



What are teachers doing differently in classrooms where students are growing as leaders of a better future?

STRATEGIES

Five families of actions distinguish classrooms where students are growing as leaders of a better future.

OVERVIEW

Get started with a map of teacher actions and a toolkit of key resources.

DISCOVER

Virtually explore **transformational classrooms** to find distinguishing strategies.

LEARN

Explore the **five families of actions** in classrooms that grow students as leaders and learn how to develop them as a teacher.

DO

Find actionable guidance for each of the **25 actions** as well as **contextualizable tools** for teachers and coaches.

SHARE

Share and explore incoming **insights, challenges, questions, resources, and research.**



OVERVIEW

Growing students as leaders of a better future calls for more relational, student-led, discovery-oriented teaching and learning.



It turns out, if you are a teacher working to help students improve their lives and their communities' futures, you do things very differently than teachers who are working to raise test scores.



DISCOVER

Check out [a](#) compilation of clips from some of the teachers, students, classrooms, schools, and communities that were part of our “global learning loops.” What do these classrooms have in common? What key strategies do you see?

[[Explore More](#) Transformational Classrooms and Communities]

LEARN

Map of Actions that Grow Students as Leaders

[PURPOSE](#) and [LENSES](#) enable 25 actions aligned to growing students as leaders of a better future.

LOVE & CONNECT to build culture	LISTEN & ENVISION to co-create purpose	LEARN & DESIGN to plan learning experiences	FACILITATE & CHALLENGE to inspire learning	REFLECT & GROW to fulfill potential
BUILD RELATIONSHIPS	BROADEN PERSPECTIVES	BUILD CRITICAL KNOWLEDGE	FACILITATE EFFECTIVELY	TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF
FOSTER BELONGING	HOST DIALOGUE & DISCUSSION	PLAN BACKWARDS	MANAGE NORMS & RITUALS	PAUSE & REFLECT
NURTURE CULTURE	PARTNER WITH FAMILIES & COMMUNITY	VALUE LEARNER VARIABILITY & OWNERSHIP	FOSTER COLLECTIVE DISCOVERY	FIND & FOSTER ALLIES
KNOW YOURSELF	CRITICALLY EXAMINE HISTORY	EXPECT HIGHER-ORDER THINKING	FLEXIBLY ADJUST COURSE	SEEK FEEDBACK
BE HUMAN	COLLECTIVELY ENVISION SUCCESS	LEVERAGE LEARNING THEORY	MONITOR LEARNING & PROGRESS	LEARN & UNLEARN

Key actions for new teachers. Add your own actions.

DO

- [Explore](#) the two-page “how-to” guides for each of the 25 actions that are emerging from practitioner insights from all over the world.
- Explore an emerging toolkit, including a prototype [reference guide](#), [self-reflection guide](#), and [observation tool](#) for teachers and teacher coaches to help align growing students as leaders of a better future.
- Find links to our latest collection of implications for teachers, teacher coaches, and program designers, gathered as people adopt and change Teaching As Collective Leadership for their local vision, values, and context.
- Consider what forms of [learning experiences](#) best grow and develop these strategies and actions.

SHARE

Share your insights, questions, resources, and challenges related to developing visions of student success.

DISCOVER

Virtually visit transformational classrooms

Teaching As Collective Leadership emerged from listening to and observing inspiring educators around the world. Thousands of teachers, coaches, researchers, designers, students, and others joined in the process of drawing out patterns from the practice of these educators. We would like to invite you into this collective learning process.

When you close your eyes and imagine a classroom where students and teachers and families are working together to grow students as leaders of a better future, what comes to mind?

Virtually visit two or three (but not just one) of the transformational classrooms below and consider how they are similar and different. What patterns do you see?



“Ako” means teaching & learning

Kia Aroha is a public secondary school in South Auckland, New Zealand, working with Maori and Pacifica students. As shown in this [video](#) from 2015, the school has taken a radically different approach to education, focusing on bilingual, critically conscious, culturally responsive, and social justice-oriented education.



Centering student voice & ownership

Through this [video](#) from 2018, visit a classroom in Delhi where Pooja Chopra, a teacher with Teach For India, partnered with students to create their vision and community. As you watch, consider: What are students doing and what do they believe? What is the teacher doing to enable students to be a community of leaders?



Liberatory education

What does a liberatory education look, sound, and feel like? Observe, in this [video](#) from 2015, Wisdom Amouzou (Teach For America, Colorado) and his students explore one classroom that helps shed light on these questions.

GLOSSARY

Transformative Classroom: These are classrooms where students seem to be on a different trajectory. They are making dramatic progress in their wellbeing, connectedness, awareness, agency, and mastery. That growth is transforming their paths and opportunities going forward.

Grow Students: We have chosen the verb “grow” in this phrase because we feel it’s more active and meaningful than more traditional terms like “develop.” We made this intentional choice to inspire readers to pause and think about the opportunity and responsibility we have to help students be prepared for a very different future than the one that shaped conventional classroom models.

