

AKILAH BOND

This beautiful clip of Akilah Bond and her second graders opens with Akilah guiding her students to recall and explain key information from Chapters 1 and 2 of *Young Cam Jansen and the Zoo Note Mystery #9* before they continue reading Chapter 3. Akilah uses substantial Wait Time and Right Is Right to support students in giving thorough responses to her Check for Understanding questions about chapters.

Read the following passage from *Teach Like a Champion 3.0* on Wait Time (p. 276):

After asking a question of his class, the typical teacher waits about a second before taking an answer. The challenges and limitations posed by such a habit are significant. The answers the teacher can expect to get after less than a second's reflection are unlikely to be the richest, the most reflective, or the most developed his students can generate. And taking answers after just a second has the effect of systematically encouraging students to raise their hands with the first answer they think of, rather than the best answer. **Wait Time** is the practice of inserting a short amount of waiting before taking an answer. The benefits of waiting a few seconds between question and answer include:

- Allowing more hands to go up
- Enabling a wider range of scholars to raise their hands
- Supporting better, more rigorous answers
- Prompting more cognitive work during the “wait”
- Increasing use of evidence in answers

How much Wait Time do you generally give to your students in class? What can make it hard to pause before calling on a student to answer?

CHAPTER 001 - CUT B - AKILAH BOND

We are going to watch these first three minutes in two chunks so you can see the impact of Akilah's Wait Time on class discussion.



Use this QR code to watch the clip titled *Chapter 001 - Cut B - Akilah Bond* or find the video at the URL wiley.com/go/fg3ch1.

Watch this clip until you hear Akilah say “Clap, clap, fold.” At 0:50, Akilah asks “Why does Cam help Eric find the note?” What happens after she asks this question? What do you notice about her Wait Time?

Now pick up watching after Akilah calls on Cheyenne Tony and watch until the end. How does Akilah’s Wait Time impact student responses?

YOUR TURN: PRACTICE

Take a moment to record specific language you would like to use for Wait Time in your classroom. Use the examples to help you.

- **Making Wait Time Transparent** (e.g. “Hands down, this is a hard one. Take 10 seconds to think about it in your head and then give me the biggest smile when you think you have it.”)

- **Using Wait Time to Prompt Thinking Skills** (e.g. “Imani is looking at what we know about the characters. Nice move.”)

CHAPTER 001 - CUT C - AKILAH BOND

In this next burst of video, we will see Akilah begin reading Chapter 3 expressively, send students into a Turn and Talk, and then facilitate a whole-class discussion to make sense of what they read. We love how she guides student attention toward the learning throughout this next clip. Consider the following framing around the importance of attention from one of our favorite teachers, Zaretta Hammond. Hammond writes, “Attention drives learning. Neuroscience reminds us that before we can be motivated to learn what is in front of us, we must pay attention to it. Learning isn’t a passive event but a dynamic action. It requires focused attention, active engagement, and conscious processing by the learner” (*Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain*, p. 48).

We invite you now to jump back into Akilah’s keystone, keeping the idea of attention in mind.



Use this QR code to watch the clip titled *Chapter 001 - Cut C - Akilah Bond* or find the video at the URL wiley.com/go/fg3ch1.

Akilah sets students up for a Turn and Talk when she says, “Why does Eric ask Cam, ‘Now what do we do?’” How do Akilah’s step-by-step directions to launch the Turn and Talk support students’ attention to one another?

After the Turn and Talk, Akilah calls on two students to discuss the character's motivation. After the first student speaks, she asks, "What do you guys think?" and pauses for students to signal their agreement (the co-sign hand gesture) or desire to build (fist on top of fist gesture). How does this series of Cold Calls and Wait Time allow Akilah to cultivate "focused attention" and "active engagement"? What other actions does she take to make sure that all of her students are focused and learning, even when they are not speaking, during this whole-class review?

CHAPTER 001 - CUT D - AKILAH BOND

We can't watch this clip without smiling—a lot! We invite you to rewatch the beginning of the clip with a focus on *how* Akilah makes space for joy in her classroom. Start by reading the passage below about the nature of happiness.

