FOCUS Discussion Protocols

Discussion Protocol	Purpose	Process	Link
Check In Circle	The purpose of this protocol is to give each person a chance to check in and share their thoughts and experiences.	Sitting in a circle, each person takes a turn sharing "where they are" to whatever degree they feel comfortable, or they can pass. Others do not respond. (1-2 minutes each)	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/check_circle_0.pdf
Change in Practice	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.	Participants write about a change they have made in their practice and then present their writing to the group. Colleagues ask clarifying questions. The group discusses what they heard the presenter say. Then, map the presenter's story onto a diagram. Discuss what parts seem to be engaged in the change process. Then, presenter reflects on feedback. This process is repeated for each participant. Then, debrief.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/change_practice_0.pdf
Block Party	A Pre-Reading Text-Based Activity	A facilitator writes quotes on notecards before the session. Each participant gets a notecard and spends ~3 minutes reflecting on it. Particpants then mingle and share quotes with others. Then, whole group sharing of thoughts (popcorn style, round, etc but not usually a discussion). Then, faciliatotor explains where the quotes came from.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/block_party_0.pdf
Attributes of a Community	To establish basic attributes of good learning communities through real participant experiences. The attributes become goals/guidelines for checking on progress as a new learning community develops.	Participants write about a group they have been a part of that was a positive learning experience. They should include the reason for the group's existence, how it was structured, and why it was positive. In groups of 3-4, participants will share their stories. As they do so, groups will make a lists of 4-5 attributes that they think are key. Then, all together, groups will go one by one sharing attributes and a facilitator will make a join list, starring any repeats. Then debrief all together.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/attributes_lc_0.pdf

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Affinity Mapping	This activity works best when begun with an open-ended analytic question that asks for defining elements of something, or that has many answers and thereby provides many points of entry for deepening a conversation.	Beginning with an open-ended analytical question, participants will each be given the opportunity to write ~5 responses to the question posed on their own. Then, they will split into groups of 4-8 and SILENTLY work together to naturally group the responses together. Then, they will converse together to title the different groups they ade and share their thoughts to the other groups. Then, debrief and make connections between all the different groups.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/affinity_mapping_0.pdf
Carousel Discussion	Student-Drive Group Discussion: Achieves a breadth and depth missed in whole class discussion	Students work in groups, with each group assigned to a different topic or example. First, they discuss the material assigned to their group, and prepare to present it to their classmates. Then, students form new groups, in which each of the previous groups is represented by at least one member. Within these new groups, students share and discuss their gindings, and serve as "experts" on the particular topic or example they were originally designed.	https://oakland.edu/Assets/upload/docs/CETL/TeachingTips/CarouselActivityFullVersion.pdf
Circle Voting	Promotes self-awareness and peer connection through the exploration of shared and unique experienc	Students grab an object that represents them and stand in a circle. A tall object (e.g. trash can) is placed in the middle of the circle. Students are asked a series of questions and can vote by placing their object close to the center or out by their feet. Example: “It’s easy to talk to new people and get to know them.” (very easy = near center, very hard = near feet).	https://www.bookwidgets.com/blog/2019/08/5-powerful-lesson-ideas-to-help-students-find-self-identity
Continuum Dialogue: Take a Stand	Get to know people you work with: Perspectives, beliefs, opnions, etc.	A discussion facilitator will pose a topic/questions that has a range of possible answers and also explains what each of the extremes of the continuum would be (i.e. time of day you do your best work, all the way to the left would be first thing in the morning and all the way to the right would be super late at night). Then, participants will stand where they think fits best. Then, participants will discuss and adjust their spot on the continuum if they chose to and discuss the overall process.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/continuum_dialogue_0.pdf