Leaders of a Better Future: This is a concept that emerged years ago, when Teach For All hosted a collective, year-long reflection process among students, teachers, teacher developers, CEOs, community leaders, and families about the aims of our network. One clear theme in those conversations was the changing and challenging world today’s students are inheriting, and the need for education to prepare them to face and improve that future for themselves and others.



Culturally sustaining relationships

In this [video](#) from 2017, the million-dollar Global Teacher Prize winner Maggie MacDonnell puts relationships at the center of her teaching practice



A culture of rigorous questioning

Taylor Delhagen (Teach for America, New York) facilitates debate to develop students' critical thinking. Taylor provides concrete strategies for students to process information and develop their [viewpoints](#).

Reflection Questions

- What are teachers and students doing similarly in these classrooms? How are those methods different from what you see in other classrooms?
- What actions do you infer created the culture, systems, rituals, and lessons that you are seeing?
- How are these classrooms similar and different from what you experienced as a student?



HELP US DISCOVER & ILLUSTRATE

Transformational Teaching Actions. [Submit](#) other examples!

LEARN

Five transformational teaching and learning strategies

When thousands of students, teachers, teacher coaches, community members, and researchers virtually visited and compared classrooms where students seem to be growing as leaders, they saw patterns in the actions teachers take in those classrooms.

Those studies suggest that five families of actions (which we are calling “strategies”) distinguish transformational classrooms:

LOVE & CONNECT to build culture	LISTEN & ENVISION to co-create purpose	LEARN & DESIGN to plan learning experiences	FACILITATE & CHALLENGE to inspire learning	REFLECT & GROW to fulfill potential
Caring and authentic relationships foster the trust, understanding, and honesty necessary for my students, their families, my colleagues, and me to work together toward meaningful aims.	Perfecting current ways of learning and teaching will not fulfill my students’ potential as leaders of a better future, so we collectively question and reimagine the purpose of our classroom, building sustainable coalitions for change.	Careful planning ensures that learning experiences align with our vision of students as leaders, students’ needs, and how students best learn.	Our classroom creates opportunities for students (and the teacher) to joyfully and productively struggle with rigorous challenges and content at the frontiers of our knowledge and abilities.	Learning is a lifelong journey fueled by humility and curiosity, as we improve our knowledge and skills and grow our capacity for understanding ourselves, each other, and the world.

Under each of these five strategies, you will find five specific ACTIONS (for a total of 25 actions) often found in classrooms growing student leadership.* But before we double-click on each of these general strategies, let’s take a moment to consider these five big ideas.

In the following few pages, you can explore each of these **five general strategies**, and find links to how-to guides for each of the five concrete actions aligned to each of those strategies.

As you explore that full map of TACL teacher actions, please keep in mind:

- **No single classroom in our collective studies embodied all these actions.** This map of actions is a *conglomerate* of strong classrooms and is a tool for reflecting on strengths and areas for growth, not a prescription for success.
- **These globally informed patterns need locally rooted contextualization.** Unlike many classroom excellence models, this framework not only asks “Is this teacher exemplifying this action in the classroom?” but asks “How is this teacher exemplifying and customizing this action with their students?”
- **The first two actions in each column teachers have identified as “most foundational.”** If you’re looking for a place to start or you’re a new teacher, start with those.

*This is an initial list of actions that have been found in classrooms growing student leadership, but it isn’t a final list. Our aim for this list is to grow and evolve; you can contribute to this process by adding your own actions to our [Co-Learning Padlet](#).

INTRODUCTION TO LOVE & CONNECT TO BUILD CULTURE

Caring and authentic relationships cultivate the trust, understanding, and honesty necessary for students, their families, and teachers to work together toward meaningful aims.

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

We take time to nurture authentic connections with and among all (including marginalized) students, families, colleagues, and others.

FOSTER BELONGING

We co-create with students an environment in which their identities, experiences, communities, and cultures are welcome and celebrated.

NURTURE CULTURE

We co-create and promote inclusive and welcoming norms, values, and expectations that encourage students to lead their own learning and support each other's growth.

KNOW YOURSELF

We build awareness of our own perspectives, biases, socialized oppressions, motivations, traits, and strengths as a foundation for connecting with others.

BE HUMAN

We model vulnerability, honesty, and humility as co-learners on a shared journey with our students.

[\[Jump to\]](#) the whole set of "Love and Connect" actions]

In a collaboration with Jim Collins, best-selling author of *Good to Great*, Teach For America studied "matched pairs" of teachers in the U.S. While both teachers in each pair attended the same training, were getting the same coaching support, and taught the same subjects in the same school, one of the teachers in each pair was leading students to dramatic academic progress and the other teacher was not. In this study, both teachers were interviewed, surveyed, and tested extensively to try to identify what differences between the teachers in each pair could account for those differences in student outcomes.

Among hundreds of data points, what most predicted student growth was not the teacher's coach or training curriculum. One of the data points most predictive of student success was how strongly the teacher agreed with this statement:

The students in my classroom are people that I would like my own children to get to know.

