CHAPTER

1

Creating a Growth-Oriented Culture

As a social resource for school improvement, relational trust facilitates the development of beliefs, values, organizational routines, and individual behaviors that instrumentally affect students' engagement and learning.

—Bryk and Schneider (2002, p. 115)

WHAT IS A GROWTH-ORIENTED CULTURE?

Culture is the intangible feeling that one gets when placed in an environment. It is the inclusive, exclusive, supportive, critical atmosphere that is created by those in the culture. Culture is often the major influence on why and how students learn and also on why and how teachers learn.

Teachers don't often create a different culture in their classrooms than is provided for them as adult learners. From our own experience, cultures that create conditions for learning are:

- Supportive
- Safe
- Inclusive
- Nonthreatening
- Free of blame and negativity
- Enabling
- Enthusiastic
- Trusting
- Open, so people can take risks without fear
- Sharing and problem solving
- Accepting of challenges

Culture speaks clearly but not always with words. Culture is conveyed through actions and subtleties. Cultures may be labeled as toxic, positive, negative, or enabling.

If a positive, enabling culture is not present, learners do not thrive. The climate at the school is not growth oriented. The classroom or the schoolhouse needs to be such that all people can learn and grow together, whatever their age. A growth-oriented climate results when these conditions exist.

The following chart suggests positive and negative indicators of climate.

Positive	*Negative*
Encouraging atmosphere	Toxic culture
Providing choices and variety	Unnecessary pressure
Providing appropriate time	Unrealistic time frames
Offering constructive feedback	Little or no feedback
Ensuring safety	Inappropriate challenges
Ensuring "relaxed alertness"	Uneasiness related to expectations
Offering helpful support and encouragement	Critical and judgmental environment
Honoring personality styles	Individual needs ignored

Deal and Peterson (1998) remind us that positive, successful cultures exhibit:

- A mission focused on student and teacher learning
- A rich sense of history and purpose
- Core values of collegiality, performance, and improvement that engender quality, achievement, and learning for everyone in the school
- Positive beliefs and assumptions related to students and to staff learning

- An informal network that fosters positive communication flows
- A strong professional community that uses knowledge, experience, and research to improve practice
- Leadership that balances continuity and improvement
- Rituals and ceremonies that reinforce core cultural values
- Stories that celebrate success and honor heroes and heroines
- An environment of joy and pride
- Respect and care for all

Trust

When we engage in group activities, comfort level comes from knowledge of one another and trust that grows over time. Trust develops through positive interaction fostered by formal and informal leadership.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Daniel Goleman (1995) suggests that there are five domains that constitute emotional intelligence:

- **Self-awareness of emotions:** Self-awareness is one's ability to sense and name a feeling when it happens and also to put it into words. Self-aware people can use appropriate strategies to deal with their moods by sharing frustrations with others or seeking support on a bad day.

- **Managing emotions:** Managing emotions is an outcome of recognizing and labeling feelings. It is the ability to calm and soothe during anxious moments or to manage and deal with anger.

- **Self-motivation:** Self-motivation consists of competencies such as persistence, setting one's own goals, and delaying gratification.

- **Empathy:** Empathy is being able to feel for another.

- **Social skills:** Social skills are the competencies that one uses to "read" other people and manage emotional interactions. People with high levels of social competencies have the ability to handle relationships well and are able to adapt to a variety of social situations.

WHY DO WE NEED A POSITIVE CLIMATE AND CULTURE?

The brain is on high alert for anything or anyone who might be a threat. A threat was formerly a snake or saber-tooth tiger when our ancestors lived on the savannah. Today it can be anything that is a perceived threat or a stressful experience. Many things are perceived threats to adult learners: the risk of failure, the fear of embarrassment, the lack of control, the sense of loss of efficacy, the feeling of being isolated and not part of a group.

The following six factors affect how people cope in stressful situations (Witmer, Rich, Barcikowski, & Mague, 1983):

1. If people have self-esteem and feelings of self-worth and efficacy, they are more able to adapt and cope with stress. If they feel that they belong and are accepted in the group or feel special or unique in some way, situations are less stressful and they feel more able to cope.

2. People need to have a sense of control over their lives and the freedom to monitor their lives and emotions based on their workable set of values and beliefs.

3. People need to have a sense of internal control over their life pace and their emotions.

4. Irrational beliefs have a lot to do with how people cope with change.
   a. Past experience with successful change and the development of new skills and procedures
   b. Approval for effort and success, positive feedback

5. Social support is essential: Professional learning communities provide support systems so that teachers can problem solve, plan, and dialogue about teaching and learning. They help teachers deprivatize their teaching and focus on the implementation of best practices so all students may succeed.

6. Job and life meaning: Adults generally, as self-directed learners, seek strategies to develop skills to be successful in their work. Contributing in a positive way and seeing relevance and meaning in their work is satisfying and energizing.

RISK FACTORS

Risk factors need to be considered when we ask adults to step out of their comfort zone. In professional learning communities, we want people to feel safe to risk changing their behavior and practices, to face failure and challenges with a "can do" attitude. Supportive energy will enable more learners to be successful. We, of course, need to start small and think big. People don't jump off the high-diving board until they have confidence to jump off the lower board in a well-supervised area (maybe even with water wings). Teachers are more apt to work with one other trusted colleague on their journey toward deprivatization of practice than share ideas with the whole faculty. Considering what level of risk is appropriate for adults is often a key to getting people to take a chance. People pushed beyond their safety level will not take or will hesitate to take action. People who see that the risk level is manageable are enabled to risk a change of behavior.

Andy Hargreaves and Ruth Dawe (1989) note that there are several types of cultures that exist in the schoolhouse: isolation, balkanization, contrived congeniality, and true collaboration. The following chart shows the four kinds of culture and behaviors that might be exhibited in each one.

Isolation/ Individualism *Lone Ranger*	Balkanization *Camps*	Contrived Congeniality *I Don't Need to Hold Hands*	True Collaboration *Let's Work Together*
• Individual planning • Private discipline	• Groups, clichés, or departments work together and exclude others • Often develop "group think" • More closed-minded over time	• Forced situations • Committees • Grade group teams • Focus groups	• Grade groups focused on student needs • Vertical teams developing scope and sequence or curriculum mapping • Lateral teams developing consistency • Selected groups focused on a particular issue • Inquiry or research

How Do We Do It?

Teams evolve through predictable phases. As mentioned previously, teams develop over time. The first stage is that of forming, where members wonder about purpose, operating procedures, power, and control in the group. We know that people need to feel connected, safe, and unself-conscious if they are going to be free to think, be creative, and risk suggesting and offering ideas.

PRIMARY PURPOSE FOR THE STRATEGIES IN THIS SECTION

In this chapter, we offer you strategies to build a climate conducive to learning and growing, including the following:

- Developing a team
- Celebrating success
- Getting and giving
- Giving feedback
- Communicating
- Building trust

STRATEGY 1

ABC Conversations

Purpose: Creating a Growth-Oriented Climate

This strategy gives people a chance to listen intently to one person at a time and offers a captive audience. It allows for a sharing of ideas or problem solving.

It makes a good processing tool at the end of a session so that individuals can share their intentions and concerns about an idea or topic.

Basics

Number of Participants	May be done in small table groups of three or in an "eye to eye, knee to knee" chair cluster
Time Needed	15–20 minutes
Room Arrangement	Table groups, chair clusters, or standing
Difficulty Level	Low risk, moderately easy
Brain Bits	Emotional impact and social support, development of cognitive learning in terms of developing common vocabulary, clarifying, and sharing
Brain's Natural Learning Systems	Social, cognitive, physical, reflective
Adult Learning Principle	Experiential: connects to what we know and do well Life application: determines real-life use and process of transfer to participants' unique circumstances
Materials	Scribe recording sheet

Process Directions

1. Form triads.

2. Each person takes a letter: A, B, C.

3. Person A is the Questioner, Person B is the Respondent, and Person C is the Scribe.

4. In the first round, each performs his or her role.

5. In the second round, each performs a new role (see figure).

6. In the third round, each performs a new role (see figure).

When

- Participants need some active involvement related to their own well-being.
- People need a change of state and another colleague to discuss an idea.
- People need to move or get up.
- The facilitator needs to lower the risk for participation.
- Dialogue and creating consensus are necessary.
- There is a need for team building.

Examples and Uses

1. Since our last meeting, what have you done to use a Venn diagram with your students?

   What content was used?

   What went well?

   What would you do differently next time you use a Venn with students?

2. Could be used for problem solving.

   What is most problematic when you ask students to work in groups?

   How have you handled this in the past?

   What help would you like?

3. What idea interested you most from this session?

   What strategy would you like to implement?

   What standard or expectation will you target?

   What content will you use?

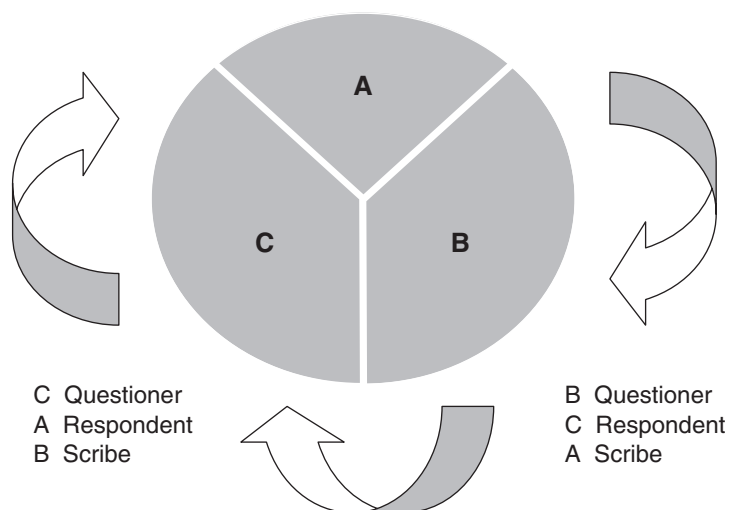   What adjustments will you make to help students be successful?

