

**Facilitator note: Homepage**

**Getting Started**

Throughout this process, you will find notes to help you facilitate a group going through the inquiry process. Sometimes they will be helpful suggestions or reminders, other times they will be examples of particular activities to use as models.

To make hard copies of documents in the resource section of each step more accessible to all users, they are available in both Acrobat Reader and the Microsoft Word formats.

For a complete Facilitator's Guide, containing all the Facilitator Notes for this site, go to the General resources section.

**Other information to consider before you begin:**

**Using this process as a guide:**

The process as it is described on this web site is merely a guide, one your group may wish to adapt and modify to meet its needs. If an activity seems redundant or doesn't seem to fit for your group, feel free to skip or change it.

**Granting graduate credit for the work:**

Some teachers put a great deal of effort into their inquiry studies and wish to use them toward graduate degrees. You may be able to arrange with a local college or university to grant graduate credits to teachers who successfully complete projects and pay the necessary fees and tuition. Hamline University in St. Paul, MN has cooperated with the Perpich Center for Arts Education in Golden Valley, MN to grant graduate credit for inquiry projects for a number of years.

**Scheduling the Activities:**

The Perpich Center for Arts Education in Golden Valley, MN has facilitated this inquiry process for a number of years with groups of teachers from across the state. The teachers meet three times a year—once in the fall, again in early winter, and finally in the spring. Each meeting is two days long. The first meeting engages teachers in steps ONE through THREE of the process. Teachers complete step FOUR on their own before attending the second meeting. The second meeting is spent entirely on step FIVE. Teachers complete step SIX on their own before attending the final meeting. The third meeting is spent entirely on step SEVEN. Facilitators stay in touch with teachers between meetings through mass mailings and e-mail messages. This is not the only way to work through the steps and schedule the activities. If your group does not need to travel great distances to meet, the steps and activities could be divided and scheduled in weekly or monthly meetings.

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However your group decides to schedule the activities, the important aspects of the process are allowing ample time for participants:

- to collect information between meetings
- share information and learning at meetings

This professional inquiry process should not be undertaken without making a time commitment that spans at least several months.

### **Completing the individual studies:**

Throughout the instructions for this process, you will find the advice that finishing the inquiry study and coming up with a final answer is less important than undertaking the inquiry journey. As a facilitator you will need to remind people of that fact from time to time. Some teachers who have worked with the Perpich Center for Arts Education have undertaken inquiry studies that they continue to pursue for several years. They have found that a particular line of inquiry continues to fascinate them and they continue to learn and grow by studying it long after they have shared their "final" findings in step seven.

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## **Facilitator note: 1A.3 Sharing Perspectives** **Who are we as a group?**

To ensure the success of this first conversation it is important to set parameters around discussion. *Participants should be informed of time limits at the beginning of the activities.*

### **A. Time Structure:**

The discussion (see Letter D below) should be limited to forty-five minutes or less if the conversation begins to wane.

The two closure activities—summaries from listeners (see Letter E below) and a walk and talk (see Letter F below)—should consume not more than fifteen minutes each.

If the group discusses differences between the oral and written comments (see Letter F below), it should take no more than ten minutes.

### **B. Physical arrangements for the conversation:**

The group sits in a circle with no tables or chairs in the middle. Each person in the group needs to be able to see all the other participants.

A facilitator is necessary to monitor the conversation.

Select three “listeners” to sit outside the circle. They do not participate in the conversation. Their role is to take notes and summarize the conversation when it is completed. *Select people who will be successful in this role.* (For more detailed instructions for listeners, see Letter E below.)

### **C. The facilitator explains the rules for the conversation:**

Comments should be made in response to the questions (see Letter D below) with regard to the summaries. Personal stories should be brief, kept to a minimum and used only when absolutely necessary to explain a viewpoint.