That small finding in that small study is representative of a massive theme in our crowd-sourced studies of strong classrooms: **Love and connection matter. Relationships, belonging, and trust are not nice-to-have additions to a good classroom; they are the foundation of great classrooms.**

Additional Research & Resources

- [The Marshmallow Test Revisited.](#)
- [Transforming Teaching Through Understanding Trauma](#)
- [Dr. Pamela Cantor on the impact of stress on brain development.](#)

Connection and love are the starting and ongoing check points in any education practice that dreams of being transformational. Why this is minimized by researchers, policy makers, publishers, education faculties, etc., is at best (I assume) based upon their discomfort in centering, naming, and validating such "soft" skills that evade standard measuring techniques designed for much less nuanced and complex data. Even the labeling of these relationship-building skills such as empathy and communication as "soft skills" and their associated value in the paid market place, only reflects how patriarchy constantly invades our language and value system. The most important lesson I have learned in the classroom is that love, which I will define as a deep caring and emotional investment from you towards your students to be masters of their own destiny, is the enduring rock that any decent education system stands upon.



Maggie MacDonnell

Global Teacher Prize Winner, Inuit Community north of the Arctic Circle

INTRODUCTION TO LISTEN & ENVISION TO CO-CREATE PURPOSE

Perfecting current ways of learning and teaching will not fulfill students' potential as leaders of a better future, so we collectively question and reimagine the purpose of our classroom, building sustainable coalitions for change.



When I first made my vision for my students, I didn't take into account the needs of the community. I didn't think about the things that the community already had. And so I had to do it all over again.

... What I did was I talked with each of my students and their families. And listened, just listened a lot. I think that was the first step.

Miguel Ñique

Educator and social communicator. Specialist in designing learning ecosystems and a competency-based approach. Currently leading Training at Enseña Perú

Our families get to sit and reflect and think about what are your hopes and dreams for your child's education. And many families say "I have never been asked that before. I have never been asked by a teacher, a school leader, or a school about what my hopes and dreams are for my child. Thank you for giving me that opportunity, because it makes me step back and think about what all this is for, and what can education really do for my family and my child?"

Veronica Palmer

Co-founder of RISE Colorado and Teach For America Alumna

GLOSSARY

Contextualized Vision: A locally informed, collectively evolved picture of what education is aiming for.

BROADEN PERSPECTIVES

We seek insights and wisdom from multiple perspectives in diverse contexts to grow a collective sense of possibility.

HOST DIALOGUE & DISCUSSION

We hold space for authentic dialogue and discussion, by being fully present, listening deeply, and exhibiting curiosity over judgment.

PARTNER WITH FAMILIES & COMMUNITY

We connect and collaborate with students' families and others in the community, engaging them in classroom purpose and practices.

CRITICALLY EXAMINE HISTORY

We explore the systemic roots of inequality, listening closely to those with lived experiences of inequity and seeking to understand the assets of the community.

COLLECTIVELY ENVISION SUCCESS

We listen and contribute to conversations among students, families, and educators about the purpose of education.

[[Jump](#) to the whole set of "Listen and Envision" actions]

In the first chapter of this guide, we explored the ways that **PURPOSE** is showing up in our collective studies of transformational classrooms. The teachers we have studied are questioning education's purpose (the WHY), and are asking who should define that purpose and who has historically done so (the WHO).

This classroom strategy, LISTEN & ENVISION, maps five concrete actions teachers can use to collectively develop and align actions to a clear vision of students' success.



Virtually visit communities and classrooms around the world, hearing from educators, families, and students about the power of asking WHY. **Explore** the power of **contextualized visions** of student success to inform classroom practices.

Tools for Aligning Actions to Vision

- [Aligning actions with purpose.](#)
- [Daily implications of vision.](#)
- [Self-diagnosis on vision.](#)

Additional Research & Resources

- [Reimagining Education](#) is a participatory process through which adolescents and young people with different trajectories and educational profiles, from all over Uruguay, create proposals to reimagine secondary education. (In Spanish)
- [Core Insights:](#) Locally Rooted and Globally Informed Visions of Student Success.
- [Detailed Insights:](#) A Collectively Developed Vision of Student Success.

INTRODUCTION TO LEARN & DESIGN TO PLAN LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Most of the work of strong teaching happens before and after classroom lessons. Careful planning ensures that learning experiences align with our vision, meet the needs of all students, and align with how we best learn.

BUILD CRITICAL KNOWLEDGE

We develop expertise on the subjects we are teaching, in content pedagogy, and in child development.

PLAN BACKWARDS

We design and sequence lesson and unit plans with “the end in mind,” ensuring that teacher and student efforts lead to classroom vision and goals.

VALUE LEARNER VARIABILITY & OWNERSHIP

We seek to understand our students’ strengths, interests, experiences, and ways of learning to inform plans to maximize student growth and ownership of learning.

EXPECT HIGHER-ORDER THINKING

We design lessons that are built from students’ understanding and application of new ideas to analysis, evaluation, and creation.