Selected References

Annenberg Institute for School Reform (1998); Buehl (2006); Chadwick (2006); Elder and Paul (2002); Lipton, Humbard, and Wellman (2001).

ABC Conversation

A Questioner
B Respondent
C Scribe

C Questioner
A Respondent
B Scribe

B Questioner
C Respondent
A Scribe

Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
A Questioner	B Questioner	C Questioner
B Respondent	C Respondent	A Respondent
C Scribe	A Scribe	B Scribe

Scribe Form

	Notes:	Reflections:
Person A_____		
Person B_____		
Person C_____		

STRATEGY 2

Birthday Months

Purpose: Creating a Growth-Oriented Climate

This strategy is good to get participants' voices in the room, even with larger groups, or note learning from start of session to the end of session. This is also great for creating a simple processing break.

Basics

Number of Participants	May be done in small table groups or as a large group
Time Needed	10–15 minutes
Room Arrangement	Table groups
Difficulty Level	Low risk, easy
Brain Bits	Emotional impact and social support, development of cognitive learning in terms of developing common vocabulary, clarifying, and sharing
Adult Learning Principle	Experiential: connects to what we know and do well
	Life application: determines real-life use and process of transfer to participants' unique circumstances
Materials	Chart paper and markers

Process Directions

1. Have participants group themselves by birthday months or seasons at various points in the room.

2. Give a prompt and ask participants to discuss with a partner within that grouping.

3. The facilitator asks for responses to prompt from partners, taking several examples.

When

- Participants need some active involvement related to their own well-being.
- People need a change of state and another colleague to discuss an idea.
- People need to move or get up.
- The facilitator needs to lower the risk for participation.
- Dialogue and creating consensus are necessary.
- There is a need for team building beyond table groupings.
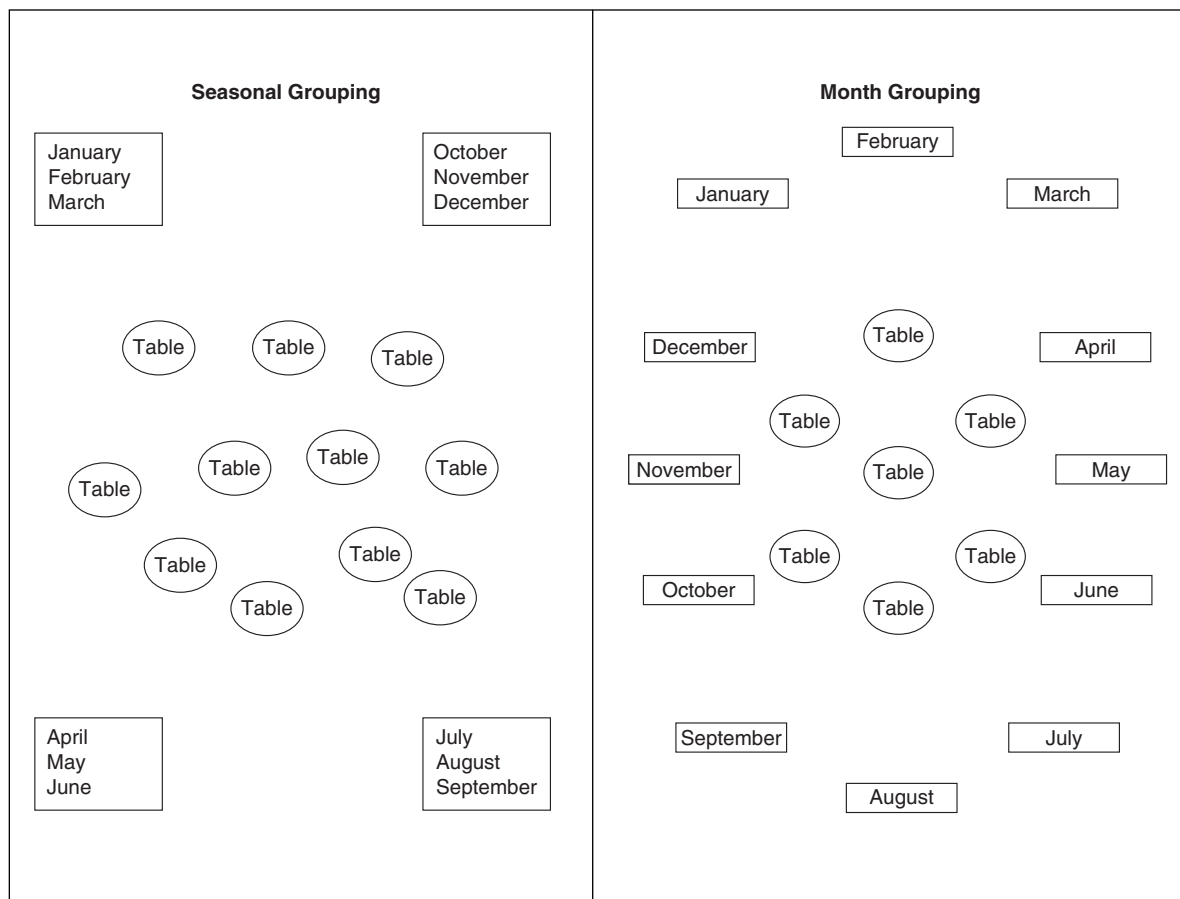- Groups are large and need to process.

Examples and Uses

1. Use at the beginning and end of day with the same prompt to support learning.

2. Use to introduce each other.

3. Use to get participants up and sharing points of view or experiences related to the training topic.

Selected References

Garmston (1996), Sousa (2004), Wellman and Lipton (2003).

ROOM ARRANGEMENTS

Seasonal Grouping

January
February
March

October
November
December

Table Table
Table

Table Table Table

Table

Table Table

Table Table

April
May
June

July
August
September

Month Grouping

February

January

March

Table

December April

Table Table

November Table May

Table Table

October June

Table

September July

August

STRATEGY 3

Community Circle

Purpose: Creating a Growth-Oriented Climate

A safe, connected community circle allows participants to feel included and have a voice and creates a positive climate. It is a vehicle for sharing, reflecting, discussing, and celebrating.

Basics

Number of Participants	May be done in several small groups or as a large group
Time Needed	10–15 minutes
Room Arrangement	Chairs in a circle or sitting on carpet so everyone can see everyone else
Difficulty Level	Low risk, easy
Brain Bits	Emotional impact and social support, development of cognitive learning in terms of developing common vocabulary, clarifying, and sharing
Brain's Natural Learning Systems	Emotional, social, reflective, physical, cognitive
Adult Learning Principle	Experiential: connects to what we know and do well Life application: determines real-life use and process of transfer to participants' unique circumstances
Materials	None

Process Directions

Ask participants to bring chairs and sit in a circle where everyone can see everyone. (Chairs may be set up previously or a carpeted area could be used so participants sit on the floor.)

1. A prompt or question is posed, and people are given time to think of a response.

2. Ask for someone to volunteer to start.

3. Go around the circle—each person speaks in turn.

4. If someone is not ready to share or needs a little more think time, Right to Pass may be used. The person will say "Pass," and then the facilitator will move on to the next person. People who pass will be asked to respond later.
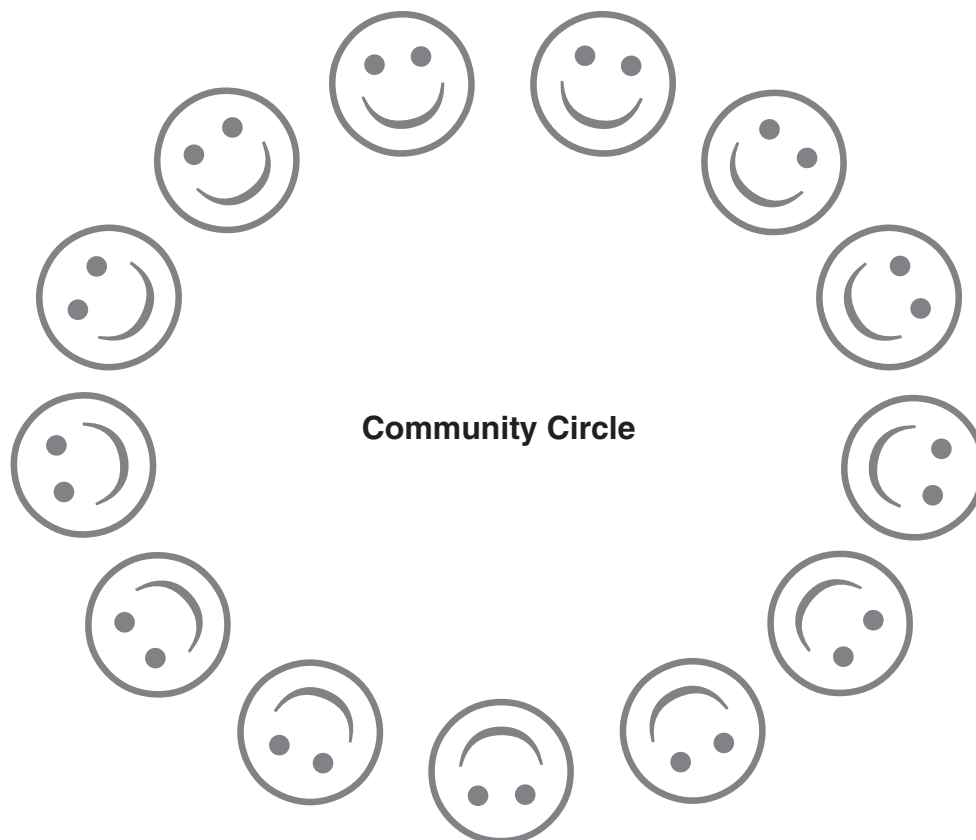
When

- You want people to share ideas that the whole group can see and hear.
- You want to celebrate things that have been accomplished.
- You want to discuss critical issues in close proximity with equal footing and position.

