

Support participation and build confidence

A suggestion for implementing the strategy 'Helpful classroom strategies years 9-13' from the Guide: [Speech, Language and Communication](#)

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- Includes:**
- Design the day to maximise participation
 - Respond to communication needs
 - Support friendships
 - Foster collaboration and group work
 - Foster class discussion
 - Use a variety of discussion strategies

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From

Guide: [Speech, Language and Communication](#)

Strategy: [Helpful classroom strategies years 9-13](#)

Suggestion: [Support participation and build confidence](#)

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22 June 2026

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Design the day to maximise participation

Discuss with students what will support their participation and motivation.

Build these suggestions into your teaching practice.

- ✓ Check in with the student regularly.
- ✓ Connect learning to the student's interests.
- ✓ Establish clear classroom routines, expectations and rules.
- ✓ Provide task and lesson outlines.
- ✓ Break work into short manageable chunks.
- ✓ Schedule brain and movement breaks.
- ✓ Offer leadership opportunities and group roles based on the student's expertise and interests.
- ✓ Foster tuakana-teina relationships where students support each other.
- ✓ Provide easy access to quiet spaces for working or winding down.
- ✓ Develop and teach strategies to help students when they get stuck.
- ✓ Notice task avoidance or increasing anxiety. Implement supports quickly.

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Respond to communication needs

Ākonga will have unique communication needs.

Work with them to understand their preferences and challenges. For example, some ākonga will enjoy speaking in large groups and others will not.

- ✓ Give ākonga time to think and talk.
- ✓ Listen without interruption.
- ✓ Provide ample opportunities for students to make their feelings, thoughts and needs known.
- ✓ Give students a heads up, when possible, so they can prepare their response.
- ✓ Model communication using the students means of communication, for example using point to select, using the student's communication device, or using NZSL.

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Support friendships

Professor Gina Conti-Ramsden suggests facilitating the development of friendships by building on students' interests and talents.



Video hosted on Youtube <http://youtu.be/59dSpP17VsA>

No captions or transcript

Source:

[RADLD \(UK\)](#)

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Foster collaboration and group work

Provide opportunities for ākonga to work with others. Carefully design group or pair activities to maximise productive interactions and learning.

- ✓ Encourage tuakana-teina relationships and create a culture where students provide support for each other.
- ✓ Provide a kete of strategies to help students to listen actively to each other, share ideas, and recognise different points of view.
- ✓ Use a variety of thinking tools, such as [De Bono's thinking hats](#).
- ✓ Assign roles such as speaker, listener, and note-taker to the group members.
- ✓ Develop cross-cultural communication skills, learning how conventions for conversation vary across cultures and contexts.
- ✓ Monitor the discussions to ensure that all students understand the task and have opportunities to participate.

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Foster class discussion



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Use a variety of discussion strategies

Using a variety of strategies, makes class discussions more equitable and gives each student an opportunity to use their strengths to participate.

- Think, Pair, Share – students work individually, then in pairs, and then in the group.
- Pass the paper – rotate A3 sheets around the room for ākongā to add their responses.
- Framed discussions – share sentence starters or explicit frameworks to scaffold responses.
- Gallery walk or chat stations – students respond to prompts or questions placed around the room.
- Donut – students work in two concentric circles and move one step at a time to share ideas with a new conversation partner.
- Human graph – students share opinions or preferences (not right/wrong answers) by moving to different parts of the room.
- Cafe style conversations – cafe style stations for ākongā to explore and share ideas and expertise. A “host” stays at each cafe table.
- Silent discussions – using digital polling tools such as survey forms, Mentimeter or Padlet.
- Asynchronous techniques – for example, use video response tools like Flip to record responses when students are ready.
- Backchannel chats – add discussion question sheets, voting options, sticky note options, or digital platforms for students to use when they are ready to respond or as an alternative to speaking in class discussions.

Adapted from: [Cult of Pedagogy](#) and [Reading and Writing Haven](#).

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