LEVERAGE LEARNING THEORY

Intentionally chooses and metacognitively teaches learning principles to design experiences that accelerate student growth.

[[Jump](#) to the whole set of “Learn and Design” actions]

The transformational teachers studied in the Global Learning Lab’s “**learning loops**” have described what we see in the classroom as the tip of the iceberg. Most of what we are seeing in those classrooms is the result of thoughtful preparation and planning, even if we’re making adjustments as we implement those plans.

The LEARN & DESIGN strategy attempts to capture the most important actions surfacing in those studies of transformational classrooms and teachers, but perhaps the most important insight is that the preparation and planning of great teachers are too often undervalued.

In the words of the sixteenth U.S. president, Abraham Lincoln, “Give me six hours to chop down a tree, I will spend the first four sharpening the ax.”

Additional Research & Resources

- [Planning and Reflecting with Culturally Relevant Pedagogy.](#)
- [Deepening Learning with Understanding by Design.](#)

GLOSSARY

Learning Loop: “Global Learning Loops” is what we have called the mini courses we host in which people from around the world virtually visit classrooms in different countries and share what they think we can learn from them. The Global Learning Lab has also worked with many partner organizations to host their “learning loops,” where staff come together to learn from their strongest classrooms.

Being teachers during the pandemic challenged us to rethink how our students were learning. Despite being in different schools, we decided to plan learning experiences together, with one big idea in mind: putting the student at the center without neglecting pedagogical rigor.



With Leslie, a fellow that was placed in the same region, we learned the importance of proper planning, including what we called pre-planning, to design transformative learning experiences. Before starting the design process, we would analyze the context of our students, the resources they had access to, their interests, their relationship with their families, and their needs.

By taking all these factors into account, we were able to create meaningful and relevant learning experiences that catered to our students’ unique circumstances. The collaboration and pre-planning allowed us to adapt our teaching methods and ensure that our students continued to receive a quality education, even in challenging times.

Alexandra Vassallo
Alumna of Enseña Perú

A teacher “teaches” so that the student needs him/her less with each lesson.

Mikaela Valenzuela
Student Leadership Program Participant at Enseña Perú

INTRODUCTION TO FACILITATE & CHALLENGE TO INSPIRE LEARNING

Our classroom creates opportunities for students (and the teacher) to joyfully and productively struggle with rigorous challenges and content at the frontiers of our knowledge and abilities.



One of the most obvious distinguishing characteristics of transformational classrooms I visit around the world is that students are enjoying working together on difficult content. The work is hard. And the work is fun. Sometimes that learning is led by the teacher, sometimes by students—but in every case, students are enjoying wrestling with rigorous knowledge and skills. And I am always struck by how much the teacher is enjoying teaching with that aim.

Wendy Kopp

Co-founder and CEO of Teach For All

One thing was clear: To give our kids the kind of education they deserved, we had to first agree that rigor mattered most of all. That school existed to help kids learn to think. To work hard. And yes, to fail. That was the core consensus that made everything else possible.

Amanda Ripley

American journalist and author (Quote taken from *The Smartest Kids in the World: And How They Got That Way*, 2013)

FACILITATE EFFECTIVELY

We communicate clearly, listen actively, and question strategically to build collective learning.

MANAGE NORMS & RITUALS

We co-create and uphold rituals and systems that minimize inefficient distractions and maximize productive engagement.

FOSTER COLLECTIVE DISCOVERY

We create the conditions for collective student-led exploration by sharing responsibility and de-centering ourselves from the learning process.

FLEXIBLY ADJUST COURSE

We respond and adjust to students' needs while staying true to lesson objectives and purposes.

MONITOR LEARNING & PROGRESS

We check for learning during and after lessons, highlighting and celebrating progress while diagnosing root causes of learning challenges.

[[Jump](#) to the whole set of "Facilitate and Challenge" actions]

Robust, rigorous meaningful learning rarely happens when students are passively listening to or watching a teacher. (The same is true for adult learners. Passive listening is weak learning.)

If we are aspiring to grow students as leaders, and if we care about growing a broader set of student leadership outcomes, then classrooms must be built around active, collective, discovery-oriented learning. Students, not teachers, must "carry the weight" of the learning. Of course, knowledge, modeling, provocations, and resources come from the teacher, but in transformational classrooms, we see that the ratio of teacher-to-student ownership of learning time flips from the traditional model where the teacher talks a lot and then the student practices a little. In transformational classrooms, the teacher is the catalyst, the "space holder" and the facilitator of students' exploratory engagement with rigorous content.

Many of us were taught with an "I do, we do, you do" type classroom model. Many of us, as new teachers, were taught similar lesson-planning models. The truth is, that the conventional way of planning lessons is simpler and easier for new teachers, but it has enormous costs in the long run. Facilitating more active, discovery-based learning is much more engaging, enjoyable, and effective as a path to meaningful mastery through (not at the expense of) wellbeing, connectedness, awareness, and agency.