Examples and Uses

1. At the end of a meeting, each person in the circle may give a thank you to someone on the team for their contribution that day.

2. A use may be to share opinions about an issue. Each person, in turn, gives a perspective or point of view concerning the issue.

3. Each person shares how he or she feels about an issue or suggestion.

Selected References

Annenberg Institute for School Reform (1998), Australian Government Department of Education (DOE, 2006), Chadwick (2006), Gibbs (2001).

Community Circle

STRATEGY 4

Concept Formation

Purpose: Creating a Growth-Oriented Climate

When establishing working norms for team success, people often need to articulate what is important to them and clarify behaviors expected of all team members. Concept formation can be used as a way of getting consensus and organization from a brainstorm of ideas.

Basics

Number of Participants	May be done in small table groups or as a large group
Time Needed	15–20 minutes
Room Arrangement	Table groups
Difficulty Level	Low risk, easy
Brain Bits	Emotional impact and social support, development of cognitive learning in terms of developing common vocabulary, clarifying, and sharing
Brain's Natural Learning Systems	Social, physical, cognitive
Adult Learning Principle	Experiential: connects to what we know and do well Life application: determines real-life use and process of transfer to participants' unique circumstances
Materials	Self-sticking chart paper and markers

Process Directions

1. Suggest a topic so that participants have a focus for brainstorming a data set.

2. Give each participant in the group at least five to six self-sticking notes.

3. Have each person jot down one idea per note.

4. Have people share their notes in the center of the table, and begin organizing them in clusters based on like attributes.

5. Once participants are satisfied with the arrangement, have them label each cluster with a title that is representative of the grouping.

6. You might want to use the acronym GROUP to remember the steps in the process:
   - Generate data or gather them from another source
   - Re-examine

- Organize by similarities
- Use a label to identify groups
- Process and discuss

This is much more of a constructivist approach to concept attainment through participants' knowledge and personal input of generating data.

7. Sometimes participants may be given a data set and asked to organize it. They may not have the background to create data or data are already available, and it wastes time to go through the generation process.

When

- Participants need some active involvement related to their own well-being.
- Active involvement of personal ideas and a kinesthetic task is needed.
- Dialogue and creating consensus are necessary.
- There is a need for team building.

Examples and Uses

1. Use to generate and come to consensus on norms for the group to live by. Participants will generate behaviors that are important to them as the group works together over time. These can be clustered and discussed, and several norms or rules to live by can be identified.

2. Use to generate priorities for a team to work on. Each person generates three to five priorities, and then the team clusters and labels the groups. From this, the team can prioritize and move to planning such as a "People Ladder."

3. "What is quality teaching?" may be another prompt for which people can generate attributes.

4. "What assessment tools do you use?" may be another way to generate strategies and share ideas while dialoguing about teaching and learning.
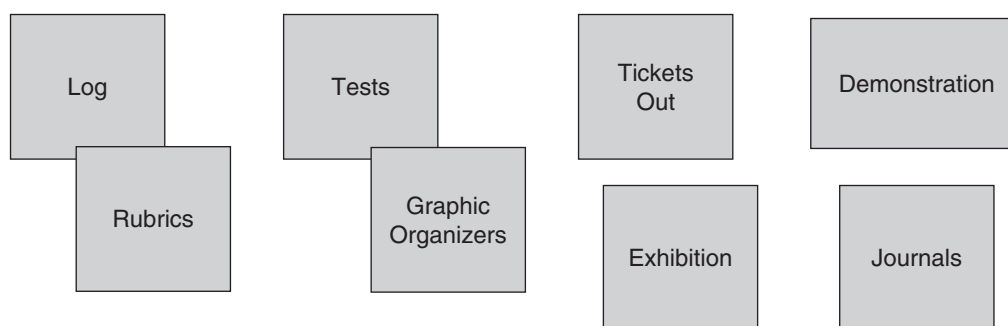
Selected References

Beaudoin and Taylor (2004), Chang and Dalziel (1999a), Erickson (2005), Marzano (2004), Taba (1967), Wald and Castleberry (2000).

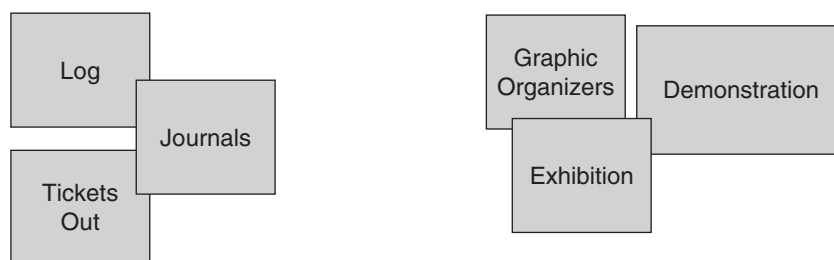# EXAMPLE: ASSESSMENT TOOLS I USED THIS WEEK

Ask each person in the group to generate (one per sticky note) which assessment tools he/she used this week.
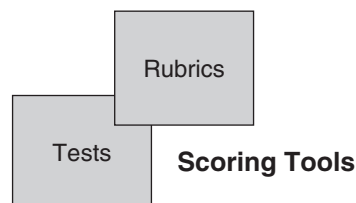
Generated data set for one group of three:

Log	Tests	Tickets Out	Demonstration
Rubrics	Graphic Organizers	Exhibition	Journals

Clusters identified:

Visual Representation

Log
Journals
Tickets Out

Graphic Organizers
Demonstration
Exhibition

Metacognitive Tools

Rubrics
Tests   **Scoring Tools**

After considering strategies others used, what can I add to my repertoire to inform me about how my students are learning?

STRATEGY 5

Appreciating Diversity

Purpose: Creating a Growth-Oriented Climate

Trust and respect are key for a successful learning community to thrive. Each of us has a different background and different experiences. We also have different preferences and strengths in multiple intelligences that tend to be complementary as we work together. It is important that we honor those differences and appreciate how they bring greater depth and capability to the team. The more people feel valued, the more they tend to continue to contribute and receive feelings of self-worth and self-confidence.

Basics

Number of Participants	Anyone in the group may show appreciation at any time, but it may be something that the team wants to build in
Time Needed	Very little time is needed to show appreciation to others
Room Arrangement	Not applicable
Difficulty Level	Low
Brain Bits	Emotional impact and social support, development of cognitive learning in terms of developing common vocabulary, clarifying, and sharing One of the basic human needs is to belong and feel valued
Brain's Natural Learning Systems	Social, emotional, physical, cognitive
Adult Learning Principle	Sociability
Materials	Simple to none. Award cards

Process Directions

1. Participants could use a preference inventory to identify their dominant style.

2. The analogies on page xvii in the introduction could serve as a discussion piece and each team member could identify their own preferences.

3. Team members could then brainstorm what they feel would be valuable about each style and what each would bring to the group.

4. At the end of each session together, team members thank each other for the strengths that each has brought to the group.

When

- Participants need to appreciate the diversity within the team.
- Annoyance surfaces when others' styles get in the way of progress of the team.
- Team building needs to continue.

Examples and Uses

1. Use this protocol to include new members to a team.

2. Use this strategy to make certain all voices and viewpoints are heard and respected on a controversial new initiative.

3. Use this strategy when the team needs to move beyond storming and norming.

4. The following charts can be used to brainstorm qualities of each preference (see page xvii for characteristics of each of these styles).

Puppies	Microscopes
Clipboards	**Beach Balls**

5. At the end of a meeting each participant needs to express appreciation for contributions from others. Perhaps a round robin expression of thanks would suffice.

6. Teams can create awards for helpful behavior of team members. The Creativity Award, To The Rescue, Possibility Thinker, Action Oriented.

7. The Giving of Roses: Every week a rose can be given to a staff member who goes "beyond the call" for another member staff. Teachers or administration drop a name in the "Rose Bowl" suggesting a recipient each week. It has been said that people would appreciate one rose and an encouraging word from a friend rather than a room full when they are dead and can't appreciate them.

8. At the end of each meeting participants could discuss how their differences contributed to the success of the session.

Possibility Thinking...

This award is given to _____

For _____ to

_____

_____

Date: _____

Creativity Award

This award is given to _____

For helping us to _____
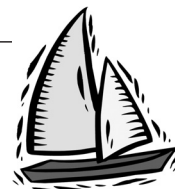
_____

Date: _____

To the Rescue

This award is given to _____

for helping _____ to

_____

_____

Date: _____

Action Oriented

This award is given to _____

For _____ to

 _____

_____

Date: _____

Giving the Rose...

