TALK MOVES

Talk Moves are designed to create a classroom culture where students are regularly expected to speak, listen, and respond to one another. Each gesture serves a different purpose in establishing and/or maintaining a dynamic conversation.

Introduce Talk Moves one at a time, giving students ample time to learn the hand signals, the sentence starters, and the cognitive meanings behind each one.

“Thumbs up” is used to indicate that a student has had enough time to think and is prepared with an answer.
- I’ve been giving it some thought...
- I know what I’d like to say.
- I’m ready to answer.

The raised arm and flat hand indicates a student is unsure of the question, the answer, or the content of the conversation.
- HELP! I’m lost.
- I’m not following the conversation.
- I need someone to repeat and/or clarify what was said.

Stacking fists represents that a student would like to add or build onto a peer’s original idea.
- In addition...
- Building on what ___ said, I can add...
- When ___ said that, it made me think about...

Tapping the head is a respectful way to indicate an alternative opinion or response.
- I have a different thought.
- I hear what ___ is saying, but what about...
- I’m wondering about...

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Rotating his index fingers, a student reveals he heard what a classmate said and can restate it.
- I can paraphrase what ____ said.
- I heard what ____ said and can revoice it.
- I listened and can repeat it.

With a thumb pointing at himself and a pinkie pointing to the speaker, a student can show agreement.
- I believe that as well.
- That’s the same answer I got.
- ___ is on the right track.

Representing the pages of a text, students use their hands to reveal that they can offer proof or evidence.
- For example,…
- That’s true because…
- In fact,…

Forming a complete triangle with two hands symbolizes how one student can reiterate a peer’s response more clearly.
- He is saying that…
- In other words…
- I get it. ___ means that…