A Teacher’s 3 Main Jobs
During Discussing Learner Thinking

1. Get a learner’s idea out in the open
2. Help others to engage with the idea presented
3. Use that exchange of ideas to surface important mathematics
Talk Moves for Discussing Learner Thinking

Elicit learner thinking—or draw ideas out.
- Invite students to share their thinking (e.g. “What’s your idea?”, “what was your strategy?”, “how did you think about it?”) or to make sense of someone else’s work (e.g. “Take a look at this work and try to make sense of it.”)
- Increase participation and diversify voices (e.g. “Did anyone solve it a different way?”)

Clarify learner thinking—or ensure the idea on the table is clear to everyone.
- Ask students to elaborate (e.g. “Can you say more about that?”)
- Re-voice student thinking and verify (e.g. “So, I think what you’re saying is __________. Did I understand your idea right?”)
- Ask other students to repeat or rephrase what they heard (e.g. “Who thinks they understand what ______ said. Can you try to explain it in your own words?”)
- Ask about ambiguous phrases or vocabulary (e.g. “When she says, *subtract it*, what is the *it* she is talking about?” or “What do you think he means when he says *the bigger one*?”)

Press learner thinking—or probe the idea in order to surface important mathematics, underlying concepts, or misconceptions/errors/inconsistencies.
- Ask students to further unpack an idea/strategy to illuminate the concepts behind it (e.g. “You said to add the 2 and the 7, but I don’t see a 2 and 7. What is this 2 worth?”)
- Ask why a strategy works (e.g. “Why do you think Tiffany’s method works?” or “How come we are allowed to just ignore the zeros and put them back in later?”)
- Ask a question that challenges a strategy or provides a counterexample (e.g. “What will happen if we try 10?”)

Connect learner thinking—or engage students in questioning, commenting on, or adding on to an idea OR in making connections between the idea and other ideas.
- Ask students to reason about an idea/strategy (e.g. “Do you agree? Disagree? Why?”)
- Encourage students to ask each other questions (e.g. “What questions do you have for ______ about his idea?”)
- Invite students to build on an idea (e.g. “Would anyone like to add on to that?”)
- Point out connections to other students’ thinking, or to key mathematics (e.g. “This reminds me of Kira’s idea from earlier on because…” OR “This is making me think about how convenient it is to *make a ten* when we are adding”)

Protect learner thinking—or actively make a safe space for the sharing and building of ideas.
- Give wait time (e.g. “Let’s take our time and think first.”)
- Treat mistakes or confusion as an opportunity for learning for everyone (“I’m so glad you made that mistake because it helped us all to understand this!”)
- Actively encourage students to revise their thinking (e.g. “Would you like to revise your answer?” or “What are you thinking now?”)
- Assign competence (e.g. “Rakeem’s method is really important for us to think about.”)
- Validate struggle (e.g. “Feeling confused when you’re grappling with something new is normal! Let’s work together to get through that feeling.”)