

**Handout 3: Seven Teacher “Moves” for Leading Discussion in History**

1. **Asking for textual support:** The teacher requires that students back their claims with evidence from the documents.
  - Example: *Can you find a quote in the document that supports your argument that the Texans wanted to keep slaves?*
2. **Revoicing:** The teacher rephrases an idea that a student is struggling to express as a means of distilling the key argument and helping other students place the comment in the framework of the larger discussion.
  - Example: *It sounds like you’re saying that Benjamin Lundy was an abolitionist, so we can’t completely take him at his word about Texas. So you agree with Jennifer that the Texans truly believed the Mexican government was violating their rights because the only person who says they wanted to expand slavery is Lundy and he’s not a reliable source in this case.*
3. **Prompting Counter-argument:** The teacher poses or prompts a counter-argument to challenge a particular student’s interpretation.
  - Example: *Does anyone have a different interpretation? Who disagrees?*
4. **Uptake:** The teacher incorporates prior comments/ideas into subsequent questions.
  - Example: *That sounds a little bit like what Thomas was saying earlier. . . . Does anyone want to build on Jennifer’s argument?*
5. **Stabilizing the Context:** The teacher pauses discussion to review content knowledge relevant to the discussion at hand:
  - Example: *Let’s just make sure we’re all on the same page. The Missouri Compromise established what? And Texas was where? So if Texas were to become a state, would it be a slave or free state?*
6. **Questioning the Text:** The teacher prepares questions about specific parts of the text that yield themselves to multiple interpretations.
  - Example: *What does Lundy mean when he says, “We have been asked to believe that the inhabitants of Texas have been fighting to maintain the sacred principles of Liberty, and the natural, inalienable Rights of Man:---whereas, their motives have been exactly the opposite”?*
7. **Modeling:** The teacher thinks out loud and exposes how he/she works through a complicated idea in a text (e.g., how to reconcile a contradictory statement, decipher difficult prose, or interpret evocative language).
  - Example: *One of the things I’m wondering as I read this is why the Texas Declaration of Independence says “life, liberty, and property” instead of “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” It makes me wonder if the Mexican government was taking the settlers’ property, or maybe this is a reference to the abolition of slavery?*

Source: <http://teachinghistory.org/teaching-materials/teaching-guides/25620>