

Chat Stations^{*}^ – this activity gets your students talking and making connections to their background knowledge. It prepares them for a rich, deep discussion.

Time: 10-20 minutes	Subjects: All	Grades: All <i>**Special instructions K-2</i>	DoK: Level 3 Extended Thinking
As you walk around the room during this activity, you will hear your students talking about the topic. Since they are in groups of two or three, everyone is talking. This helps each student connect to what he or she already knows.			

*Recipe created by Linnea J. Lyding, Ed.D. adapted from Jennifer Gonzalez from Cult of Pedagogy.

Materials:

- ✓ Prewritten statements posted around the room (or down the hall[^])
- ✓ Space for students to walk around and stand in front of the papers or white boards
- ✓ A way to divide students into groups of 2-3

Steps:

1. Create a list of questions or statements (5-10) that will get students talking about the topic you want them to talk about.
2. Number the questions/statements, print them on papers, and put them around the room. You may need to print two or three sets if you don't have very many statements*. If you do this, create a way to distinguish between the sets. You can do this by using different colored paper, highlighting the statements in different colors, or using different colored ink.
3. Divide the students up into groups of two or three.
4. Have each group of students start at a different statement. Have them read the statement and talk about it. After talking for a while, they can move around to another statement in their "set." Since the statements are numbered, they can keep track of which ones they have read.
5. As you walk around the classroom and listen what the students are saying, you may need to encourage students to move on to the next one or ask a few questions to get them to talk more.
6. To continue the lesson...
 - a. As the students finish, have them think about which statement was the most meaningful for them and why.
 - b. Next, have the students "Vote with Your Feet" for their favorite and be prepared to share their thoughts.
7. From there, you can start a class discussion.

Don't Panic: The students do not have to read and discuss every statement. When the first one or two groups finish all of the statements, you can stop the activity. If you continue by having students "Vote with Your Feet," all statements are discussed.

Details and Adaptations:

*You will want to have at least one more question/statement that you have groups. That way there is always a question/statement free for the group to move to. For this reason, you may need to make a second set. In that case, assign ½ of the groups the different set.

^If you do not have adequate space for your students to walk around the room, you can put the questions/statements down the hallway.

**When you are working with younger students, you may want to use pictures instead of sentences. Young students will also need to see the strategy modeled and spend time practicing it.

Value/Research: This activity strengthens learning by providing:

- ✓ Discussion/Collaboration -
- ✓ Movement - Movement not only wakes up the brain, but it has also been proven to improve attention span and focus even after the movement has stopped. (Ayan, 2010; Jensen, 2004; Mahar, Murphy, Rowe, Golden, Shields, & Raedeke, 2006; Medina, 2008). The part of the brain that processes movement is the same part of the brain that processes learning. (Jensen, 2005)
- ✓ Emotional engagement - The students really enjoy this activity because they are talking with peers this increases both engagement and retention. (Almarode & Miller, 2013; Cabrera & Colosi, 2010; Goldin-Meadow, 2010; Jensen, 2004; Lyding, 2012; Medina, 2008; Willis, 2006).
- ✓ Connection to background knowledge (schema) - Our brains work more efficiently when new learning is linked to prior learning, and the learning becomes more permanent (DeWitt, Knight, Hicks, & Ball, 2012)

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