

“Finally, a resource that can help elementary teachers engage students in deep, meaningful discussions about the texts they read!”

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The Most Reasonable Answer

Helping Students Build Better Arguments Together

ALINA REZNITSKAYA and IAN A. G. WILKINSON

Foreword by Catherine E. Snow



THE MOST REASONABLE ANSWER

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FOREWORD BY CATHERINE E. SNOW

The Most Reasonable Answer is an innovative and comprehensive guide to engaging students in inquiry dialogue—a type of talk used in text-based classroom discussions. During inquiry dialogue, students collectively search for the most reasonable answers to big, controversial questions, and, as a result, enhance their argumentation skills and develop a deep understanding of the texts they read. Based on years of research and work in nearly fifty classrooms, this book is an essential resource for educators looking for new ways to teach critical thinking and engage students in high-quality discourse.

Reznitskaya and Wilkinson introduce a robust Argumentation Rating Tool, a rubric highlighting eleven practices and corresponding talk moves that can be used by teachers and students to improve the quality of their arguments. The tool encourages students to build on and challenge each other’s ideas, clarify meaning, rely on well-examined reasons and evidence, and make logical connections.

The authors explain how to choose the readings that have high “dialogic quality,” create controversial questions based on these readings, and design lessons that help students develop their argumentation skills when speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The book provides detailed annotated transcripts that illustrate how teachers can effectively facilitate whole-group and small-group discussions using fiction, nonfiction, and multimodal texts.

Packed with a rich array of field-tested materials, *The Most Reasonable Answer* supports teachers in facilitating inquiry dialogue in upper-elementary grades.

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