

Sharing Documentation with Colleagues

Focusing the documentation

- Review a lesson or recurring classroom routine or activity (e.g., student feedback session, preparation and presentation of a project or report, or other times when students work in groups)
- Explore a question about teaching and learning (e.g., How are students making sense of a concept? What are the strengths and challenges of group work in your classroom?)
- Determine the impact of an activity or lesson on student learning, attitudes, or behavior



Collecting the documentation

- Think ahead to the moment when the activity, routine, demonstration of understanding, or other behavior is most likely to occur
- Decide on the documentation tools you will use (camera, notebook, tape recorder, video camera)
- Arrange to have a parent, colleague, or student help you document or watch the rest of the class while you document
- Focus on capturing the thinking and activity of one small group rather than trying to document multiple groups

Shaping the documentation to share with colleagues

- Select photographs, video-clips, and/or excerpts from your notes or recordings that relate to your inquiry. (Note: video-clips should be under 5-6 minutes)
- Be sure to include enough material for a group to engage in a meaningful conversation, but not so much that there isn't time to both look at and discuss it (it shouldn't take longer than 5-7 min. to read or view your documentation)
- Put documentation into an easily shareable format such as Powerpoint or video that can be shown on a laptop or projected, or copies of text and images for the entire group to look at

Discussing the documentation

What are students learning and understanding?

- What are the key concepts or skills the students are working on?
- What evidence do you see of student learning?

How is the group learning?

- How do the interactions or conversations among students help them learn or make learning more difficult? (Consider size and composition of the group, the language and strategies used, the roles students take, and what they choose to share with each other.)
- When does one person's thinking seem to affect the thinking of another or the whole group?
- What does the documentation suggest about creating better conditions (physical space, time, materials, nature of the task, etc.) for learning in groups?

Where do you go next?

- What might you try next to deepen or extend students' thinking or learning?
- What might be the value of sharing some or all of this documentation, and perhaps your own reflections, with the students? What might you select and how might you frame it?
- What is still puzzling or interesting to you after viewing the documentation?