Additional Research & Resources

- [Research-Backed Strategies for Better Classroom Management.](#)
- [Student Motivation: Why Autonomy Matters.](#)

INTRODUCTION TO REFLECT & GROW TO FULFILL POTENTIAL

Learning is a lifelong journey fueled by humility and curiosity, as we improve our knowledge and skills and grow our capacity for understanding ourselves, each other, and the world.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

We commit to a sustainable plan of daily practices that support our wellbeing and growth.

PAUSE & REFLECT

We commit to a regular practice of pausing to process how our work is going.

FIND & FOSTER ALLIES

We seek and nurture relationships and networks that support and stretch us.

SEEK FEEDBACK

We welcome diverse sources of feedback and data from which to learn and co-create a culture in which students are doing the same.

LEARN & UNLEARN

We set aside time to develop our knowledge and skills, and to shift ways of being and perspectives that may be inhibiting growth.

[[Jump](#) to the whole set of “Reflect and Grow” actions]

One of the distinguishing characteristics of transformational teachers emerging from our “global learning loops” is that they identify as **learners**. As explored in the “Lenses” section of this model, we often hear the strongest teachers in the Teach For All network say something like “I hope my students are learning as much as I am.”

Teachers who are growing students as leaders of a better future see themselves as lifelong learners who respond to challenges with curiosity, humility, and creativity. These teachers embrace this identity as learners intentionally, employing daily practices to fuel their growth.

Additional Research & Resources

- [Cambridge Assessment International Education’s guide to reflective practice.](#)
- [Treating Reflection as a Habit, Not an Event.](#)
- [Practice Perfect: 42 Rules for Getting Better at Getting Better](#) by Doug Lemov, Erica Woolway, and Katie Yezzi.

In this “go-go-go” world, where it feels as if everything is urgent, and we don’t have a chance to slow down, this capacity to pause for a moment so we can reflect and grow is more important than ever. What the world needs from leaders today are those who can focus on the important not just the urgent, those who recognize that who we are is just as important as what we are doing, those who can frame challenges not as failures but as opportunities to learn and grow, those who have the humility and self-compassion to ask questions and reach out for support, and those who are both willing to learn new things and unlearn limiting beliefs that don’t serve what they’re up to in the world. This spaciousness is what we need to be able to live into our full creativity and reimagine education systems so that they create opportunities for ALL children.



Radha Ruparell

Head of Global Leadership Accelerator, Teach For All

Teaching As Leadership vs. Teaching As Collective Leadership

Teach For All's "global learning loops" are showing actionable similarities in classrooms all around the world where students are growing as leaders of a better future. And these classrooms are quite different from classrooms designed to close achievement gaps (as measured by standardized tests). They are more relational, more student-centered, more discovery-oriented, and more collaborative. In so many ways, these classrooms are welcoming, fulfilling, and joyful spaces for learning.

Teaching As Leadership (the book and rubric) has been used by many partners in the Teach For All network. That is a map of teacher actions that lead to dramatic academic achievement. Teaching As Collective Leadership is, however, a collectively developed map of what teacher and student actions, perspectives, and ways of being are growing students as leaders of a better future. *For a side-by-side comparison of the two models, check out this [one-pager](#).*

Critical reflection is the process by which adults identify the assumptions governing their actions, locate the historical and cultural origins of the assumptions, question the meaning of assumptions, and develop alternative ways of acting (Cranton, 1996). Brookfield (1995, 2004) added that part of the critically reflective process is to challenge the prevailing social, political, cultural, or professional ways of acting. Through the process of critical reflection, adults come to interpret and create new knowledge and actions from their ordinary and sometimes extraordinary experiences. Critical reflection blends learning through experiences with theoretical and technical learning to form new knowledge constructions and new behaviors or insights.

Hibajene M. Shandomo

Associate Professor, Buffalo State College.
(Quote taken from [The Role of Critical Reflection in Teacher Education](#). Cited with permission)

DO

To support teachers, teacher coaches, and program designers, we have created two-pager how-to guides for each of the actions, prototyped tools, and gathered insights into how we can best develop these actions in ourselves and others. We are also beginning to collect ways practitioners and programs are contextualizing these strategies and actions for their local vision, values, and context.

Two-pagers of moves & guidance for each of the 25 actions

Explore how-to guides organized by the five strategies. Links to guidance for each action are in the table below.

Map of actions

LOVE & CONNECT to build culture	LISTEN & ENVISION to co-create purpose	LEARN & DESIGN to plan learning experiences	FACILITATE & CHALLENGE to inspire learning	REFLECT & GROW to fulfill potential
BUILD RELATIONSHIPS	BROADEN PERSPECTIVES	BUILD CRITICAL KNOWLEDGE	FACILITATE EFFECTIVELY	TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF
FOSTER BELONGING	HOST DIALOGUE & DISCUSSION	PLAN BACKWARDS	MANAGE NORMS & RITUALS	PAUSE & REFLECT
NURTURE CULTURE	PARTNER WITH FAMILIES & COMMUNITY	VALUE LEARNER VARIABILITY & OWNERSHIP	FOSTER COLLECTIVE DISCOVERY	FIND & FOSTER ALLIES
KNOW YOURSELF	CRITICALLY EXAMINE HISTORY	EXPECT HIGHER-ORDER THINKING	FLEXIBLY ADJUST COURSE	SEEK FEEDBACK
BE HUMAN	COLLECTIVELY ENVISION SUCCESS	LEVERAGE LEARNING THEORY	MONITOR LEARNING & PROGRESS	LEARN & UNLEARN

Remember: This map of actions is not a recipe or formula. It is a menu from which to choose and contextualize actions called for by you and your students' contexts and needs.

