

MIA BULJAN: I think the right thing to do is to do the dot talk with just dots available and then move into using the bags and exploring a new tool.

MIA BULJAN: Boys and girls, today you are going to be doing another dot talk.

MIA BULJAN: For today's lesson we're doing a dot talk and our first sort of official dot talk did not go that well, um, on the second day of school from my perspective. I mean, it was fine. We got through it and stuff happened but in terms of, like, a process of a dot talk and sort of like the focus of what we're doing during a dot talk for me got swallowed up a little bit. Partly because of where it was in the lesson -- it was later in the lesson and partly because of, um, there were just lots of moving parts at that point for them to negotiate. So my idea today was to put the dot talk in front of the lesson and to set out dots before we even handed out our math bags, which can be a little distracting in the beginning.

MIA BULJAN: Um, Jania, when I handed those to you I said can you make sure everybody in your row has a paper. Thank you. And to do the dot talk today I'm only going to show it to you but remember I'm going to show it to you for a second. Thank you, Jania. Okay, boys and girls, you look perfect. You're going to need some dots but we don't know how many dots yet. I want you to look at my dots -- you have your eyes up here. I'm not going to show you very long. You ready? Want to make sure you're paying attention because you're not going to get to see it for very long. When I show it to you I don't want you just to count -- there's nothing wrong with counting but I want you to think about the pieces, the parts that help you figure it out. So you're going to make yours look just like mine. Are you ready?

STUDENT: Yeah.

MIA BULJAN: Okay, make yours look just like mine. Thank you, Josie, for sharing your dots. That was lovely. I'm going to show you again. I'm going to show you again. What do you see? Make yours look just like mine. You nailed it, huh?

MIA BULJAN: Tools are tricky and, um, I introduce their math bags on the first day of school and they put their dots in it. And, um, on the first day of school we use those dots to build very small configurations, like the numbers 1 through 5 in different ways, um, and that was very manageable. And then on the second day of school we added the unifix cubes, so they each got 40 cubes, or 40-ish depending on their counting, and they put those in their bags. And then we did a dot talk and it was a little, um, one of my favorite things happened, which is some kids said, "Which one do I use?" And unfortunately right when we got started I said, "You're going to need your dots because we're doing a dot talk," which is sort of something I try not to direct them to use -- a particular thing. So, um, but fortunately no one's listening to me. So Silas right away said, "Oh, what do I use?" and I was able to say, "Well, surprise me. Show me what you're going to use." And then, um, he was very vexed by that. He did not like that answer. He was, um, I think he thought it was a trick. He was just kind of looking at me -- he was very suspicious. And then I noticed when I started the dot talk that most everybody was using dots except Trini, who was right in front of me was using some dots and some cubes. So right away I was able to ask Silas to come over and look at her mat and see what he noticed and he was still a little bit, like, "yeah, I see it," you know, walked off all mad.

MIA BULJAN: Make yours look just like mine. Are you sure it looks just like mine?

STUDENTS: Yes.

MIA BULJAN: Give me a thumbs up when you're happy with your dots. Give me a thumbs up right here. Don't put it in the air. Give me a thumbs up right here when you're happy with your dots. Okay, so did you count your dots? Count your dots and give me a thumbs up when you're ready. Jania, are you ready? I'm looking for a thumbs up. You don't have to wave your thumb in the air, put your thumb right here for me. Thank you. I can see you. Silas, I'm waiting for your thumb. Excellent! Turn, um, A people raise your hands. If you are an A raise your hand. Turn to the person next to you and tell them how many dots you used.

STUDENT: I used seven dots.

MIA BULJAN: The tools box is a long term goal and my immediate goal is to get them through a dot talk in a really structured way. And so, um, I think I'm making the right choice. I'll find...they'll let me know if I did it wrong. Their feedback is pretty...