

Facilitating dialogue in the classroom



Dialogue involves two-way conversations where people not only speak to each other but also really *listen*. In dialogue, we are passionately committed to understanding the other person. We understand that no one has *the right answer*, because no one can see the problem from all sides. The focus moves from debating who is right to exploring different perspectives and complex relationships.

Dialogue occurs in a space—a physical space where people come together, but also a set of non-physical conditions where everyone feels safe to interact openly. This whole space can be referred to as the *container* or *dia* for dialogue. Facilitating dialogue is the art of creating this container in which people become aware of their assumptions and suspend judgements. They listen to each other and remain open to the possibilities inherent in others' views.