What two or three of these actions represent a real strength of yours, or of a teacher you are supporting? And how can you better leverage those strengths for student learning? What one or two of these actions represents an area you or teachers you support want and need to improve to accelerate student learning?

Inviting and gathering innovative teacher development tools

To jump-start the creation of a library of resources and tools, we have been working with some early-adopter partner organizations as well as beta-tester teachers and teacher coaches to experiment with various tools and resources. Here are some prototype tools and resources to spark innovations:

NAME _____ Date _____ Lesson _____

Self-reflection & development tool

for teachers [prototype v1.0]

"Note that this is merely an example of how the self-reflection tool can be used. It's not expected of you to reflect on every student outcome in every lesson but rather to get you thinking about how these outcomes are coming to life in any given lesson, and the role you and your students play in bringing these outcomes to life."

Well-being Students feel secure and loved, empowering them to be themselves and take risks in ways that foster learning.	Connectedness Students seek and value the perspectives and experiences of others as they work collaboratively toward a common good.	Awareness Students are aware of inequity, celebrate their unique strengths and identities as assets for navigating challenges in pursuit of their growing sense of purpose.	Agency Students take independent or collective action toward shared goals to cause positive change in their own life or the lives of others.	Mastery Students attain higher order command of knowledge and skills as a means to create new opportunities and solutions to challenges.
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Observed evidence
What am I seeing in my classroom? What do I want to see more? How do these indicators overlap in my classroom?

Agency & Connectedness: After publicly praising Ahmed for his efforts last week, today, I saw him leading his group to share their presentation to the class. I also saw him helping Ali & Sam with their work. Ahmed really seems to be taking into his newfound identity. I'm so proud of him!

Mastery: Students still struggle with the concept of expanding algebraic expressions. I know 15-20 are struggling with basic multiplication but I'm not sure how much time to spend on that when I'm so far behind in the syllabus. I will need to recruit more Ahmeds to support me in supporting the learning of their friends. This is necessary or else these students will not be able to work on concepts such as area and volume.

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For teachers
[TACL SELF-REFLECTION TOOL](#)

NAME _____ Date _____ Lesson _____

Classroom observation & debrief tool

for teacher coaches, trainers, mentors and tutors [prototype v2.1]

Well-being Students are joyfully taking risks and learning together.	Connectedness Students are working collectively, helping peers feel welcome and learn new content.	Awareness Students are exploring their own assets, strengths and identities, as well as systemic injustices that may devalue or inhibit them.	Agency Students are finding their voice, leading learning and connecting daily efforts to their aspirations.	Mastery Students are eagerly and productively struggling with challenging and relevant content, at the edge of their abilities.
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Observed evidence
What observable evidence of these outcomes did I see? What did I not see? Why do I think that is?

Students as leaders The teacher sees students as whole and intelligent people who are capable of shaping their own lives and the world around them.	Teachers as learners The teacher sees him/herself as a lifelong learner who responds to challenges with curiosity, humility and creativity.	Community as power The teacher sees communities as sources of power and wisdom and recognize that lasting change requires authentic partnership with students, families and other educators.	Our work as systemic The teacher sees our work as challenging the root causes of injustices that inhibit students' potential: systemic barriers around us, and limiting beliefs inside us.
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Observed evidence
What observable evidence of these lemmas do I see? What might I ask to explore the teacher's use of the other lemmas?

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For teacher coaches
[TACL OBSERVATION TOOL](#)

2023

TEACHING AS COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP

Reference guide for teachers, teacher coaches and program designers [prototype v1.1]

Well-being Students feel secure and loved, empowering them to be themselves and take risks in ways that foster learning.	Connectedness Students seek and value the perspectives and experiences of others as they work collaboratively toward a common good.	Awareness Students are aware of inequity, celebrate their unique strengths and identities as assets for navigating challenges in pursuit of their growing sense of purpose.	Agency Students take independent or collective action toward shared goals to cause positive change in their own life or the lives of others.	Mastery Students attain higher order command of knowledge and skills as a means to create new opportunities and solutions to challenges.
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Observed evidence
In class, students are joyfully taking risks and learning together.
In class, students are working collectively, helping peers feel welcome and learn new content.
In class, students are exploring their own assets, strengths and identities, as well as systemic injustices that may devalue or inhibit them.
In class, students are finding their voice, leading learning and connecting daily efforts to their aspirations.
In class, students are eagerly and productively struggling with challenging and relevant content, at the edge of their abilities.

