

Student Panel

Scaffolding in Knowledge Building Forums

>> I think we just went there and then kept, like, shared our ideas. And that's how different people saw it. And they started building onto it. And that's what inspired us to get to where we were.

>> So in the Knowledge Forum we put down our ideas. And then somebody else would go on, add onto it, add a question onto it or a comment or something they found about that topic. Or research. And you could just build onto it over and over again. It could be different people; it could be the same people. It was a really nice web. We really learned to share things from it.

>> And it was a really open space. So it wasn't restricted to, like, the students who -- like, if a student knew some information, it wasn't only restricted to them. Like, anyone in that class, in that group, could go and go put down their ideas and read other people's ideas to use as their own. So in their -- in one class, we'd have a few different projects. So when we'd discuss on something and when we'd ask different questions, we'd use those questions to question ourselves. So if their question was on a subway station, like accessibility, and we'd question ourselves. Like, is our park accessible? Is our park safe for other students and other kids and parents and families? So it was really helpful for us to build on our own questions while helping other people in their questions as well.

>> So I -- in my opinion, the scaffolds were a way to start your idea. Something that really sparks you. For example, in my opinion there are three kinds of scaffolds. And I kind of categorize them as one being, "I wonder about ..." So I want to ask you a question. I think, I wonder about. And then another one was, "In my opinion." In my opinion, this is what I think. In my opinion, this is what I analyzed. And then another one was, "I learned." So after questioning, after analyzing, then what did I learn? What does this research show? The scaffolds were an organizing factor, but also a factor of a spark. A starting question.

>> Right. It always helped us, like, discover new ideas. Like, for example, "I wonder." What am I wondering about a topic? And I write one sentence on something that I wonder about. And then I go, like, "In my opinion ..." And then that adds on to what I think about that idea. And that just builds on and then different people come in. They add in and then it just brings up a whole new idea with, like, something that can affect so much things. So many things.

>> It's basically like a base to jump on. Because sometimes you don't know how to put your ideas out there, so when you have these little helpful tools on the side for you, you -- sometimes it helps you evolve your own question. So for example, I may have an idea of a question, but I don't know how to write that. Like, I don't know how -- I wouldn't know how to put that on a screen. And sometimes when I take a look at the scaffolds, I'll be like, "Maybe I could word my question this way ..." And when I word it that way, I might figure something out in my brain that might even lead to a different question. So the scaffolds are not only just helpful with a question, but they also help evolve to another question as well.

>> The -- just being free, being able to work together and then, like, getting everyone's ideas. And, like, just knowing what people are doing. Like, Marcia mentioned earlier about being free. How you can just take your question to any level and then, like, just get deeper into it. And then even -- not only, like, the process, but also how you are presenting your ideas. We were free for

doing, like -- some people were presenting it through a spoken-word poetry. Some people were doing a drama presentation. And there were whole new, like, different and very creative ideas out there.