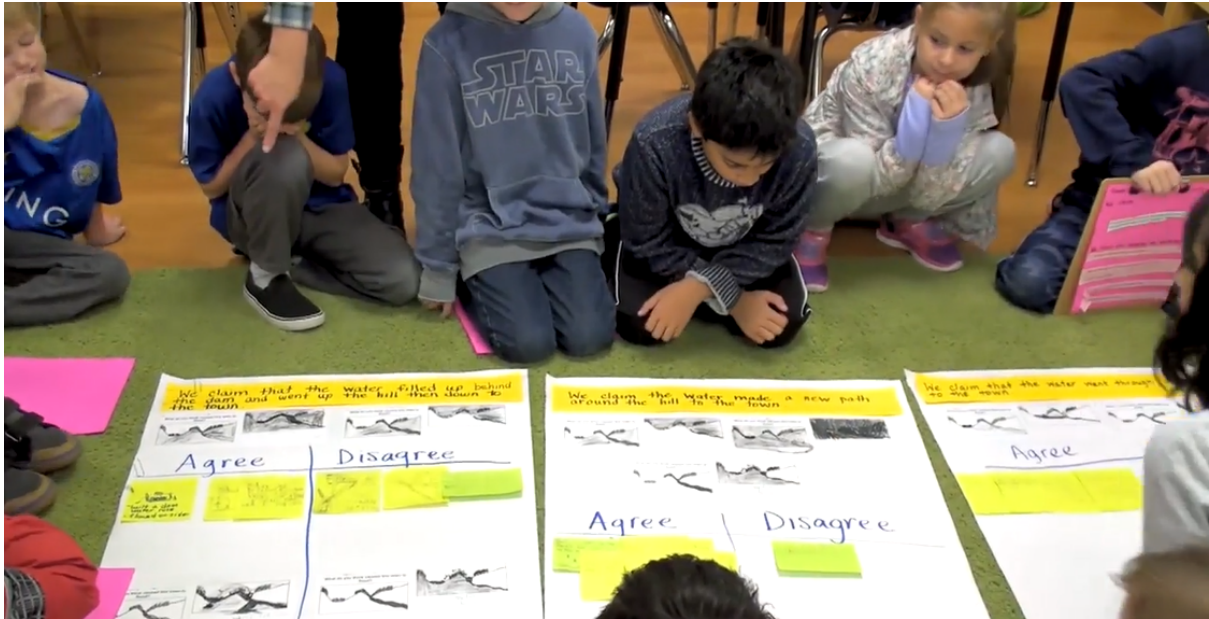


Primer: Facilitating Mid-Unit Agree/Disagree Discussions



This primer describes key steps and decision-points for revisiting the T-charts after one or multiple unit activities (e.g., experiments, readings, watching videos, etc.). During T-chart discussions, students can add evidence gathered from activities to the agree/disagree columns of the T-charts to support or refute unit-level claims about your focal phenomenon. We encourage revisiting the Agree/Disagree T-charts with students several times during a unit.

Steps and Decisions:

1. During or after one or multiple activities, help students record observations or relevant textual information. Consider providing sentence stems such as “I observed _____,” “I learned _____,” or “I noticed _____.”
 - Tip: It can be helpful to have students record on sticky notes or pieces of paper that they can bring with them to the T-chart discussion.
2. Bring students around the T-charts.
 - Decision-Point: Decide on the number of T-charts that you hope to work on with your students at a time. Starting with one claim on a T-chart can reduce the cognitive load for students. Alternatively, working on two or three T-charts can give students more options for placing evidence.
3. Tell students that they will use their observations/textual information (recorded in Step 1) as “evidence” to agree or disagree with the claims about the phenomenon that they generated earlier in the unit. Scientists use evidence to support or disprove claims about how and why phenomena occur.
4. Have a student share an observation/piece of textual information with the class. Invite other students to re-voice what they heard and ask clarification questions so that they can make sense of what the original student shared.

5. Think together with the class about whether the observation or information agrees or disagrees with any of the claims on the T-charts. When students share, ask: “Why do you think _____ (observation/information) agrees/disagrees with _____ (claim)?” Ask other students whether they agree or disagree with proposed ideas, and whether they have different ideas. Once there is some consensus, place the observation or information on the T-chart(s).
 - Tip: Observations/textual information can often go on more than one T-chart. Feel free to put them in multiple places.
6. Repeat steps 4-5 so numerous students have opportunities to share and reason with their observations/textual information.
7. Ask students if they want to make any changes to the claims on the T-charts, based on their evidence.
8. We encourage facilitating these discussions at several different points in a unit so that students can gather and reason with various sources of evidence to support or refute unit-level claims.
 - Tip: Have students record their evidence on different colors of sticky notes/paper so that they can see the range of evidence that supports or refutes each claim.