This award is given to _____

For _____ to

 _____

_____

Date: _____

STRATEGY 6

Find Someone Who

Purpose: Creating a Growth-Oriented Climate

"Find Someone Who" or the "People Search" can be used as a getting-to-know-you activity or an ice breaker. It can be used with personal information or instructional material that people need to dialogue about.

Basics

Number of Participants	Any number works as long as they are able to move about in the space provided
Time Needed	10–15 minutes
Room Arrangement	Area where people can walk about and interact
Difficulty Level	Low risk, easy
Brain Bits	Emotional impact and social support, development of cognitive learning in terms of developing common vocabulary, clarifying, and sharing
Brain's Natural Learning Systems	Social, reflective, physical, cognitive
Adult Learning Principle	Experiential: connects to what we know and do well, uses people as valuable resources Life application: determines real-life use and process of transfer to participants' unique circumstances
Materials	Paper and pencil

Process Directions

1. Give participants a Bingo grid or list of items for which they need to find someone to answer or give them information.

2. Each person takes his or her list and walks around the room trying to find someone who is able to give an answer to a question on the sheet.

3. The person listens attentively to the answer that is given and jots down the name of the person who answered the question beside the question.

4. When everyone has completed his or her grid, people can report what they have heard and learned from others.

When

- Participants need some active involvement related to developing connections and relationships with others on the team.
- People need a change of state and another colleague to discuss an idea.
- People need to move or get up.
- The facilitator needs to lower the risk for participation.
- There is a need for team building.
- Content needs to be shared and discussed.

Examples and Uses

1. If the staff is implementing differentiated instruction, a People Search may yield statements that would foster dialogue and keep the implementation going.

2. This can be used for sharing of thoughts on a particular topic.

3. This can be used for sharing what works with a set of skills after teachers have had time to practice in their classrooms.

Selected References

Barell (2003); Bellanca and Fogarty (1994); Dunne, Nave, and Lewis (2000); Hill and Eckert (1995); Hill and Hill (1990); Reid (2002); Robertson and Kagan (1992); Silver, Strong, and Perini (1997).

Examples

FIND SOMEONE WHO:

1. Has created and can describe a challenging assignment for more able learners in his or her class

_____

2. Can explain why it is important to differentiate instruction in the classroom

_____

3. Can tell one way he or she establishes FLOW

_____

4. Can share his or her thoughts on compacting

_____

5. Can define cubing and explain how he or she uses it

_____

6. Can explain how to use Multiple Intelligences to differentiate

_____

7. Will share how to use focus and sponge activities in his or her classroom

_____

_____

More Examples:

People Searches can also be done on a Bingo card.

FIND SOMEONE WHO CAN TELL YOU . . .

One way to help students be self-reliant	One way to manage homework	A suggestion to help motivate learners
A note-taking and summarizing skill	A way to promote metacognition	An assessment that gives immediate data
A strategy to challenge high-ability learners	A vocabulary technique that works	An answer to a question you have about differentiation

Blank Bingo Card to Create Your Own Processing Prompts

STRATEGY 7

Four-Corners Processing

Purpose: Creating a Growth-Oriented Climate

This is a great strategy for self-examination, reflection, and evaluation. People choose a corner where they think they belong based on experience, opinion, point of view, or response.

Basics

Number of Participants	Four corners of the room are labeled appropriately depending on the topic
Time Needed	10–15 minutes
Room Arrangement	Corners
Difficulty Level	Higher risk, easy to do
Brain Bits	Emotional impact and social support, development of cognitive learning in terms of developing common vocabulary, clarifying, and sharing
Brain's Natural Learning Systems	Physical, cognitive, reflective, social
Adult Learning Principle	Experiential: connects to what we know and do well
	Life application: determines real-life use and process of transfer to participants' unique circumstances
Materials	Signs for the corners of the room

Process Directions

1. Decide what signs you need in the corners. PowerPoint or overhead directions could be used as well (see the following).

2. Participants are given a prompt and a minute or two to think about their response.

3. Then people are asked to go to the corner of their choice and be ready to share their rationale for their decision to go there.

4. When people arrive in their corner, they meet up with someone else and share their rationale.

5. Each pair can meet another pair and continue the conversation.

When

- Participants need some active involvement related to their own well-being.
- People need a change of state and another colleague to discuss an idea.

- People need to move or get up.
- Dialogue and creating consensus are necessary.
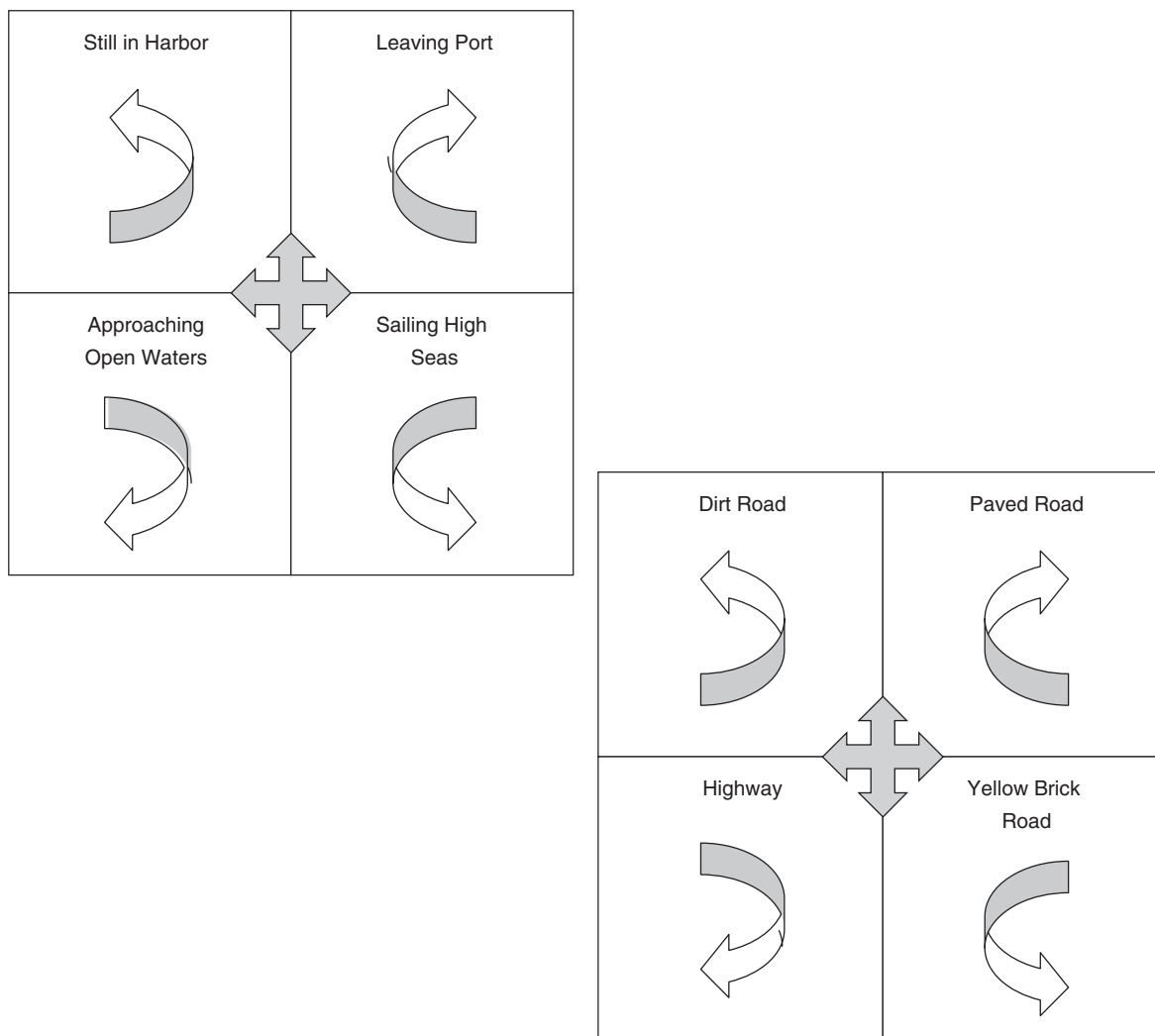- There is a need for team building and perspective taking.

Examples and Uses

1. Ask participants how they feel about adopting a block schedule.

2. Ask participants what they think differentiation is or is not.

Selected References

Gibbs (2001), Hill and Hill (1990), Reid (2002).

Examples of Four-Corner Templates

STRATEGY 8

Give and Go

Purpose: Creating a Growth-Oriented Climate

This strategy can be used when there is a need for generating ideas, sharing ideas, or giving the group an opportunity to transfer ideas learned in a session or discuss.

Basics

Number of Participants	Any number would work
Time Needed	5 minutes
Room Arrangement	Doesn't matter
Difficulty Level	Low risk, easy
Brain Bits	Emotional impact and social support, development of cognitive learning in terms of developing common vocabulary, clarifying, and sharing
Brain's Natural Learning Systems	Physical, cognitive, reflective
Adult Learning Principle	Experiential: connects to what we know and do well Life application: determines real-life use and process of transfer to participants' unique circumstances
Materials	Paper and pen or pencil

Process Directions

1. On your form, list two strategies you use for _____.

2. Meet with another person. Share one of your ideas. Record his or her idea on your form.

3. Continue meeting new colleagues until you have 10 new ideas.

When

- Participants need some active involvement related to their own well-being.
- People need a change of state and another colleague to discuss an idea.
- People need to move or get up.
- The facilitator needs to lower the risk for participation.
- Dialogue and creating consensus are necessary.
- There is a need for team building.
- The group wants to brainstorm.