In *The Happiness Advantage*, Shawn Achor discusses research on three elements of happiness: pleasure, engagement, and meaning. We are happy when we find pleasure, but happiness goes well beyond that. We are happy when we are connected and when we perceive ourselves to be doing something important. "People who pursue only pleasure experience only part of the benefits happiness can bring while those who pursue all three routes lead the fullest lives," Achor continues. Pleasure, engagement, and meaning: all three should be the foci of our efforts to make our classrooms joyful places (*TLAC 3.0*, p. 497).



Use this QR code to watch the clip titled *Chapter 001 - Cut D - Akilah Bond* or find the video at the URL wiley.com/go/fg3ch1.

Throughout this keystone, we see Akilah help her second graders focus their natural energy on celebrations of each other and of their learning. It's clear that students are excited to contribute to the group and to support their peers, and are happy about learning.

How do you see her ensuring that students experience all three elements of happiness: “pleasure, engagement, and meaning”?

Reflect: Why are “focused attention” and “active engagement” key to support student learning? How do you sustain these in your own classroom?

CHAPTER 001 - CUT E - AKILAH BOND



Use this QR code to watch the clip titled *Chapter 001 - Cut E - Akilah Bond* or find the video at the URL wiley.com/go/fg3ch1.

This portion of Akilah's keystone opens with Akilah's expressive reading. She pauses and asks, "Why does Eric ask Cam, 'Why don't you click?'" She calls on Sonoa first; when Sonoa doesn't give a full answer, Akilah asks, "What are we missing from Sonoa's response?" She calls on Michael, and when Michael pauses during his answer, she says, "I see you looking at the chart. Go ahead and say out loud what you're thinking inside your head." Michael says beautifully, "What do we know about the characters." We, as teachers, sometimes worry that giving too much knowledge at the top of a lesson waters down the rigor of student thinking. How did Akilah's focus on prior knowledge support this discussion?

Chapter 001 - Cut E - Akilah Bond Rewatch

Part of the reason that the learning is so rich in Akilah's classroom is because she has established a culture that nurtures intellectual risk taking. Part of that culture comes from the joy and celebrations we've already lifted up, but part of it comes from something we call Culture of Error. Read the following passage from *TLAC 3.0* to learn more about Culture of Error.

The term “psychological safety” is often used to describe a setting in which participants are risk-tolerant. Certainly psychological safety is a critical part of a classroom with a **Culture of Error**, but I would argue that the latter term goes farther: it includes both psychological safety—feelings of mutual trust and respect and comfort in taking intellectual risks—and appreciation, perhaps even enjoyment, for the insight that studying mistakes can reveal. In a classroom with a **Culture of Error**, students feel safe if they make a mistake, there is a notable lack of defensiveness, and they find the study of what went wrong interesting and valuable. (*TLAC 3.0*, p. 111)

Keeping this framing in mind, let's go back to the beautiful moment we just watched in which Michael and Sonoa work together, in front of the class, to correct an error in understanding. Return to the QR code above to rewatch Chapter 001 - Cut E - Akilah Bond or visit the URL <http://wiley.com/go/fg3ch1>.

Akilah eventually kicks the question back to Sonoa, saying, with a smile, “Sonoa, take it back.” How does this moment support her relationship with Sonoa? How does this moment further support the **Culture of Error** Akilah has built in her class?

YOUR TURN: PRACTICE

What would you like to borrow or adapt for your own classroom based on Akilah's classroom? Write an action step for yourself.

- Pull out an upcoming lesson. Identify two questions where a Turn and Talk would boost student engagement and deepen student responses. Script how you will launch the Turn and Talk. Feel free to script below or directly into your lesson plan.
- In the same lesson, identify two questions where students would benefit from additional Wait Time. Script your narration of the Wait Time below or directly into your lesson plan.

We have studied Akilah's video piece-by-piece, but we know you'll want to keep watching it on your own. Use the QR code below to watch the full clip titled *Chapter 001 - Cut A - Akilah Bond - Full Keystone* or find the video at the URL <http://wiley.com/go/fg3ch1>.



Check Your Work! Compare your video analysis work to ours. Consider how your observations are different from ours. What did you notice that we didn't? What did we capture that you missed? Remember, we've had the chance to watch these videos many times!

Chapter 001 - Cut B - Akilah Bond

Akilah asks "Why does Cam help Eric find the note?" What happens after she asks this question? What do you notice about her Wait Time?

