
Getting Started with Documentation, Part II: Discussing Documentation

Purpose of the Tool

BUILDING
INQUIRY SKILLS

From the perspective of *Visible Learners*, after collecting documentation through the practices of observing and recording, it is then important to interpret and share that documentation to support student and teacher learning going forward.¹ The purpose of this tool is to support you

Suggested Time Commitment



You will probably need at least an hour to engage in this activity, and you will likely return to this activity throughout your innovation process.

When & How

As noted in the Making a Plan to Document tool, engaging in the process of documentation may be useful at any stage of your innovation project work. Once you have collected documentation from a particular school or classroom experience through the practices of observing and recording, set aside time with your study group members to look closely at what you collected by engaging in the practices of interpreting and sharing.

¹ To learn more about documentation from a *Visible Learners'* perspective, please see Krechevsky, M., Mardell, B., Rivard, M., & Wilson, D. (2013). *Visible learners: Promoting Reggio-inspired approaches in all schools*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Steps

1. Select a piece of documentation to review from one member of your study group. Have the presenting group member provide some general context for the learning environment where the documentation came from, and then offer the guiding question she/he was focused upon when collecting this work.
2. Before engaging in discussion, ask the presenting study group member any clarifying questions about the learning environment where this documentation came from, the presenting study group member's guiding question, or the documentation itself.
3. Once all clarifying questions have been addressed, spend some time looking closely at the documentation, and then begin discussing the work as a group, with the presenting study group member just listening for the time being. You may use a discussion protocol, such as the following:
 - *What do you see?* What do you see, hear, or otherwise notice about the documentation that you are reviewing? What stands out to you?

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- *What do you think? Based on what you have noticed, what do you think the student and/or teacher are trying to figure out or understand?*
 - *What do you wonder? What questions about learning and teaching does this piece of documentation bring to the surface for you?*
 - *What do you suggest? What suggestions can you offer the presenting educator to support her/his work and/or her/his learners?*

4. After discussing this piece of documentation for a sufficient amount of time, invite the presenting study group member to respond to what she/he heard in the discussion, and to offer some potential next steps.

5. After you have engaged in this process with a piece of documentation from one study group member, repeat the process with a piece of documentation from another study group member, as time allows.