This is a group conversation. Every comment should be addressed to the entire group. No one should attempt to change another person’s mind, convince anyone of anything or confront people about what they say or believe. Nor should anyone try to answer another person’s question. All statements should be “I” statements about what the participants believe, value, question, or think *with reference to the summaries*. For example, participants should begin statements about the ideas in the summaries with phrases such as:

- I agree with
- I don’t understand why
- I believe
- I’m most confused by

The facilitator explains that s/he does not participate in the conversation but will serve an important role. To gently interrupt, for instance, if participants begin side-conversations, if participants address comments to individuals rather than the entire group or if a participant begins to monopolize by telling a long story.

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The facilitator explains that the listeners will not participate in the conversation. They will sit outside the circle and take notes. When the conversation is concluded, each listener will summarize issues or ideas that reappeared throughout the conversation and the variations on those issues or ideas with specific references to where there was agreement or disagreement.

People do not raise their hands to speak. This is a conversation. Simply wait for an opening to speak as in a regular conversation in the lunchroom or hallway with friends. No one is forced to speak.

The facilitator ends the discussion while people are still engaged with the conversation. The facilitator signals the end by saying, "Two more comments and we'll stop." The conversation must stop at that number. The conversation should be stopped at 45 minutes to allow time for listeners to summarize.

## **D. The facilitator poses three questions to start the conversation (these questions may need to be repeated during the course of the conversation if comments begin to stray):**

- What statements from the summaries "fit" with your way of thinking?
- What statements from the summaries don't "fit" with your way of thinking?
- What statements from the summaries are confusing or don't make sense in your opinion?

## **E. The facilitator asks the listeners to summarize the conversation:**

Each listener lists issues or ideas that reappeared throughout the conversation and the variations on them. They cite specific references to where there was agreement and disagreement concerning the summaries.

Each listener may give a response to the conversation as a whole in terms of what, in his/her opinion, appeared to be significant to the group.

## **F. The facilitator asks each member to make two written statements:**

The facilitator reminds participants that they have just heard a verbal "picture" of the group in the conversation. S/he explains that they will now take another "snapshot" of the group's thinking but this time *in writing*, and they will also discuss the differences and similarities between the verbal and the written comments.

The facilitator passes out strips of paper in two different colors to each participant. The participants write what one idea from the summaries really fits with their way of thinking on one color and one idea from the summaries that doesn't fit in their opinion on the other color.

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Participants post their written responses around the room so everyone can read them.

Participants pair up and do a "walk and talk." A walk and talk consists of two people strolling together and discussing what they view as significant and interesting about what they are reading or viewing. The purpose is to allow two people "think aloud" together.

The participants sit down and discuss the differences, similarities and any surprises in the written statements in contrast to the conversation. This should be kept short, ten statements in ten minutes. If this seems redundant, the facilitator may decide to forego this step.

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## **Facilitator note: 1A.4 Sharing Perspectives**

### **If I were a song and a dance**

*NOTE: Reconnecting at the beginning of meetings doesn't need to be a lengthy activity—ten to fifteen minutes should be plenty of time for five or six people to speak. Set a time limit for individual responses. Don't allow one person to monopolize the time. If it becomes necessary, ring a bell to signal time to move to the next person for response. It is essential that every person speak each time.*

1. List types of dances—tango, waltz, soft-shoe, folk, two-step, line—on the board or a piece of flipchart paper. Ask the group to name other dances to add to the list of possibilities.
2. List song titles and types of music—"Bridge Over Troubled Waters," "Blue Suede Shoes," symphony, dirge. Ask the group to name other song titles or types of music to add to the list of possibilities.
3. Ask participants to think about their lives—current, past or the whole so far. If they had to choose song titles or types of music to represent their lives what would they be? If they were dancing to these songs or types of music, what dances would best represent their lives? Ask them to form brief explanations of why the songs/types of music and dances represents their lives. (Facilitators may want to think of their answers before the meeting and share them at this point to break the ice and help people determine the appropriate level of personal sharing.)

Give people a few minutes to think and ask for a volunteer to begin.

