Coding of Kate’s First Time Teaching “Eleven”

Kate coded the discussion she had with students by looking for initiating comments she made (questions), responses students offered, and evaluations she offered of their comments. This IRE procedure for classroom discussions is discussed at length by Cazden (1986).

Kate: Okay. That was a good story. How many of you liked the story?

[more than half the students raise their hands]

Kate: Good. Okay. Let’s answer some questions over the story. Why didn’t the girl want the sweater to be on her desk? Amanda?

Amanda: It smelled and had germs.

Kate: Good, Ben?

Ben: It embarrassed the girl, you know, having people thinking it was hers.

Kate: That’s right. Hallie?

Hallie: It wasn’t hers.

Kate: That’s right; it was smelly and that embarrassed her and she didn’t want anyone to think it was hers. Good.

Kate: So, what did getting the sweater have to do with turning eleven? [no response]

Kate: Um, turning eleven must be important because it’s the title. So why is it important that on the day she turns eleven she has this encounter with having to put on the sweater? [pause] Laura?

Laura: It was like, it was her birthday.
Kate: Good. It was happening on the day it was her birthday. Good. [pause]
Kate: So what did the author say about turning eleven on that day? William?
William: It was... it didn’t matter. —Response
Kate: What do you mean it didn’t matter? —Follow-up
William: It’s because she was also all those other ages. Ten and nine and eight and so on.
Kate: Okay. Very good. Do you all agree that it didn’t matter that it was her birthday?
[several students nod; more do nothing] —Response
Kate: Did it make it worse that this was her birthday? —Same initiating question
[students look down at their text] —Response
Kate: Amanda, what do you think?
Amanda: I guess it was worse.
Kate: That’s right. Good. Why was it worse? Amanda?
Amanda: I guess because like on your birthday, you know, it’s like your birthday and nothing bad was supposed to happen.
Kate: Okay. Also since it’s her birthday, she’s supposed to be more mature, but see what she’s really saying is that she can’t just be more mature because she’s all those ages, those other ages, and those other ages sometimes come out—that’s why she started crying. Okay? See, she’s showing that you stay all those other ages even when you turn another year older.
Kate: Okay?
Students: [most nod] —Response

Comments: Not much discussion. Just me asking questions and kids answering.