Formal Frames /Academic Phrases

Description
A Formal Frame or Academic Phrase begins as a sentence starter, but adds critical grammatical and lexical clarification and support, enabling students to produce a competent verbal or written response in an appropriate register. As you begin practicing Formal Frames make sure you choose topics that everyone can talk about so that the cognitive demand is on practicing the phrase NOT grappling with the content of a particular topic.

Steps:
1. Teach the academic phrase you would like students to use, such as "In my opinion … ." Write on the board and provide examples of when this sentence starter might be used (You may wish to use one color to display the sentence starter or academic phrase and another color for the response).
2. Point out the grammatical expectations for saying a complete sentence using the starter (e.g. an adjective, a present tense verb).
3. Provide a relevant word bank to stimulate thinking and more precise language use (e.g. a list of relevant adjectives, present tense verbs).
4. Introduce a topic that everyone in the class has some knowledge of.
5. Model use of the formal frame – reading the entire response with expression.
6. Have students chorally read your response to develop fluency.
7. Partners practice using the sentence starter as teacher circulates and scaffolds.
8. Share out selected responses with the whole class.

   Note: You may wish to emphasize formal language practice time by providing necklaces or neckties for students to wear when it's their turn to share.

Example:
Task: How do students behave in the cafeteria?
Response frame: In my opinion students behave _____(adverb: *nicely*) in the cafeteria.
Adjective bank:

badly	crazily	delightfully	excitedly	appropriately
correctly	abnormally	calmly	defiantly	(im)politely

Task: *Why does a dog bark?*
Response Frame:
I believe a dog barks because it _____(present tense verb + s: needs…) _____.
Verb Bank:

needs	wants	desires	likes	enjoys

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