

How Building a Thinking Classroom Can Make Math Moments

[Making Math Moments Episode 225](#)

How do I pick a task? How do I plan? How do I engage students?

- The goal is not exclusively to find engaging tasks. It's also to build engaged students.
- Get their attention in the direction you want to hold it.
- What's my first question? What's the context? What's the setting?
- What's my goal? What are the outcomes I want to hit? What am I going to ask them second? What am I going to ask them fourth?
- Nobody ever gets to be done.
- Plan with intentionality. We have to be intentional. We have to anticipate. What are the things the students will do right? What will they do wrong? Where are they going to bump into things? Can I cause them to bump into something?
- Occasioning - I can occasion something to happen.
- There's a delicate dance between bringing my vision to life and trying to avoid them sensing that I'm sheep-dogging it too much. I want them to live in their own curiosity and engagement.
- As much as we plan, we have to learn how to be responsive to where they are in their conversation and not where we are in our conversation.
- Plan with intentionality but be ready to zig when they zag.
- Have all your contingency plans, but sometimes you have to think of those on your feet.
- Consolidation: Decide where you're going to tie the bow. Sometimes they don't get as far as you intended. Don't tie the bow too high. That's not helpful. Tie the bow wherever they get and revisit the next day. Sometimes the opposite happens when they get further than your goal.
- Plan with purpose. It's not going to go perfectly. We never learn from anything that goes perfect.
- Don't force or will your plan to fruition. It's a plan and not a script. All plans are subject to change.