- Akilah uses considerable Wait Time after she asks the question the first time. She tells students to put their hands down and think, saying, "This is a tough one." She repeats the question again, and then pauses. She praises one student's thinking skills: "Imani is looking at what we know about the characters. Nice move."
- She uses Wait Time again after several students have shared and she wants them to include a detail about one of the characters in their responses. Akilah gestures for students to put their hands down and says, "Take another 10 seconds to think about it in your head. Don't raise your hand but give me the biggest smile when you think you've got it."
- Each time Akilah asks a question, several students launch their hands into the air. By asking them to pause and consider the question, she gives them time to develop more complex answers, and she also gives students who didn't immediately have an answer time to think.

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How does Akilah's Wait Time impact student responses?

- Because Akilah is transparent about her Wait Time, student responses improve with each iteration. She tells students to use additional time to think or mentions a resource or characteristic they should be incorporating.
- We can also see a difference in the number of hands up from immediately after Akilah asks her question and after she gives considerable Wait Time. More students are prepared to answer and therefore participate in class.

Chapter 001 - Cut C - Akilah Bond

Akilah sets students up for a Turn and Talk when she says, "Why does Eric ask Cam, 'Now what do we do?'" How do Akilah's step-by-step directions to launch the Turn and Talk support students' attention to one another?

- Akilah explains *why* they have the opportunity to speak to their partner for this question ("This is a really tough one!"), which sets the tone for the Turn and Talk—this is a hard question that will require two minds to answer. She then reminds them to include specific evidence about both characters.
- By prompting students to turn to one another and lean in, she is setting students up spatially to pay attention to one another. When the Turn and Talk begins, the room crackles to life, and it is likely hard to hear just your partner. By encouraging students to position their bodies so they can fully look at one another, students are better able to hear their partners' responses and to communicate that they are genuinely listening.

After the Turn and Talk, Akilah calls on two students to discuss the character's motivation. After the first student speaks, she asks, "What do you guys think?" and pauses for students to signal their agreement (the co-sign hand gesture) or desire to build (fist on top of fist gesture). How does this series of Cold Calls and Wait Time allow Akilah to cultivate "focused attention" and "active engagement"? What other actions does she take to make sure that all of her students are focused and learning, even when they are not speaking, during this whole-class review?

- This may seem simple, but Akilah asks students to put hands down when their peers are talking. The message here is that when others are speaking, you should be listening fully, not thinking about something else you want to say. This might be doubly important in a classroom with young students, where it sometimes takes a bit longer for them to get their ideas out.
- The norm during discussions is to make eye contact with the speaker. This does two things. First, it communicates to the speaker that their ideas are important; second, it positions students to really pay attention to what their peer is saying.

Chapter 001 - Cut D - Akilah Bond

How do you see her ensuring that students experience all three elements of happiness: “pleasure, engagement, and meaning”?

- Akilah constantly pauses after students contribute their thoughts to celebrate their work with enthusiastic chants. This emphasizes the connection in the classroom—peers are listening to one another and appreciate each other’s efforts.
- Akilah models expressive, engaged reading as she reads aloud. She uses different voices, slows down to emphasize key moments, and demonstrates how reading can be a pleasurable experience.
- She intentionally plans opportunities for students to talk to a partner; this means every student has the space to rehearse an answer, and it encourages engaged participation later because all students are ready with an answer. It again offers an opportunity for students to feel connected.
- Even her transitions are joyous—her out-cue from the Turn and Talk is a Call and Response song with movement.

Chapter 001 - Cut E - Akilah Bond

We, as teachers, sometimes worry that giving too much knowledge at the top of a lesson waters down the rigor of student thinking. How did Akilah’s focus on prior knowledge support this discussion?

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- Students are able to refer back to the information they know about the characters; Michael recognizes what is missing from his peer's response.
- Because Akilah reviews the key information from the story before, students are able to refer to back to the reviewed characteristics to explain character motivations later in the story.

Akilah eventually kicks the question back to Sonoa, saying, with a smile, "Sonoa, take it back." How does this moment support her relationship with Sonoa? How does this moment further support the Culture of Error Akilah has built in her class?

- Akilah knows that Sonoa can give a better answer, so she prompts Michael to say what is missing and then calls on Sonoa again to improve her previous answer.
- This communicates to Sonoa that she cares deeply about her learning and believes in her success. It shows that mistakes are welcome opportunities for students to learn, improve, and grow. The warmth of her tone and her smile emphasize this point.