarize the conversation so far]__, what are you thinking? What are you still wondering about?

- I still think ____, but now I wonder ____.