

CONDUCTING AN INITIAL READ-THROUGH: TEAM MEMBER EXPLANATION AND HOW-TO GUIDE

Phase One

To conduct the individual pre-reading review, you will need this handout, the initial read-through map packet, two colors of highlighters, and a pen or pencil.

- One color is for highlighting positives found in each map. The other color is for highlighting concerns or needed clarifications:
 - *Positives* are examples in which the map writer's elemental wording, format, or intra-alignment is properly incorporated. Positives are noted directly on the maps using the highlighter as well as noted using a pen or pencil textually on the cover sheet. Specific examples are critical to the review process. For example, "You did a nice job with your content listings," is not specific. But this is: "Your first content listing, Informational Text: Current Event Magazines, is descriptive since *current event magazines* tells me the exact type of informational text the students must know for the unit of study."
 - *Concerns* represent instances in which the map writer's elemental wording, format, or alignment appears to be incorporated improperly or missing entirely. Specific comments are noted textually on the cover sheet.
 - *Needed clarifications* are textual visual puzzlements in which a map reader could not easily figure out what the map writer was trying to convey or that lead to confusion. These concerns are highlighted as well as noted on the cover sheet.

During the preliminary reading, you will fill in the first three columns of the cover sheet of your map packet. During your small-group team meeting, you will fill in the last column as part of the meeting process.

Phase Two

When your small-group team meets, sit in a cooperative-style arrangement (e.g., around a circular or rectangular table), and designate someone to be the official timekeeper. Because everyone deserves equal time, plan on approximately 5–10 minutes per map writer. A second person needs be designated as the parking lot attendant. This person's role it to stop any conversation that strays for the purpose and goals for conducting the initial read-through. For example, if a conversation begins regarding "not enough time is being given to us to map," the parking lot attendant literally calls out, "Parking lot!" This person then records the mentioned concern or concerns on note taking paper. The small-group leader immediately gets the team focused back on the task at hand and continues the discussion focused on the wording, format, and intra-alignment of the highlighted person's map. At the end of the meeting time the parking lot attendant's notes may be addressed immediately or can be included in a future large-group or small-group meeting.

The designated team leader is first. (If there is no team leader, select someone to be first.) All team members focus on this member's personal map and begin the collaboration by sharing positives about the map's quality. After everyone shares a specific positive comment the focus shifts to concerns or needed clarifications. It is recommended that the full allotted time is spent

on each person's map. In other words, do not rush through each map. A critical feature of the read-through process is the conversation sparked when reviewing each map. Before moving on to the next team member, everyone records a personal, reflective comment in the last column's cell on the cover sheet that corresponds with this team member's map, including the writer of the focused-on map.

The following conversation features a four-member, small-group team. Barbara, the team leader, is the first to request comments from the group:

Barbara: I'll go first.

Everyone retrieves Barbara's map from within the packet. Team members prepare to share by using highlighted notations and summary comments.

Beth: You used a capital letter at the beginning of each word for all of the content listings.

Barbara: Thank you.

Nancy: All of the skill statements start with a measurable verb, and you included targets. For example: Differentiate in writing between special and general relativity.

Barbara: Thank you.

Andrea: I noticed when an assessment name did not provide enough information, you included the evaluation summary such as Energy Lab (Evaluation: Checklist/Journal Entry Rubric).

Barbara: Thank you.

Lisa: It was easy to follow your intra-alignment because you used the letter-number coding. (*Points to specific areas in Barbara's map.*) I know that this content is aligned to these three skills, these two assessments, and these standards. No guesswork here.

Barbara: Thank you.

Important Note: The hardest aspect of this phase of the sharing process is for the map writer to not provide personal thoughts or comments as each person shares a positive. Notice that Barbara simply said "thank you" each time she was given a compliment. While this may seem trite, it is not. The initial read-through's key purpose is to encourage collaboration and trust. During the positive sharing, the map writer simply says thank you or nods in acknowledgment. When sharing concerns or needed clarifications, however, the map writer is allowed and encouraged to share personal thoughts and comments based on the team members' comments.

Barbara: Does anyone have any concerns or needed clarifications about what I wrote?

The floor is open. Team members respectfully share personal notations. It is recommended that if a team member has more than one comment to share, he or she shares only one to begin with so that other team members can also actively

participate. Since this is a time to provide constructive feedback, it is important when sharing that the map writer does not feel defensive or put on the spot.

Andrea: I noticed you did not include any resources. Is there a reason you left them out?

Barbara: Honestly, no. I know that I forgot to add them. I just figured I could add them later. Obviously with you noticing they were not there, it tells me I need to add them, for certain, when I am writing my next month's map.

Nancy: I was a little confused by the last content–skill set. The wording is just about identical for the content and the skill. The descriptor for the content is the same wording as in the skill statement.

Barbara: *(Pauses as she reads the map entry.)* I see what you mean. I know what I was thinking. I just didn't get it on the map! I can see revising the skill statement's descriptor so that it lists the various types of energy pertaining to the three categories I included in the content listing. . . . This really is helping me. Is there anything else anyone noticed?

When the open-floor discussion concerning Barbara's map naturally comes to a close (or a designated time limit is reached) all team members share a final compliment regarding Barbara's willingness to be open to the team's comments.

Before moving on to Nancy's map, each member, including Barbara, writes a self-reflection note concerning the discussion of Barbara's map in the last column's cell that corresponds with Barbara's map. The sharing cycle of specific positives, open-floor concerns or needed clarifications, and recording final thoughts in the last column is repeated until the remaining team members have each had a turn.

Conclusion

After everyone has been provided feedback, conclude your initial read-through meeting by conducting a debriefing time. An activity may already be planned by your small-group team leader or large-group facilitator.

The handout is an excerpt from, *A Guide to Curriculum Mapping: Planning, Implementing, and Sustaining the Process.*
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