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For everyone
[TACL REFERENCE GUIDE](#)

A toolkit of other resources

In this system...	The purpose of education systems is to ensure all children have the same access to resources	The purpose of education systems is to ensure all children attain the same levels of achievement	The purpose of education systems is to realize all children's potential as leaders of a better future
How do we define and measure success?			
Who defines success in this paradigm?			
What is the role of the teacher?			
What teacher beliefs, mindsets, and perspectives are valued?			

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PURPOSE

- [Implications of Purpose for Daily Actions](#)
- [Implications of Motivation for Daily Actions](#)

Exploring Lens Polarities

<p>Teachers as sources I see myself as the source of knowledge and skill that students need and as the implementer of "what works."</p>		<p>Teachers as learners I see myself as a lifelong learner who responds to challenges with curiosity, humility and creativity.</p>
<p>Sharing I have a unique and valuable perspective. Others benefit from my contributions, so I speak up and share my full self.</p>		<p>Listening My perspective is limited. I listen deeply to benefit from others' contributions and to learn from my mistakes.</p>
<p>Action I act, and resist the temptation to over-analyze, doubt, criticize, or seek universal approval.</p>		<p>Reflection I pause to think, and resist the temptation to hurry, stay busy, or avoid vulnerability.</p>

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LENSES

- [Reflection Exercises for Lenses](#)
- [Polarities](#)
- [Benefits & Costs](#)
- [Enablers & Inhibitors](#)

Name: _____ Date: _____ Lesson: _____

Classroom observation & debrief tool

for teacher coaches, trainers, mentors and tutors [prototype v2.1]

Well-being	Connectiveness	Awareness	Agency	Mastery
Students are joyfully talking risks and learning together.	Students are working collectively, helping peers feel welcome and learn new content.	Students are exploring their own assets, strengths and identities, as well as systemic injustices that may devolve or inhibit them.	Students are finding their voice, leading learning and connecting daily efforts to their aspirations.	Students are eagerly and productively struggling with challenging and relevant content, at the edge of their abilities.
Observed evidence What observable evidence of these outcomes do I see? What do I not see? Why do I think that is?				

Students as leaders	Teachers as learners	Community as power	Our work as systemic
The teacher sees students as whole and intelligent people who are capable of shaping their own lives and the world around them.	The teacher sees him/herself as a lifelong learner who responds to challenges with curiosity, humility and creativity.	The teacher sees communities as sources of power and wisdom and recognizes that lasting change requires authentic partnership with students, families and other educators.	The teacher sees our work as challenging the root causes of inequities that inhibit students' potential - systemic barriers around us, and limiting beliefs inside us.
Observed evidence What observable evidence of these lenses do I see? What might I ask to explore the teacher's use of the other lenses?			

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STRATEGIES

- [Self-Reflection Tool](#)
- [Observation Tool](#)
- [TACL Reference Guide](#)

Teach For All

HOME RESOURCE SEARCH HOW TO SELECT RESOURCES

Student Leadership Measurement Library

Outcome Families

- Well-being
- Connectiveness
- Awareness
- Agency
- Mastery

Programmatic Purpose

- Classroom-level data and feedback
- Feedback for parents and other school-level stakeholders
- Program-level monitoring and evaluation

Applicable Grade Levels

- Primary
- Elementary
- Post-secondary

Select resources

TITLE	WELL-BEING	CONNECTIVENESS	AWARENESS	AGENCY	MASTERY	ASSUMPTIONS	RECOMMENDATIONS
Character Growth Card	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Agency	Research evidence based
80000 Measure of Adolescent Well-being	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Psychological well-being	Social well-being
Health and Attainment of Pupils in a Primary Education Network (HAPPEN) well-being survey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Psychological well-being	Physical well-being
How I Feel About School and School Questionnaire (HSFASQ)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Psychological well-being	Social well-being
Kelly-Kohn	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Psychological well-being	Social well-being
Life Orientation Test	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Agency	Psychological well-being
Mastery of Life Questionnaire	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sense of purpose	Psychological well-being
PIISA Index of economic, social and cultural status (ESCS)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Physical well-being	Economic well-being
PIISA Student-level scale	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Psychological well-being	Cognitive well-being
POSITIVE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Psychological well-being	Cognitive well-being
Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Psychological well-being	Cognitive well-being
PsyFl Psychological Well-being scale	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Well-being	Social purpose
Scale of Autonomy as a Student	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Autonomy	Cognitive well-being

OUTCOMES

- [Assessment Library](#) of tools for measuring student leadership outcomes

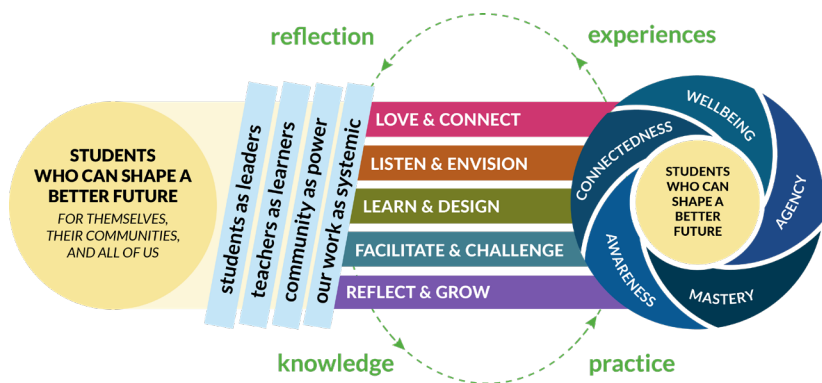
Learning theory, again: Guidance for developing these skills and actions in ourselves and others