Examples and Uses

You may ask people to:

1. List ways they collect student data.

2. List ways to help students review for a test.

3. List ways to increase student involvement.

4. List ways to have students dialogue.

Selected References

Dunne et al. (2000), Hill and Eckert (1995), Reid (2002), Silver et al. (1997).

Give and Go

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Give and Go

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

STRATEGY 9

Mapping Our Journey

Purpose: Creating a Growth-Oriented Climate

Identifying where a group came from and where to go next is a great way to honor the work. This helps a group build initial trust that the hard work of the past will not be forgotten as it moves forward.

Basics

Number of Participants	May be done in small table groups or as a large group
Time Needed	20–30 minutes initially and ongoing
Room Arrangement	Table groups
Difficulty Level	Low risk, easy
Brain Bits	Emotional impact and social support, development of cognitive learning in terms of developing common vocabulary, clarifying, and sharing
Adult Learning Principle	Experiential: connects to what we know and do well Life application: determines real-life use and process of transfer to participants' unique circumstances
Materials	Chart paper and markers Bulletin board

Process Directions

The following is a guideline of the process, but you may begin by identifying the destination first or the catalyst first. This can also be a recursive process, as we never know when a setback may occur or an action may really click and propel us forward.

1. Create a bulletin board that will show the journey of the group or school in its improvement efforts.

2. The first step is to identify the current state. Where are we now?

3. The next is to articulate the future state in detail.

4. There may be a need to name the catalyst or impetus for the changes sought.

5. Then there is a backward mapping process to identify actions that need to be taken to continue the journey.

6. As in a process or journey, there may be roadblocks or pitfalls that may occur.

7. These setbacks may result in the need for rolling planning (the sense to monitor, assess, and adjust plans based on feedback and changes that occur). It is always smart to change plans and designs to respond to the challenges, new information, or "bumps in the road" that everyone faces in a change process. It doesn't make sense to continue on the wrong road when evidence or experience tells us differently. Visually posting and examining the issues will help the group progress in spite of setbacks.

8. Visuals also concretely represent progress and reason for celebration.

9. This allows people to step back and examine what works and what doesn't so that by reflecting on the process, we get better at problem solving and at planning in the future.

When

- Participants need some active involvement related to their own well-being.
- People need a change of state and another colleague to discuss an idea.
- People need to move or get up.
- The group needs an opportunity to create a visual representation of a journey.
- We are building initial trust and the work that went before us needs to be honored and remembered to continue into the future.
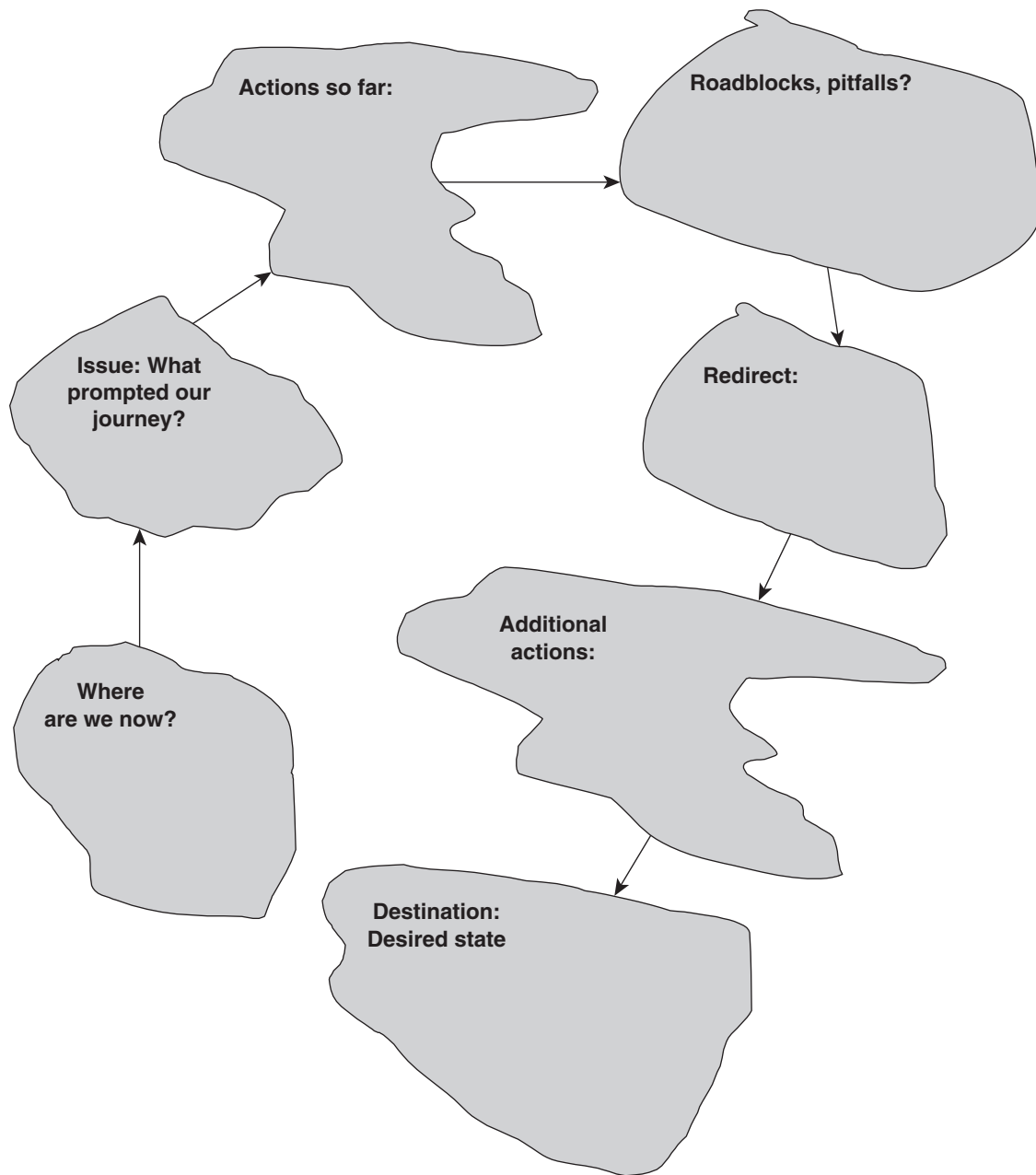
Examples and Uses

1. A group is trying to close the math gap more rapidly (see example).

2. Several new teachers have joined the group, and the group is trying to move forward by first reviewing where it is and what it has done so far.

3. Several members of the group are worried about potential problems as planning for the future proceeds. It is better to acknowledge and label the issues and then plan for these worries than it is to ignore concerns. This helps a group build team spirit and create a climate where hopes and fears are addressed respectfully.
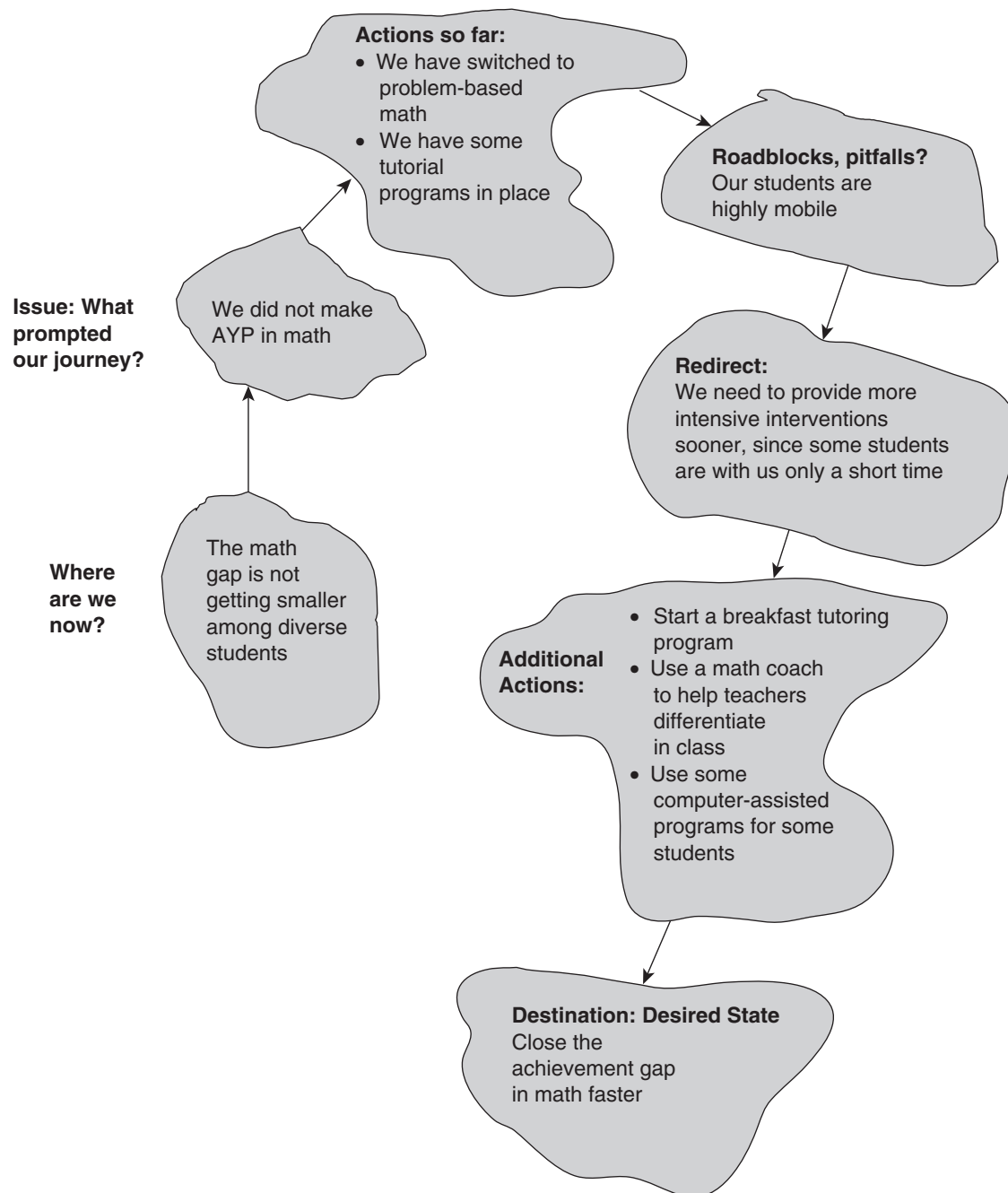
Selected References

