



## A Change in Practice

*Developed by Gene Thompson-Grove.*

The purpose of this protocol is to provide a structure for analyzing the process participants have used to make changes in their practice, and for linking that process to Inquiry. This protocol highlights the changes educators constantly make in their practice, and gives them a way to think more systematically about the questions and data they use to inform those changes. Key to this protocol is the discussion in step 4, when the group talks in such a way that they broaden the presenter's thinking about how they generally approach making changes in their practice.

### Roles

- A facilitator (who also participates) should be assigned for each round. The facilitator's role is to keep the conversation moving through each phase and to facilitate the final conversation. The facilitator should also keep time.
- The presenter shares their writing about a change they have made in their practice. This becomes the text for professional learning within the group.
- Groups of three seem to work well for this process, as it allows every group member to present, and the conversation builds and deepens. If, however, a presenter prefers to hear multiple perspectives, a group of four or five could be used.

### Time

Approximately 75 minutes for triads.

### Process

#### 1. Writing (10 minutes)

Each member of the group writes about a change they have made in their practice, with as much detail as they can muster (see prompts, below). This writing should tell only what happened, like a snapshot. The writing should be crisp and succinct, but it should be clear that the group's discussion will be about what happened, not about the quality of the writing.

Describe a significant change you have made in your practice:

- What were you teaching/doing?
- What change did you make?
- Why did you think you should make a change? How did you know you should be doing something differently? Was there a question that led to the change?
- How did you decide what to do? Was there data or evidence of some sort that made you think you should make a change?
- How did you know whether the change was successful/was working?
- Who else played a role?
- Now, what are you wondering about?

The group decides on the order — who will present and facilitate during each round?

**2. Presentation** (5-7 minutes)

Presenter either reads the written account of what happened, or tells the story from the writing.

**3. Clarifying Questions** (5 minutes)

Colleagues ask clarifying questions.

**4. Discussion** (10 minutes)

The group talks about what they heard the presenter say. They then turn their attention to the Evidence Project's *Gears Diagram* — or some other “cycle of inquiry” — and map the presenter's story onto the diagram, raising questions and adding thoughts and insights as they do so. In this conversation, the group talks about which gears (or parts of the inquiry cycle) seemed to be engaged in the change process as described by the presenter, the relationship between the parts of the inquiry cycle from the story, and what the presenter could do next. The goal here is for the presenter to leave with a greater understanding of how they approach making changes in their practice, and to link this process to more formal “inquiry.” (The presenter listens and takes notes.)

**5. Reflection** (5 minutes)

Presenter reflects on what they heard, then the group engages in conversation about what the implications might be for the presenter's practice and/or for their own practice. A useful question at this stage might be, “What new insights occurred for all of us?”

**6. Repeat Each Round** (27 Minutes)

**7. Debrief** (5 minutes)

Debrief the process. The group talks about what just happened. How did the process work?