

## Reflection on Essential Questions: What does it mean to teach? How do you know?

Based on your discussions, many of you argued that teaching is directly connected to student learning:

- “Teaching is based on student learning: Can the kids explain their answers?”
- “The less I talk the more they learn...”
- “Teaching involves letting students argue out problems so that they learn...”

One way to interpret these viewpoints is by the following:

**Teaching happens when students learn from well-designed instructional tasks that are *facilitated* by the teacher. *Student learning* is evidenced by their explanations, justifications, and “math talk” with one another.**

Many of you felt that teaching necessarily involves something more from the teacher than purposefully designed, well-facilitated instructional tasks:

- “Sometimes I’ll go home and think, ‘O no I didn’t teach anything today, I just asked a lot of questions.’”
- “Exploration/discovery works for some students... but if your kids are just talking to each other, I’m not teaching. I’m not doing anything...”

One way to interpret these viewpoints is by the following:

**Teaching happens when students learn something from me. *Teaching* is evidenced by my verbal instructions and explanations, showing students how to get an answer, and modeling problem solving.**

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### Questions for Discussion:

- Do these points of view necessarily contradict one another? Why or why not?
- What does it mean to teach? How do you know?

Record *summary* statements from your discussion in the space below.