Bailey (1995), Chadwick (2006), Chang and Dalziel (1999b), Gregory and Kuzmich (2004), Roberts and Pruitt (2003), Wald and Castleberry (2000).

Mapping Our Journey

Actions so far:

Roadblocks, pitfalls?

Issue: What prompted our journey?

Redirect:

Additional actions:

Where are we now?

Destination: Desired state

Mapping Our Journey: An Example

Actions so far:
- We have switched to problem-based math
- We have some tutorial programs in place

Roadblocks, pitfalls?
Our students are highly mobile

Issue: What prompted our journey?

We did not make AYP in math

Redirect:
We need to provide more intensive interventions sooner, since some students are with us only a short time

Where are we now?

The math gap is not getting smaller among diverse students

Additional Actions:
- Start a breakfast tutoring program
- Use a math coach to help teachers differentiate in class
- Use some computer-assisted programs for some students

Destination: Desired State
Close the achievement gap in math faster

STRATEGY 10

3-2-1

Purpose: Creating a Growth-Oriented Climate

When establishing working norms for team success, people often need to clarify what is important to them and clarify behaviors.

Basics

Number of Participants	May be done individually, in small table groups, or as a large group
Time Needed	5–6 minutes
Room Arrangement	N/A
Difficulty Level	Low risk, easy
Brain Bits	Emotional impact and social support, development of cognitive learning in terms of developing common vocabulary, clarifying, and sharing
Brain's Natural Learning Systems	Cognitive, reflective
Adult Learning Principle	Experiential: connects to what we know and do well Life application: determines real-life use and process of transfer to participants' unique circumstances
Materials	Chart paper and markers for large group Small pieces of paper or self-sticking notes for individual participants

Process Directions

1. Choose method of use:
   a. Distribute 3-2-1 cards to be filled in by participants as a ticket out at the end of a session.
   b. The 3-2-1 prompt can also be put on the whiteboard or overhead, and people can respond on a self-sticking note.
   c. Create a template and distribute it.

2. Ask participants to fill out their cards individually.

3. Process as a small or large group.

4. Use information to help focus the next steps of the group's work or as feedback for a meeting or session. Be certain to share the results, and have the facilitator describe how the group can use the results.

When

- Participants need some active involvement related to their own learning.
- Use to tap into relevance and meaning related to new learning.
- Use to evoke commitment through writing specific steps each person commits to for implementation.
- Use to give data to help fine tune next steps for a group.
- Use to give information about the group process and how well it is meeting needs.

Examples and Uses

1. At the end of a session, people need to reflect on their involvement, learning, and commitment or goals.

2. 3-2-1 can also be used at the beginning of a session to reconnect with the last time the group was together.

3. It is easy to collect data sources for monitoring group learning or process when working on specific topics, especially as a group is just learning new things.

4. The following examples give suggestions for prompts.

Selected References

Garmston (1996); Jones (1998); Zygouris-Coe, Wiggins, and Smith (2004).

3	Things you learned
2	Things that intrigued you
1	Thing you could share with others

3	Things you liked
2	Concerns you have
1	Thing you intend to do

3	Things that interest me
2	Things I would like to try
1	Thing I wonder about . . .

"What's on your mind?" is another reflective technique that can be used to close a team meeting. It gives people a chance to reflect and share their thinking with others. Here are three examples that you might use:

What's On Your Mind?

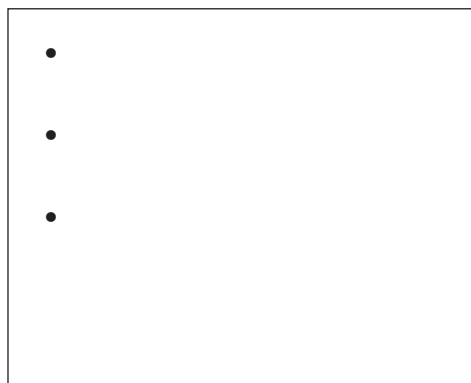4 ideas that I remember from last session
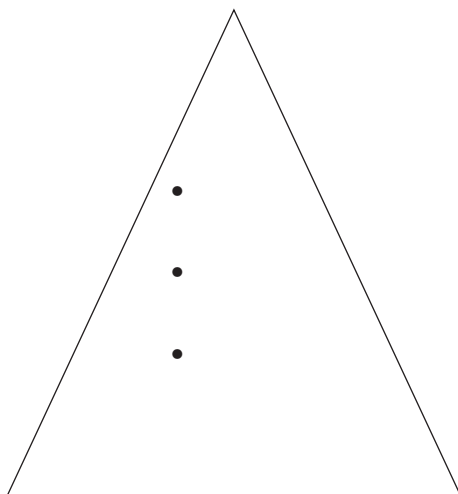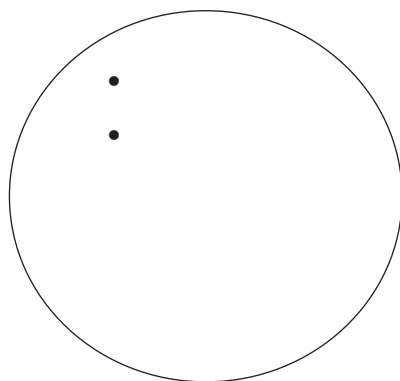
3 connections that I made for my work
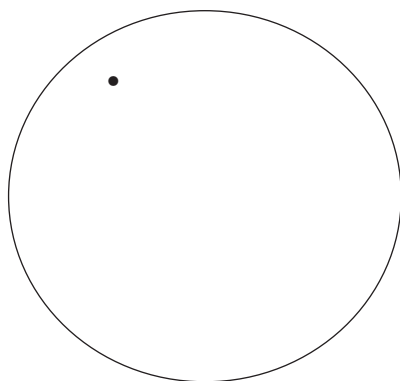
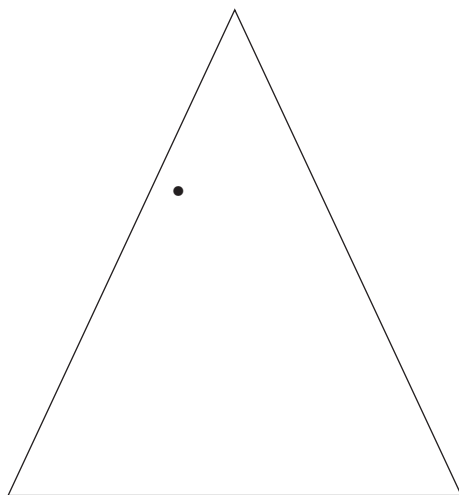1 question that is still rolling around in my head

---

What's On Your Mind?

-
-
-

3 ideas that squared with my values and belief

-
-

2 ideas rolling around in my head

-

1 idea that piqued my curiosity

3-2-1 Warm-up

3	List three changes you noticed in staff dialogue or conversations in the last year or two: • • •
2	List two things you may hear (or see) that might tell you the learning networks in your building or department are shifting their conversations so that more students will be successful (use your book and handouts to help you): • •
1	List one question you have about leading your learning networks: •

STRATEGY 11

Nominal Group Process

Purpose: Creating a Growth-Oriented Climate

It is important for comfort and consistency to establish norms or standard working procedures for working together. This way people feel safe and comfortable about how they are going to be treated and will be more able to trust the process of their work together. If people are allowed to state what is important to them in working relationships and protocols and have that clarified at the onset, there is often less conflict throughout the team process, thus they move to quality work together sooner.

