

Developing and Promoting Student Agency in High School Math Classrooms

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Creating Balance Conference
Rachel Restani
rmrestani@ucdavis.edu

Agenda

- Icebreaker
- Define Agency
- Discuss Current Experiences
- Analyze Data
- Discuss Examples
- Reflect

Two Truths & a Lie

- Think of two facts about you and something that is not true.
- In groups of three, take turns sharing your two truths and a lie.
- The other two people must guess which facts are true and which one is false.
- Share the truth with your partners.

Agency

- What is agency?
- How is agency related to identity?
- What are the benefits of cultivating agency among students?
- What are the challenges involved in promoting opportunities for students to have the skills and confidence to act on one's own behalf?

Our Definition of Agency

Responsibility. Cultural.

Agency: Willfully act and make choices. Power to do what you choose within the structure.

Help students see own gifts. Own next steps.

Pros / Cons

- Give away Power
- Who has agency?
 - + overserved
 - + underserved
- Not scripted
- Negotiation
- Time
Safety first-

Agency

- **Agency**: Behavior of characteristics within a realm of a Figured World (Holland et al., 2001)
- **Human agency**: The confidence and skills to act on one's own behalf (Solorzano & Solorzano, 1995)
- **Mathematical agency**: Students' capacity to identify themselves as powerful mathematical thinkers who construct rigorous mathematical understandings, and who participate in mathematics in personally and socially meaningful ways (Turner, 2003).
- **Characteristics of agency**: *control, composition, commitment, thematization, characterization, and reason*, which are associated with choice, knowledge, and power (Kockelman, 2007).

What strategies do you use to cultivate agency?

Share your responses in the comments below.

Analyze Data

- What types of agency are enacted in these transcriptions?
- What level of effectiveness would you rate these examples?
- How could these discussions be expanded upon to promote more confidence and skills to act on one's own behalf?

Discuss

- Describe your Integrated 1 example
- What characteristic and what level did you assign?
- Explain why/how you determined the category/level
- What are some ways to deepen the mathematical experience?
- Does anyone in the audience disagree or want to add some ideas/opinions to this example?

Strategies Used to Promote Agency

- Teacher/student positioning away from front.
- Student-generated definitions. Press to explain WHY.
- Addressed behavior. Taught students to listen (one mic one voice).
- Distributed participation.
- Either/or options.
- Multiple strategies. Choice in tools.
- Encourage regardless of accuracy. Validation. Recognized.
- Mistakes used to develop learning process. Confidence.
- Safe classroom culture.
- Use higher-order questions and precise vocabulary.

List more strategies here:

- Let's keep the conversation going!