

Four A's Text Protocol

Adapted from Judith Gray, Seattle, WA 2005

1. The group reads the text silently, highlighting it and writing notes in the margin on post-it notes in answer to the following four questions (you can also add your own "A's"):
 - What Assumptions does the author of the text hold?
 - What do you Agree with in the text?
 - What do you want to Argue with in the text?
 - What parts of the text do you want to Aspire to?
2. In a round, have each person identify one assumption in the text, citing the text (with page numbers, if appropriate) as evidence.
3. Either continue in rounds, or facilitate a conversation, in which the group talks about the text in light of each of the remaining A's, taking them one at a time – what do people want to argue with, agree with, and aspire to in the text. Try to move seamlessly from one "A" to the next, giving each enough time to explore fully.
4. End the session with an open discussion framed around a question such as: What does this mean for our work with students?
5. Debrief the text experience.

The Text Rendering Experience

Purpose:

To collaboratively construct meaning, clarify and expand our thinking about a text or document.

Roles:

A facilitator to guide the process.

A scribe to track the phrases and words that are shared.

Set Up:

Take a few moments to review the document and mark the sentence, the phrase, and the word that you think is particularly important for our work.

Steps:

1. First Round: Each person shares a sentence from the document that he/she thinks/feels is particularly significant.
2. Second Round: Each person shares a phrase that he/she thinks/feels is particularly significant. The scribe records each phrase.
3. Third Round: Each person shares the word that he/she thinks/feels is particularly significant. The scribe records each word.
4. The small group discusses what they heard and what it says about the document.
5. The large group shares the words that emerged and any new insights about the document.
6. The large group debriefs the text rendering process.

