Methods for Learning From Student Work

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| **ATLAS**       | To help teachers better understand:  
• How students are thinking and learning by describing (not evaluating) and interpreting the work  
• The kinds of strategies and next steps for the presenting teacher in re-designing the curriculum  
• The diversity in each other’s beliefs and assumptions about teaching and learning | • Assignments that use lots of thinking and that give students some freedom in how they approach the task  
• Avoid work that consists primarily of answers with little explanation  
• Work that encourages close attention to details & affords multiple interpretations | • After the assignment is given and completed  
• In team teaching or grade level/department meetings plan the lesson together, teach it independently, then bring the student work back for this process |

**Notes:** Minimum 50 minutes

| **Charette**    | • This process was originally designed in the architectural community for getting feedback on projects where the design team or presenter is “stuck”  
• When you want to know: “How do I/we make this better?” Or “What are our next steps?” | • Any project where the team or individual wants to make a lesson, project, or unit design better | • For works in progress, at a critical juncture or for next steps to improve |

**Notes:** Minimum 50 minutes

Adapted from the Collaborative Assessment Conference by Eric Buchovecky while at Atlas Communities.

Described by Carol Coe at Puyallup High School (WA) to “kick up” level of teacher and student performance.

This protocol was originally written in the 1990s/2000s. We encourage you to purchase an NSRF membership to access newer materials and to enroll in CFG Coaches’ Training to access all of the updated materials and to develop a more thorough, experiential understanding. Protocols are most powerful and effective when used within an ongoing professional learning community such as a Critical Friends Group® and facilitated by a skilled coach. To learn more about professional learning communities and seminars for new or experienced coaches, please visit the National School Reform Faculty website at www.nsrfharmony.org.
### Collaborative Assessment Conference (CAC)

- Teacher says nothing in the way of context
- Description by colleagues
- Questioning the work by colleagues
- Speculating by colleagues
- Hearing from presenter
- Discussion by colleagues & presenter about implications for practice
- Reflection on Process by everyone
- Strong facilitation to help colleagues use description

**Reasons for Using:**
- To help teachers better understand:
  - Goals, problems and issues on which students choose to focus
  - Reflecting on and gathering ideas about revising classroom practice
  - Broader implications for teaching and learning

**Types of Work:**
- One or two pieces of student work from a single student
- Avoid work that consists primarily of answers with little explanation.
- Work that encourages close attention to details and affords multiple interpretations.

**When to Use:**
- After the assignment is given and completed
- Developed for use in high schools, but has been used in elementary and middle schools as well.

**Notes:** Minimum 60 minutes

Steve Seidel developed this process.

More information from Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education

### Consultancy, adapted for Student Work

- Presenter overview and framing question
- Clarifying and probing questions
- Feedback designed to give the presenter new perspectives and ideas
- Presenter response
- Debrief process
- Responsive facilitation: meet with presenter to shape framing question, keep accurate time, may choose to participate

**Reasons for Using:**
- To help teachers:
  - Get the kind of feedback that will help them change their practice based on student needs
  - Think in new ways about their teaching

**Types of Work:**
- Any work that poses a teaching and learning dilemma; use when the presenter wants to learn something that will help them re-think teaching and instructional strategies

**When to Use:**
- After the work is completed; the presenter uses this as a form of assessment to re-design teaching strategies suited to the learning needs of students

**Notes:** Minimum 60 minutes

Developed by Gene Thompson-Grove as part of the Coalition of Essential Schools’ National ReLearning Faculty Program

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### Method Overview

#### Describing Student’s Work

- **Focused skill:** Description by colleagues
- **Presentation of work by teacher**
- **Descriptive rounds consisting of:**
  - Literal Description
  - What is student working on
  - Teaching Focus
  - Recommendation Focus
- **Reflection on Process by everyone**
- **Strong facilitation to help colleagues use description**

**Notes:** Minimum 60 minutes

**Reasons for Using**

To help teachers better understand:

- **The student's way of knowing**
- **Implications for teaching this particular child**

**Types of Work**

- One or two pieces of student work from a single student
- Avoid work that consists primarily of answers with little explanation
- Work that encourages close attention to details & affords multiple interpretations

**When to Use**

- After the assignment is given and completed

**Description**

- To help teachers better understand:
  - The student's way of knowing
  - Implications for teaching this particular child

**Examples**

- Literal Description
- What is student working on
- Teaching Focus
- Recommendation Focus

**Notes:** More information from the Prospect Center in Bennington, VT

**Developed as part of the Coalition of Essential Schools’ Exhibitions’ Project**

### Tuning Protocol

- **Presenter explains context, student learning goals, evaluation format and framing question**
- **Clarifying questions**
- “Warm” and “cool” feedback
- **Presenter response**
- **Debrief process**
- Responsive facilitation: meet with presenter to shape framing question, keep accurate time

**Notes:** Minimum 60 minutes

**Reasons for Using**

To help teachers:

- Develop more effective exhibitions and assessments
- Develop common standards for students’ work
- Reflect on and gather ideas for revising classroom practice
- Support student performances

**Types of Work**

- Student exhibitions or long-term projects, any assignment along with assessments that you want to fine tune for supporting higher quality of student performance

**When to Use**

- After the work is completed and assessed in relation to a rubric, instructional objective, standard, or student learning goal

**Description**

- To help teachers:
  - Develop more effective exhibitions and assessments
  - Develop common standards for students’ work
  - Reflect on and gather ideas for revising classroom practice
  - Support student performances

**Examples**

- After the assignment is given and completed

**Notes:** More information from the Prospect Center in Bennington, VT

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The Slice

- Skill: Determining the sampling strategy
- Intense examination of work around framing question
- Presenters and Responders change places
- Reflection on Process by everyone
- Strong facilitation for leading Socratic seminar (if this discussion protocol selected to interrogate the slice)

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<td><strong>The Slice</strong></td>
<td>• To help groups understand a variety of issues based on the framing question, sampling, methodology, and discussion protocol employed</td>
<td>• Sample distributed across the range of groups you want represented</td>
<td>• After the assignment is given and completed</td>
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<td>• Intense examination of work around framing question</td>
<td>• Must determine the kinds of work and the duration of slice (over a week or month...)</td>
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<td>• Presenters and Responders change places</td>
<td>• This is a cross-section sample not a longitudinal study</td>
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<td>• Reflection on Process by everyone</td>
<td>• Range of sample could be from different schools, grade levels, curriculum groupings, socio-economic concentrations, etc</td>
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<td>• Strong facilitation for leading Socratic seminar (if this discussion protocol selected to interrogate the slice)</td>
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Notes: Minimum 70 minutes

1996 Project at the University of Minnesota

Refer to “Students’ Work and Teachers’ Learning” by Joseph McDonald in Teachers Caught in the Action, Teachers College Press (2001)
Looking Together at Student Work, Tina Blythe, David Allen, and Barbara Powell, Teachers College Press (1999)