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## **Facilitator note: 2.A2**

### **Framing a question**

#### **How do I narrow my focus?**

Examples of how to use stems in the Framing a Question Activity

Topic: Classroom rubrics (Depending on the topic, some stems may not work as well as others. All the stems work for this rubrics topic.)

Sample sentences using topic classroom rubrics

How do/does:

- How do students' use rubrics with their own work?
- How do I use rubrics in the classroom?
- How do I use rubrics with homework?
- How do I use rubrics with group work?

Why would:

- Why would a student want to use a rubric?
- Why would a teacher want to use a rubric?
- Why would rubrics make a difference?
- Why would students care about creating a rubric for their own use?

What happens when:

- What happens when students use a rubric and grade themselves too high?
- What happens when a teacher tries to use a rubric and students don't understand?
- What happens when parents don't understand this new way of evaluation using a rubric?
- What happens when rubrics don't work?

What is the role of \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_

- What is the role of rubrics in grading? Homework? Final grades? Independent projects? Group work?
- What is the role of rubrics in peer evaluation?
- What is the role of rubrics in determining a final grade for a marking period?

What is the difference between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

- What are the differences between rubrics and checklists
- What are the differences between teacher generated rubrics and student generated rubrics?
- What are the differences between rubric evaluation and traditional grading?

What causes

- What causes rubrics to work?
- What causes student learning to improve? Do rubrics make a difference?
- What causes students to care about their grades? Will rubrics make a difference?

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How much

- How much does using rubrics change students' attitude toward grading?
- How much improvement is there in learning when students use rubrics to self-evaluate?
- How much improvement in learning happens when students generate their own rubrics?
- How much more learning happens if teachers generate the rubrics?
- How much does using a rubric matter?

**Facilitator note: 3.A1 Inquiry Worksheet**

**SAMPLE Draft Inquiry Plan Worksheet: My plan on one page**

**1. My question is:**

What impact does using student-generated rubrics in the classroom have in increasing student effort and/or improving learning?

**2. Inquiry Study summary:**

My students and I will learn about rubrics and create them together to apply to their writing. I'll gather samples of student writing and survey them before we use rubrics and gather samples of their writing and survey them again after we've used rubrics over the course of the trimester. I will try to give my students more choices and more control over what is important in their writing.

**3. The research studies from *Critical Links* that relate to my inquiry questions are: (one sentence description of each study)**

- a. *A Poetic/Dramatic Approach to Facilitate Oral Communication*: Study involved 27 sophomores in a rural public school, which is the same as my students and school. My study could be as important as this one.
- b. *Using Art Processes to Enhance Academic Self-Regulation*: This study was set up to see if students could regulate their own behavior, which is like what I want to do with rubrics.

**4. How my inquiry will advance or inform my teaching practice.**

I'd read some research before that says students are more engaged in learning if they have some control over and choices about what they learn. That's also the 13<sup>th</sup> principle in the 13 Principles of Best Practice. I also believe I'm working on an aspect of the Best Practice Teacher Standard: Section II Skill in Teaching/Instruction, under D, the first bullet: provide tools that support the accomplishment of complex tasks. I think the rubrics are the tool and I think writing is the complex task.

**5. The collections of information I will gather to answer my question include:**

- a. writing samples from my students do before they create and use rubrics
- b. a student survey about how important their writing is to them before they create rubrics
- c. examples of the rubrics my students create at the beginning of the trimester, at the mid-way point, and at the end after we've been using them for a trimester

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- d. writing my students do after they've created and used rubrics several times
- e. a student survey about how important their writing is to them after they created rubrics
- f. published studies about the use of rubrics from Grant Wiggins' work and maybe Bob Marzano; other teachers if I can find some

## **6. Critical friend(s) I will consult:**

- I'd like to ask the teacher I met in the University writing course to meet with me before I start and then again in the middle of the trimester because he's done this
- I'm going to ask another teacher in my department to be a critical friend

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## Facilitator note: 3A.2 Keeping an Observation & Reflection Log

