



Welcome fellow Recovering Traditionalists to Episode 13. Today we are looking at Orchestrating Productive Mathematics Discussions

Welcome to Build Math Minds the podcast, where fidelity to your students is greater than fidelity to your textbook. I'm your host, Christina Tondevold, the recovering traditionalist and BuildMathMinds.com Founder, where my mission is to change the way we teach elementary math to our kiddos. Are you ready to start building math minds and not just creating calculators? Let's get started.

Today's insight comes from the 5 Practices book. The official title is 5 Practices for Orchestrating Productive Mathematics Discussions and was written by Margaret S. Smith and Mary Kay Stein.

On page 69, they write

“Almost all good classroom discussions begin in the same way: by inviting a student to share how he or she solved a particular problem. After the initial student response, however, classroom discussions diverge - separating into the relatively rare fruitful ones and the much more frequent unproductive show-and-tells. It turns out that issuing an invitation to students to reveal their thinking is a relatively easy thing to learn how to do. And most students will comply...Learning how to follow up on the ideas that surface in such student presentations is much more difficult.”

I was very guilty of doing the show-and-tell type of sharing that they discuss. It wasn't until I read this book back in 2012 that I finally realized why all my discussion times seemed so unproductive. After about 3 kids had shared all the other kids started to get disinterested and I had kids who were paying attention but listening to other students' strategies wasn't building anything for them.

Smith & Stein laid out 5 practices that help you turn that sharing time from a time where kids sitting listening to other students' describe their personal learning into one where the students are engaged, discussing, and making connections from the sharer's learning to their own learning.

Throughout the book they give you practical advice, broken down into the 5 key practices that will help you keep your sanity AND feel like the time you spend having kids share their strategies is meaningful and powerful to their learning.

If you want to dig a bit deeper into learning about how to orchestrate those productive math discussions, then I highly encourage you to read the 5 Practices book. I'll link to it on the show notes page buildmathminds.com/13

For those of you who are members of the Build Math Minds PD site, log into the site and click on the link for the Virtual Math Summit. During last year's summit, Duane Habecker did a session about combining the 5 Practices with the 3 Reads method. Very cool session that you have access to inside the BMM site.

If you aren't a member, then I'd encourage you to get registered for this year's Virtual Math Summit. We have almost 40 sessions that you can watch for free for a week. After that week they go into the BMM site for the members to access. But go to buildmathminds.com/virtual-math-summit to get registered. I'll also put a link to it on the show notes page buildmathminds.com/13

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