

ACTIVITY 2.4: WONDERING REFINEMENT PARTNER TALK

At the end of Chapter 2 the authors make the following statement: Rarely does any teacher researcher eloquently state his or her wondering immediately. It takes time, brainstorming, and actually playing with your question. This activity helps readers “play” with their question once it is initially articulated.

Time Frame: 12–15 Minutes per Partner

Step 1: Framing and Sharing Your Wondering (2–3 minutes): Partner 1 shares the issue/tension/dilemma/felt difficulty that led to his or her wondering and then states his or her question. (Suggestion: Partner writes his or her question on paper as a visual for both partners to consider.)

Step 2: Wondering Conversation (5 minutes): Partner 2 poses the following probing questions about the wondering and what led to it:

- What is most important for you to learn related to your wondering?
- In what ways might your student(s) benefit from your exploration of this wondering?
- What aspects of your wondering are within your control? Outside your control? In what ways does your question reflect what you can control?
- Is your wondering posed to “fix” student(s)? If so, what student assets/strengths can you capitalize on to reframe your question?
- What do you already know about the topic of your wondering? In what ways might gaining insights into your question enhance what you already know?

Step 3: Fine-Tuning the Question (3–4 minutes): Based on what transpired during Steps 1 and 2, have partners work together to fine-tune the wording of or reframe the wondering.

TIP: *Wonderings are generally not phrased as dichotomous (yes/no) questions. If a question is phrased dichotomously, try rewording using the following question starters:*

- In what ways does . . .
- What is the relationship between . . .
- How do students/teachers/colleagues experience . . .
- What happens when . . .
- How does . . .

Step 4: Partner Thanks. Partner 1 thanks Partner 2 for helping to think through the wondering, and the process is repeated with Partner 2 sharing his or her wondering and Partner 1 posing probing questions.

See the handout “Wondering Partner Discussion,” developed by Nancy Fichtman Dana, that follows.

WONDERING PARTNER DISCUSSION

Developed by Nancy Fichtman Dana, University of Florida

Time Frame: 12 Minutes per Partner

Step 1: Framing and Sharing Your Wondering (2–3 minutes): Presenter shares the issue/tension/dilemma/felt difficulty that led to his or her wondering and then states his or her question

Step 2: Wondering Conversation (5 minutes): Partner poses the following probing questions about the wondering and what led to it:

- What is most important for you to learn related to your wondering?
- In what ways might your student(s) benefit from your exploration of this wondering?
- What aspects of your wondering are within your control? Outside your control? In what ways does your question reflect what you can control?
- Is your wondering posed to “fix” student(s)? If so, what student assets/strengths can you capitalize on to reframe your question?
- What do you already know about the topic of your wondering? In what ways might gaining insights into your question enhance what you already know?

Step 3: Fine-Tuning the Question and Thinking Ahead (3–4 minutes): Based on what transpired during Steps 1 and 2, work together to fine-tune the wording of or reframing the wondering.

TIP: *Wonderings are generally not phrased as dichotomous (yes/no) questions. If a question is phrased dichotomously, try rewording using the following question starters*

- In what ways does . . .
- What is the relationship between . . .
- How do students/teachers/colleagues experience . . .
- What happens when . . .
- How does . . .

If time allows, discuss possible data collection strategies that might provide insights into the wondering (See *The Reflective Educator’s Guide to Classroom Research*, Fourth Edition, Chapter 5, Exercise 2, p. 153)

Step 4: Partner Thanks. Thank your partner for helping your think through your wondering.