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Data Driven Dialogue	Builds awareness and understanding of the participant's viewpoints, beliefs, and assumptions about data while suspending judgements.	This is split into three phases. A facilitator introduces a topic which they can present data on. Phase 1: Participants make predictions based on previous knowledge, Phase 2: They are shown the data and make note of any observations, patterns, trends, etc. they notice. Phase 3: Participants make inferences based on the data they observed.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/affinity_mapping_0.pdf
Debate	Develops critical thinking and communication skills through evidence-based argumentation and discussion.	Participants will be split up into two groups (an affirmative team and an opposing team). A facilitator will present a topic for debate. Each group will have time to research and put together their thoughts and arguments. Then, each groups will have time to share their opening statements, their rebuttals, and closing arguments following a bath and forth pattern. Discuss afterwards.	https://oakland.edu/Assets/upload/docs/CETL/TeachingTips/CarouselActivityFullVersion.pdf
Final Word	The purpose of this discussion format is to give each person in the group an opportunity to have their ideas, understandings, and perspective enhanced by hearing from others. With this format, the group can explore an article, clarify their thinking, and have their assumptions and beliefs questioned in order to gain a deeper understanding of the issue.	The facilitator presents an article or other piece of work. Individuals will choose one idea that they believe is the most significant. After everyone has done that, one by one people will share their thought and spend less than 3 minutes explaining it. Continuing to the rest of the group, each person responds to the first person's thoughts (agreement, disagreement, a different perspective, etc.). After everyone has shared a thought, the person that began has the final word to share their thoughts on everyone elses responses. Repeat this process with other's most signidicant thoughts.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/final_word_0.pdf
Fish Bowl	Strengthens self-awareness and peer connection through the discussion of diverse viewpoints and experiences.	A discussion facilitator will pose a topic/questions that has a range of possible answers and also explains what each of the extremes of the continuum would be (i.e. time of day you do your best work, all the way to the left would be first thing in the morning and all the way to the right would be super late at night). Then, participants will stand where they think fits best. Then, participants will discuss and adjust their spot on the continuum if they chose to and discuss the overall process.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/continuum_dialogue_0.pdf

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Discussion Protocol	Purpose	Process	Link
Four A's	Analyzing Text	Members of the group read the given text silently, writing notes and highlighting things that will answer the following questions: 1. What assumptions does the author of the text hold. 2. What do you agree with in the text? 3. What do you want to argue with in the text? 4. What parts of the text do you want to aspire to? Then, hold a discussion.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/4a_text_0.pdf
Give One, Get One	Promotes active listening and peer learning through the exchange of diverse ideas and perspectives.	Participants independently generate ideas, responses, or solutions to a prompt and record them on a worksheet. They then move around the room, partnering with multiple peers to share one idea ("give one") and collect a new idea ("get one") from each interaction. Participants add new insights to their lists and continue exchanging ideas with different partners before reflecting on what they learned as a group.	https://goalbookapp.com/accounts/users/sign_in?return_url=https%3A%2F%2Fgoalbookapp.com%2Ftoolkit%2Fv%2Fstrategy%2Fgive-one-get-one
Group Juggle	Work together to juggle as many objects in the air as possible.	The group will form a circle and people will pass an object around the circle by saying a persons name and then throwing it to them. They continue this until everyone has recieved the ball exactly once. Do this a couple times to ensure everyone knows the pattern, then continue adding objects to see how many objects the team can juggle at once. After a couple rounds, the group will set a goal and try again. Afterwards, have a discussion.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/group_juggle.pdf
Icebreakers and Warm Ups	Get to know each other better	Choose, from the list of ice breakers and warm-ups, games or questions that will best help your team get to know each other better.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/icebreakers_0.pdf
Library of Congress	Primary Source Analysis: Develops critical thinking and inquiry skills through observation, reflection, and questioning.	Using the Library of Congress Website, facilitators can choose from the different analysis tools that follow the observe (identifying and noting details), reflect (generating and testing hypotheses about the source), and question (asking questions leading to more observations and reflections) pattern.	https://www.loc.gov/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources/guides/

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Mine Walk	Builds teamwork and problem-solving skills through the identification and navigation of learning obstacles	As a group, discuss the key obstacles to powerful learning. Using rope or tape, a pathway through the room will be created. Members will find objects around the room that represent the obstacles and place them on the pathway. Have participants work together as a group get across the pathway to reach "powerful learning". Different members of the group have specific challenges (not allowed to speak, see, etc.). After they have successfully gotten across the pathway, debrief.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/mine_walk_0.pdf
Multiple Perspectives Tool	Aiding in problem solving	In a large group, participants will introduce themselves and share a few things about themselves that explain their point of view of some kind (gender, race, age, occupation, etc.). The facilitator presents a question and each person writes their initial repsonse. Then, they take turns sharing their opinion from the perspective of a specific person. Then, they take turns sharing their opinions based on what others said.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/multiple_perspectives_0.pdf
Pair Communication	Active listening	In pairs, person 1 has 1.5 minutes to talk about something while person 2 listening (no responding allowed). Then person 2 paraphrases, restates content, and reflects feelings. Then person 1 gives feedback on how it felt to be heard. Then switch roles.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/pair_communication.pdf
Line Up	Communication/Teamwork	Get in line in a certain order as quickly as possible without talking. Ex. Get in line from the shortest to the tallest, Get in line by shoe size from the smallest to the largest, Get in line by birthday, etc.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/line_up_0.pdf
Data Driven Dialogue	Builds awareness and understanding of the participant's viewpoints, beliefs, and assumptions about data while suspending judgements.	This is split into three phases. A facilitator introduces a topic which they can present data on. Phase 1: Participants make predictions based on previous knowledge, Phase 2: They are shown the data and make note of any observations, patterns, trends, etc. they notice. Phase 3: Participants make inferences based on the data they observed.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/data_driven_dialogue_0.pdf