Sample Observation & Reflection Log entry

*Note: This is a very formal entry. You need not be so complete and formal in your log entries*

Observations/Descriptions	Interpretations/Evaluations
<p>This past week I used 3 days in class to help my students prepare a timeline relating to the five musical eras—Renaissance, baroque, classical, romantic and contemporary. I gathered resources they could use in the room. I created a worksheet of info they needed to put on their timeline project. Should I have done all that work for them? How can I make them do more of that work? I let the students choose who they sat with at their tables all week. I let them share information.</p>	
<p>They didn't remember any facts from last year's history class. Why not? How can that be?</p>	<p>I thought for sure that they would remember some key events in all the eras without using the resources. I was wrong.</p>
<p>I floated among my students and gave feedback on how they were doing. I helped them locate some resources and actually just spent time visiting with them. When they asked me about some part of the project or about some historical event, we had a DISCUSSION of what they thought it meant rather than just me telling them. Is this really teaching?</p>	<p>It was fun hearing them try to figure out if events were in Europe or America.</p> <p>I really felt as if I bonded with some of the troubled kids who always seem to be fighting me.</p>
<p>Students were laughing and WORKING. The room was noisy and messy. My goal was to get them to have a sense of music history. Their timeline actually turned out to look like 5 mini-posters rather than what I had imagined.</p>	<p>The five mini-posters were fine—they served the same purpose. Many students actually had fun working on this project. I think there was learning going on too</p>
<p>I've never asked students to work on a project like this before. I have some ideas for doing this next time. I'll be clearer about how the eras are designated—I think I need a tool to do that, something visual. I'll be clearer</p>	<p>Seeing the work turned in today, I'd say it was really worth it and I believe my students will REMEMBER the</p>

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about what I mean by musical events right from the beginning. I'll give them more of the responsibility for determining what goes on their timeline

This is a new style of teaching for me—getting with the new millennium!!!

five musical eras from doing this.

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## **Facilitator note: Step Four** **Collect evidence to answer question**

At the next meeting of the group for step five, Share Initial Findings, participants will be sharing the information they've gathered at about the halfway point in their study. The *Talking Points for Inquiry Discussions* sheet in the resource section for step five should be completed before that meeting. Facilitators should hand out that sheet at this meeting or send it out prior to the next meeting. Participants should also be reminded to bring their *Observation & Reflection Logs* to the meeting for step five.

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## **Facilitator note: 5A.1 Starting the Conversation**

Give participants a few minutes to review their *Observation & Reflection Logs* before beginning the discussion. Tell them to find the questions that have arisen since they started their inquiry study and mark them so they can refer to them easily during the discussion. During the meeting these will be called *catalyzed* questions.

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## **Facilitator note: 7A.1 Four Statements Dialogue**

1. Remind participants about the rules for discussion:
  - People speak without raising their hands. Wait for an opportunity to speak the way you do in a regular conversation.
  - It is not necessary that every person speak at every opportunity. No one is required to speak. This is, however, an opportunity to add your voice to the group agreement about what the work has meant.
  - All comments are directed toward the entire group. No cross talk allowed. No side conversations. No one should try to convince anyone of anything. People simply express their own experience. All comments should be "I" statements. What *I* believe, what *I* value, what *I* experienced.
2. Invite people to speak by asking if there are any of the four statements or a response to one of the questions anyone would like to share with the group. If the conversation lags, you may need to repeat this invitation or ask if anyone would like to comment on how they saw their work in terms of the *Teacher Self-assessment Rubric*.
3. If several people become anxious to share during the dialogue (you'll see it by their body language), it may be helpful to queue people so they know they will get a turn to speak. As a facilitator say, "Jane will speak next, Dan after Jane and then Pat after Dan."
4. Signal the end of the dialogue by saying, "We'll take two more comments," and then stop at two comments. End the discussion while people are still enthusiastic about sharing but don't shut the conversation down if someone has been waiting and wanting to speak.