

Benefits of Discussion

Over the last 20 years, mathematics educators have observed and analyzed alternatives to recitation, a common talk format found in typical U.S. classrooms. In particular, a growing body of literature supports the use of discussion in mathematics class. Current research suggests that discussion can:

- Increase student learning
- Motivate students
- Support teachers in understanding and assessing student thinking
- Shift the mathematical authority from teacher (or textbook) to community

Discussion is a strategy that can support teachers in understanding what students already know and in determining what they still need to learn. In this sense, listening to students' ideas in discussions can serve as formative assessment that helps teachers make decisions about instruction.

Based on What Does Research Say the Benefits of Discussion in Mathematics Class Are?

The views expressed or implied in this publication, unless otherwise noted, should not be interpreted as official positions of the Council.

Copyright © 2013 by The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, 1906 Association Drive, Reston, VA 20191-1502, Tel: (703) 620-9840, Fax: (703) 476-2690, www.nctm.org.