Basics

Number of Participants	This may be accomplished with any number of participants often working in small groups and coming to consensus by sharing the small-group norms that can be synthesized to form whole-group norms
Time Needed	20–30 minutes
Room Arrangement	Small groups
Difficulty Level	Higher risk, easy to do
Brain Bits	Emotional impact and social support, development of cognitive learning in terms of developing common vocabulary, clarifying, and sharing
Brain's Natural Learning Systems	Physical, cognitive, reflective, social
Adult Learning Principle	Experiential: connects to what we know and do well Life application: determines real-life use and process of transfer to participants' unique circumstances
Materials	Chart paper and markers

Process Directions

1. In each group, a recorder is identified.
2. Each person in the groups thinks about and jots down one or two things that are important to him or her when working in a group, such as "Everyone is on time," "While we're together, we listen to the speaker."
3. In turn, going around the table, each person states his or her expectation.
4. The recorder jots expectations down on the chart paper as stated.
5. When all ideas are recorded, there is time for questions and checking for clarification about each item.

6. Some items may be reworded or coupled or condensed with others.

7. After the clarification phase is finished, each member of the group gets to rank the norms using colored self-sticking dots, which are given a ranking score number or a rank order such as 5 for the highest priority ranking to 1 for the least important.

8. The dots or numbers are totaled, and those norms with the highest priority become the norms for the group (generally four to seven are used).

9. Participants agree to these and feel a commitment to them as they have created them personally.

10. It is each group member's job to enforce them on behalf of the group.
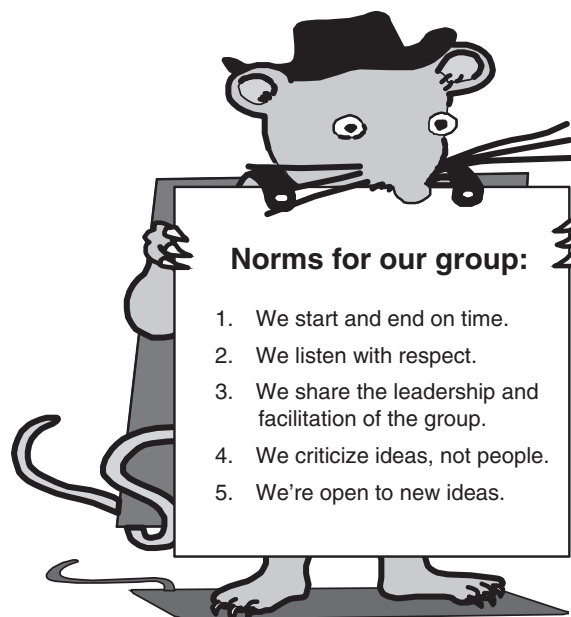
When

- Participants need some active involvement related to their own well-being.
- People need clarity about how they will work together.
- Dialogue and creating consensus are necessary.
- There is a need for team building and perspective taking.

Examples and Uses

1. This may be used to establish group norms.

2. It is also a process to prioritize goals.

3. It may be used to rank and come to consensus about any number of issues including student behavior.

Selected References

Daniels (1986), Johnson and Johnson (1991), Johnson and Johnson (1994), Kagan (1992), Kassouf (1970), Van de Ven and Delbecq (1974).

Norms for our group:

1. We start and end on time.
2. We listen with respect.
3. We share the leadership and facilitation of the group.
4. We criticize ideas, not people.
5. We're open to new ideas.

STRATEGY 12

Personal, Interpersonal, Task Model (P.I.T.)

Purpose: Creating a Growth-Oriented Climate

People often rush into meetings coming from very hectic situations. Participants need time to decompress before the work begins. P.I.T. is a strategy to help in that decompression process and to re-energize people to focus and take on new ideas and challenges. It also values individuals and their personal issues and shows empathy as a collective group.

Basics

Number of Participants	May be done in small table groups or partners
Time Needed	5–6 minutes
Room Arrangement	Table groups
Difficulty Level	Low risk, easy
Brain Bits	Emotional impact and social support, development of cognitive learning in terms of developing common vocabulary, clarifying, and sharing
Brain's Natural Learning Systems	Emotional, reflective, social
Adult Learning Principle	Experiential: connects to what we know and do well Life application: determines real-life use and process of transfer to participants' unique circumstances
Materials	None P. I. T. on poster or PowerPoint slide

Process Directions

1. **Personal:** Participants take a minute to think about how they are feeling and what has been successful or challenging that day, or about something that is going in their lives that they would be willing to share.

2. **Interpersonal:** Everyone shares their thoughts with the others or a partner. Colleagues acknowledge and show appreciation and empathy as appropriate.

3. **Task:** The task for the session is identified or the agenda is built, and the team begins the work.

When

- Participants need to feel that their own well-being is important.
- The group needs active involvement of personal ideas and feelings.
- Dialogue and creating connections are necessary for team development.
- There is a need for team building.

Examples and Uses

1. It could be that P.I.T. becomes routine at the beginning of each meeting.

2. It would be especially important during stressful times when people need encouragement or support.

Selected References

Costa and Garmston (2002), Daniels (1986), Gibbs (2001), Hargreaves and Dawe (1989), Johnson and Johnson (1991, 1994), Kagan (1992), Robertson and Kagan (1992).

Personal

Interpersonal

Task

Tests

Scoring tools

After considering strategies others used, what can I add to my repertoire to inform me about how my students are learning?

STRATEGY 13

Processing Pause

Purpose: Creating a Growth-Oriented Climate

This strategy is used to get participants' voices in the room even with larger groups or to note learning from start of session to the end of session. This is great for creating a simple processing break.

Basics

Number of Participants	May be done in small table groups or as individuals and then share
Time Needed	10–15 minutes
Room Arrangement	Table groups
Difficulty Level	Low risk, easy
Brain Bits	Emotional impact and social support, development of cognitive learning in terms of developing common vocabulary, clarifying, and sharing Activates long-term memory potential with visual representation, discussion, and determination of transfer of new information
Adult Learning Principle	Experiential: connects to what we know and do well Life application: determines real-life use and process of transfer to participants' unique circumstances
Materials	Template

Process Directions

1. Have participants fill out the template after hearing a portion of a presentation or after the team has discussed a topic for a period of time.
2. Share one or more parts with your table group or partner.
3. Share multiple items with whole group.
4. With points of confusion, ask for clarification from the facilitator or answer at each table group.
5. "Park" key ideas by telling the small group how you will use the information you found most important and when you will use it.

When

- Participants need to make meaning from new learning.
- Participants need a break from a discussion to personalize what the implications are for them.

- The group needs some clarifying of solutions and problem solving to note the best ideas for the individual or team.

Examples and Uses

1. Use at the start of the second half of a workshop to help participants make meaning of or prioritize learning for better transfer.

2. Use as a processing pause at the end of learning or a team session.

3. Use as a processing tool after a protocol such as "the Interview."

4. Use to document the work of a team for that session or series of sessions. This is an alternative to logging or journaling progress.

5. Use to help participants when the learning is dense, is complex, or requires personalization for better transfer.

Selected References

Hartzler and Henry (1994); Hoffman and Olson-Ness (1996); Marzano, Norford, Paynter, Gaddy, and Pickering (2004).

Processing Pause

Information or Ideas Worth Noting	Graphic Representation
Questions or Points of Confusion	
Summary of Key Ideas From Discussion	

STRATEGY 14

Random Partners

Purpose: Creating a Growth-Oriented Climate

In professional learning communities, it is important to connect everyone with everyone else. Learners of all ages need dialogue to explore and clarify information so that it can become knowledge.

Basics

Number of Participants	Any number will work. You may have to do a little juggling to make sure everyone has a partner for each appointment time
Time Needed	10–15 minutes
Room Arrangement	Sufficient floor to walk about and meet up with your partner
Difficulty Level	Low risk, easy
Brain Bits	Emotional impact and social support, development of cognitive learning in terms of developing common vocabulary, movement suits our need for physical interaction
Brain's Natural Learning Systems	Social, emotional, physical, cognitive, reflective
Adult Learning Principle	Experiential: connects to what we know and do well Life application: determines real-life use and process of transfer to participants' unique circumstances
Materials	Appointment cards

Process Directions

1. Prepare appointment cards, such as small 4" × 4" cards with a symbol for each season such as a snowman, beach scene, blossoms, and autumn leaves.

2. People will put their name on their appointment card.

3. Then everyone will walk around and make appointments for each of the seasons.

4. As a person meets another person, he or she will write the partner's name on the appointment card at the season when they plan to meet.

5. Each will thank the partner and move on to make another appointment with someone else at a different season time.

6. When the participants have four appointments (winter, spring, summer, and fall), they will go back to their table.

7. The facilitator can then use the appointment cards to get people together for a discussion or a task at any time during the day, meeting, or workshop.

When

- Use after lunch, at the end of the morning, or at the end of the day.
- Use any time people need a change of state and another colleague to discuss an idea.
- The group needs to energize through movement and discussion.
- People need to move or get up.
- The facilitator needs to lower the risk for participation.
- Multiple viewpoints would help problem solve or plan.
- One conversation at a time makes it safer than whole-group processing.

Examples and Uses

1. After a video clip ask the following prompt using this group format: "How might you use the strategy exhibited in the video with your students or in your content area?"

2. Meet with your spring partner and chat about how you will . . . ?

3. What suggestions do you have to remove roadblocks to . . . ?

4. Use partners to read an article and discuss the key points.

5. You may be creative and use appointment cards with special significance to the group, such as seasonal symbols for Halloween, sports events, holidays, and so forth.

6. Clock partners are great and give 12 appointments, but you may want to have people line up in two lines facing each other, and then first the person across will be the one o'clock partner. One line moves to the right with the end person coming to the other end of the line. The new person across in the other line will be the two o'clock partner. The line continues to move until all 12 appointments are made.