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Save the Last Word for Me	To clarify and deepen our thinking about articles we read	Given an article, all members choose one sentence or idea that they feel is the most important. Then, in groups of 4, one participant shares what they choose without giving a reason. All other members each have 1 minute to respond to the chosen passage. Then, to wrap up, the first person gets to respond and have "the last word". Continue this with all other members.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/save_last_word_0.pdf
School Walk Protocol	This protocol provides a means for visitors to a school to have a meaningful interchange with hosting educators.	In cross-school pairs, participants will walk around the host school making non-judmental observations. Then, have a whole group discussion about what was noticed and what comments and questions everyone had.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/school_walk_0.pdf
Jigsaw	Shared Learning	Participants are split up into as many groups as there are topics to learn about. Each group becomes an expert in their topic. Then, group members spread out to share their knowledge with other groups.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/jigsaw_0.pdf
Peeling the Onion	To provide a structured way to develop an appreciation for the complexity of a problem in order to avoid the inclination to start out by “solving” the problem, before it has been fully defined.	The facilitator describes a problem/dilemma and asks a question to help focus the group's responses. The group asks clarifying questions and takes turns repeating back what they heard. Rounds continue with group memners diving deeper into the problem (identifying assumptions, asking more questions, etc.). Once the group feels satisfied, work together to come up with possible solutions to the problem. Then debrief.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/peeling_onion_0.pdf

FOCUS in EDUCATION GROUP Discussion Protocols

Discussion Protocol	Purpose	Process	Link
Scrambled Sentences	Teamwork	Participants are separated into groups of 6 and each member is given an envelope with 4-5 words in it. As a group, they must work together until each member has completed a sentence using their words and the words of the rest of the group. They may not ask for words from other people so the only way you can get a card is if someone gives it to you.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/scrambled_sentences_0.pdf
Socratic Seminar	Develops critical thinking and comprehension through structured dialogue around text.	Based on a given text, members have a conversation to further their knowledge and understanding of the text. Participants will work together to set rules for their seminar. The format of the socratic seminar can change (i.e. fishbowl).	https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/socratic-seminar
Talking Circle	Discussion, Problem Solving, Decision Making	Partcipants will sit in a circle facing each other and follow the talking circle format for discussion. 1. Building Connections 2. Piercing the Surface 3. Delving Depper 4. Reflecting and Learning. Participants pass around a talking stick and practice their talking and listening skills along the way.	https://www.heartland.edu/documents/idc/talkingcircleclassroom.pdf
Tea Party	A Pre-Reading Text-Based Activity	The facilitator writes quotes from the reading on notes cards and hands them out to participants. They spend a few minutes reflecitng on their quote's meaning and then mingle and share the quotes in pairs. Repeat this a few times.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/tea_party_0.pdf
Three Levels of Text	To deepen understanding of a text and explore implications.	All participants will sit in a circle. They will all read the text and identify passages that seem especially important. Then participate in three actions. 1 - Read aloud the passage they selected. 2 - Say what they think about the passage. 3 - Say what they see as the implications of their work. Then the group responds. Continue this process as desired.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/3_levels_text_0.pdf

FOCUS in EDUCATION GROUP Discussion Protocols

Discussion Protocol	Purpose	Process	Link
Village of 100 People	Understand the perspective of others.	A facilitator will read the facts provided on the website about proportions of races if the world was made of 100 people. It should help understand the perspective of others.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/village_100_people_0.pdf
Wagon Wheels	To stimulate lots of generative thinking in a very short time. • To stimulate powerful thinking between people who might not know each other. • To create a "vivid image bank" of a new idea in action to inform the planning process. • To develop a sense of team with a common purpose.	Half of the participants sit in a circle facing outward, the other half sit facing across from one of the inner participants. For an alloted amount of time, work in pairs to brainstorm and write notes on a certain topic. Then have outer participants rotate so they are working with a new partner. Repeat.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/wagon_wheels_0_0.pdf
What? So What? Now What?	This protocol allows participants to quickly connect one another to their work, while at the same time allowing them to get useful feedback from one another.	Participants think of an area of growth or challenge in their work. They write about what they are working on and why it is important to them. Each participant presents what they wrote and the audience reflects back - this is what I am hearing and this is why it is important to you along with additional feedback. Participant accepts feedback to write possible next steps for growth.	https://www.nsrfharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/what_so_what_0.pdf