



How to Build Spontaneous Talk

The format of the *Festival/Concours d'art oratoire* must reflect the Ontario curriculum and the FSL classroom of the 21st century. As teachers delve deeper into the action-oriented approach, opportunities to develop language proficiency through authentic, spontaneous conversations will become increasingly more important.

Students will require a lot of practice in order to become confident interacting spontaneously in French. There are many strategies and activities teachers can use to integrate spontaneous talk into their students' regular routine. We have provided some ideas and tasks with this guide.

Building Spontaneous Talk

Here are three suggestions to build spontaneous talk opportunities for students.

1. Questioning:

Oral presentations are a regular part of FSL programs. By presenting a prepared text, students are engaging in oral production but not oral interaction. Teachers can add an interactive element to what students are already doing by asking one or two questions at the end of the presentation. These questions are not to be prepared in advance.

2. Talking Cubes:

Talking cubes are a teaching strategy that engages students in small group conversation using questions and prompts appropriate to their level. We have included examples for A1, A2, B1, and B2 with this package. Teachers can use these as a minds-on activity or when a short time-filler is needed.

Students work in groups of 2-4 and take turns tossing the cubes, then respond to the question or prompt. Students at higher levels can speak for longer using more sentences.

- a. A1 - Students say one or two sentences based on the prompt at first, building to being able to speak continuously for 45 seconds to a minute.
- b. A2 - Students say two to four sentences at first, building to being able to speak continuously for 2 minutes.
- c. B1 - Students should aim for four to 6 sentences, or about 20-30 seconds at first, building to being able to speak continuously for 3 minutes.
- d. B2 - Students should be able to produce 6-8 sentences, or approximately 1 minute at first, building to being able to speak or debate continuously for 5 minutes. Another idea at this level is to have one student toss the cube, and then have the entire group debate the topic for a fixed amount of time (2-3 minutes).

3. Questions musicales:

“Questions musicales” is another strategy that encourages students to speak to a variety of other students. Using a set of questions such as those included in this package, students move around the classroom while the teacher plays music. When the music stops, students turn to the nearest classmate and work on the next question on the list.

Questions for Talking Cubes

These questions have been provided as a reference for Talking Cubes. You will find that all of the questions have been populated in the cubes for convenience. The questions are differentiated for program, language proficiency level and grade. Consideration has been taken to ask questions which are age appropriate as well as related to the skill. These very same questions could be adapted for other communicative activities. (Please download the attachments for the differentiated cube activity)