Selected References

Daniels (1986), Hargreaves and Dawe (1989), Johnson and Johnson (1991, 1994), Kagan (1992), Robertson and Kagan (1992), Sousa (2004), Wellman and Lipton (2003).

Find a partner
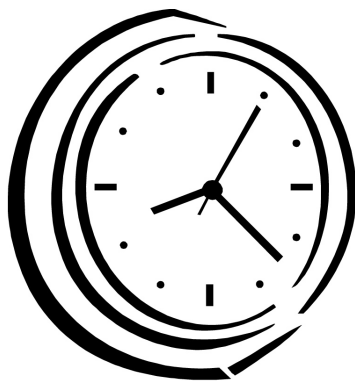
WINTER _____

SPRING _____

SUMMER _____

FALL

_____

Clock Partners

1:00 _____

2:00 _____

3:00 _____

4:00 _____

5:00 _____

6:00 _____

7:00 _____

8:00 _____

9:00 _____

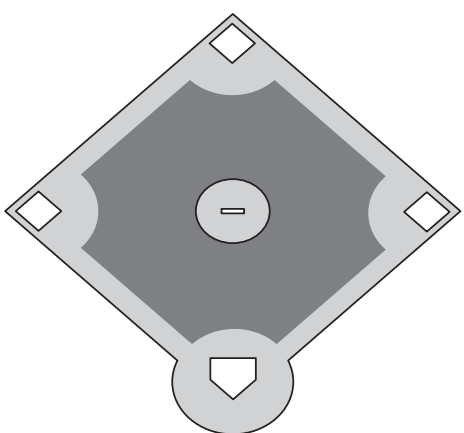10:00 _____

11:00 _____

12:00 _____

Baseball Partners

Second base partner
_____

Third base partner
_____

First base partner
_____

Home base partner
_____

Fitness Partners

Name _____

Name _____

Name _____

Name _____

Name _____

STRATEGY 15

Synectics

Purpose: Creating a Growth-Oriented Climate

William Gordon created the notion of Synectics as a process for creative thinking. It helps people understand a more abstract concept by linking it to something they already know. It taps into both hemispheres of the brain and stretches their thinking.

Basics

Number of Participants	May be done individually, in small table groups, or as a large group
Time Needed	10–15 minutes
Room Arrangement	Table groups
Difficulty Level	Low risk, easy
Brain Bits	Emotional impact and social support, development of cognitive learning in terms of developing common vocabulary, clarifying, and sharing Creative thinking and novelty helpful in learning
Brain's Natural Learning Systems	Social, emotional, cognitive, physical, reflective
Adult Learning Principle	Experiential: connects to what we know and do well Life application: determines real-life use and process of transfer to participants' unique circumstances
Materials	Chart paper or newsprint and colored markers

Process Directions

1. Create a clear understanding of a concept such as differentiation, authentic assessment, quality teaching, or teamwork.

2. The person or group chooses something they know very well to which they can relate the more abstract or new concept, such as a roller coaster, box of chocolates, or journey.

3. In the spirit of cooperative learning, assign group members a role to play:
   a. Writer
   b. Clarifier
   c. Encourager
   d. Materials manager

4. The writer will write: "Differentiation is like…" at the top of the chart. Team members will brainstorm all the reasons or connections that the two items have in common.

5. All the group members contribute ideas that connect the more abstract concept to the more familiar one, such as by creating a symbol on the page to represent the analogy.

When

- Participants need some active involvement related to concept clarification.
- People need a change of state and another colleague to discuss an idea.
- The facilitator needs to lower the risk for participation.
- Dialogue and creating consensus are necessary.
- There is a need for team building.

Examples and Uses

1. Participants need to understand a complex concept by putting it in their own words and relating it to something they already know about.

2. The strategy can be used to deepen thinking around a controversial topic such as implementing problem-based math.

3. Participants may be able to infer relationships that help them transfer newly learned concepts or skills to the classroom.

4. This strategy can add humor to a complex topic.

Selected References

Gordon (1961), Marzano et al. (2004), Roukes (1988).

Examples

A well-functioning team is like *sailing a ship* **because:**

> Each member has a job to do.
>
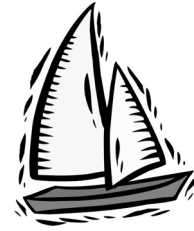> The destination is clear to all members.
>
> Each person brings different talents to the process.
>
> Sometimes it's smooth sailing; sometimes it's rough waters.
>
> Sometimes it is full sail; sometimes we run out of wind.
>
> Storms erupt; seas calm again.
>
> We can get off course.

DIFFERENTIATION IS LIKE . . .

USING DATA IS LIKE . . .

TEACHING IS LIKE . . .

STRATEGY 16

T Chart and Y Chart

Purpose: Creating a Growth-Oriented Climate

When establishing working norms for team success, people often need to clarify what is important to them and clarify behaviors. These charts are also a tool for organizing information and facilitating dialogue.

Basics

Number of Participants	May be done in small table groups or as a large group
Time Needed	10–15 minutes
Room Arrangement	Table groups
Difficulty Level	Low risk, easy
Brain Bits	Emotional impact and social support, development of cognitive learning in terms of developing common vocabulary, clarifying, and sharing
Brain's Natural Learning Systems	Emotional, social, physical, cognitive, reflective
Adult Learning Principle	Experiential: connects to what we know and do well Life application: determines real-life use and process of transfer to participants' unique circumstances
Materials	Chart paper and markers

Process Directions

1. Create a T on a sheet of chart paper at each table.

2. Put a title on the page to focus the thinking. One might be "Well-Functioning Teams."

3. Label the left side "Looks Like." Label the right side "Sounds Like."

4. Ask participants to consider what a well-functioning team would look like as it worked well and what it would sound like when it worked well.

5. After some thinking and discussion time, ask participants to contribute ideas that can be written on the common chart.

6. Doing this at each table would give people more "air time" and input.

7. Charts can then be posted and perused by participants to look for commonalities.

8. Another large group chart can be created by the whole group after the initial charts are completed and posted.

9. This could become the shared vision of a well-functioning team.

When

- Participants need some active involvement related to their own well-being.
- People need a change of state and another colleague to discuss an idea.
- People need to move or get up.
- The facilitator needs to lower the risk for participation.
- Dialogue and creating consensus are necessary.
- There is a need for team building.

Examples and Uses

1. Using "Looks like . . . sounds like" can create a clear understanding of a concept.

2. This helps clarify what a concept is or is not.

3. It helps to compare and contrast two concepts, such as a differentiated classroom versus a traditional classroom.

4. May be used with headings such as cause and effect related to a topic.

Selected References

Enchanted Learning (2006a, 2006b); English and Dean (2004); Hill and Hancock (1993); Johnson and Johnson (1991); Johnson, Johnson, and Johnson-Holubec (1993); Gregory (2000).

Examples of T Charts

A Well-Functioning Team

Looks Like	*Sounds Like*

Compare and Contrast

Differentiated Classroom	*Traditional Classroom*

Differentiating Instruction . . .

Is	*Is Not*

School Behavior

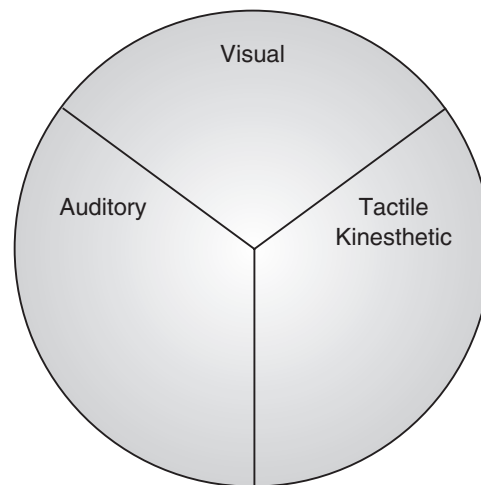| *Cause*	*Effect*

Y-Chart Examples

A Y chart is a variation of the T chart. It adds the dimension of emotions to the mix. It would push people to think about feelings associated with the concept. What would it look like, sound like, and feel like? Tapping into human emotions helps people internalize information and develop empathy for others, which will create a safe and growth-oriented climate. A Y chart can also be used to organize information for any idea or concept that has three parts. It would work with the jigsaw technique. Each person reads and summarizes part of an article. You could give participants roles so that they rotate roles as they explain and record their parts. The roles that might be used could be Reporter, Recorder, and Clarifier. That way everyone is engaged at each step.

A Well-Functioning Team

Feels like

Looks like

Sounds like
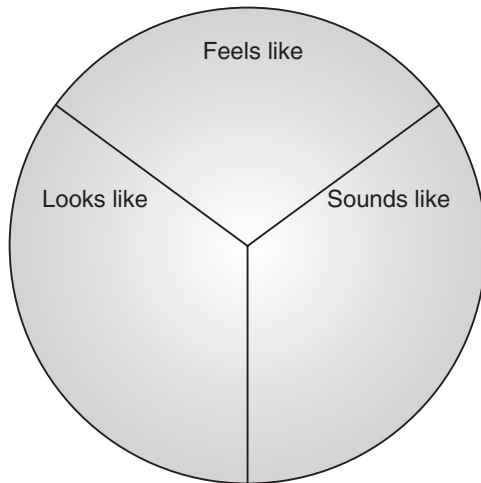
How do we serve diverse learners?

Visual

Auditory

Tactile Kinesthetic

Whose responsibility is it?

Students could

Parents should

Teachers should