In the LENSES chapter, we explored how learning theory is a critical element of figuring out what to “do” with the lenses. Similarly, the value of these strategies and actions depends heavily on our ability to develop and grow them in ourselves and others.

Building skills does not happen the same way shifting lenses does. We cannot “reflect” our way to great lesson planning, or checking for understanding, or classroom management. Therefore, we need to make intentional decisions on the most effective forms of training and support that help teachers develop these skills.

While it is a bit of an oversimplification, it’s helpful to note (as we did in the [LENSES chapter](#)) that skills and actions are often (but not exclusively) developed by watching someone model the skills and practicing the skills. By contrast, lenses most often shift when we have disorienting experiences or relationships and have the opportunity to reflect and make new meanings of those experiences and relationships.

And, as crudely illustrated in the (oversimplified!) visual to below, shifting lenses and growing skills can be part of a powerful, interrelated cycle of development. What we do (experience) gives us fodder for reflection, which yields new learning and knowledge that we can then practice to create new experiences.



So how do we create learning experiences that promote that cycle of learning and improvement? Check out our [Learning About Learning](#).

SHARE

Make your voice heard:
Help us evolve and improve these ideas and resources

Teaching As Collective Leadership is a collective effort. It has been developed through contributions from thousands of people – teachers, coaches, students, families, researchers, and others from all around the world. Please join us in continuing to evolve this work by sharing your perspective.

Below is our “digital bulletin board,” which we are constantly updating with the input of generous readers who share their ideas. Please take a moment to click [here](#) on our **Co-learning Padlet** to contribute your thoughts, questions, challenges, illustrations, and links.

STRATEGIES GENERAL INPUT

It turns out, if you are a teacher working to help students improve their lives and their communities' futures, you do things very differently than teachers who are working to raise test scores.

Franco Mosso
Enseña Perú

Contribute to our “Strategies” Digital Bulletin Board ([Here](#))

LOVE AND CONNECT

“There was lots of resistance at first with students communicating their needs. But I stayed with them, giving them tips, building trust and being open, and this has helped students gain confidence, and slowly but surely have become leaders. Some of the best discussions have been ideas proposed by students, it has been a very humbling experience. I have learned how to approach students from a different viewpoint. It’s the students taking charge of the topics.”

Teacher
(Global Teacher and Teacher Coach Study, 2022)

A recent study of over 25,000 students in the U.S. found that less than a third of middle-school students said they had strong relationships with their teachers. By high school, only 16 percent reported they had those relationships. And, for children in low-income communities, those numbers are even lower.

Eugene Roehlkepartain, Kent Pekel, Amy Syvertsen, Jenna Sethi, Theresa Sullivan, and Peter Scales
Relationships First: Creating Connections That Help Young People Thrive. Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute. 2017

One of my first graders lost his mom two years ago, as did I. On Wednesday, he gave me a handwritten card saying both of our moms are angels together. Through tears, I tell him I’m having trouble reading it. He says to me, “Just sound it out.”

Michelle Dbelle
[Taken from Twitter](#)

“Don’t be an asshole.” All good teachers I meet fit this. Have we created a system that assholes like but non-assholes run from? “Don’t be an asshole; be super curious.”

Brent Maddin
Co-founder and Provost at the Relay Graduate School of Education

Contribute to our “Love and Connect” Digital Bulletin Board ([Here](#))

LISTEN AND ENVISION

Vision-aligned work calls us to look outward to have a systemic perspective on our work, seeing the complex histories and contexts in which we are working. And it requires us to look inward at the ways in which we are behaving, and the ways our own perspective and mindset might be replicating, or transforming, the systems in which we work. We see this type of vision-aligned approach as an essential ingredient in our aim to achieve our goals as a network.

Anonymous

Sometimes our job is just to turn up and be there, to be present, to listen. These moments are becoming more and more precious. Create a sense that you are not in this. Protect fellows and their time. This can be in tension with the idea of urgency, setting projects.

How are we showing up to a conversation? What can we do as organizations to make this a part of our culture?

Ulf Matysiak
EO Teach First Deutschland (Germany)

(NEPAL, Unicef) TELE LEARNING Program between moms and kids, improving literacy and relationships.

<https://www.unicef.org/rosa/stories/tele-sikai-learning-new-reality>

Swastika Shrestha, Community at the Centre of Movement Building in Nepal

<https://vimeo.com/290068114>

When you arrive in a community for the first time and you really want to generate systemic change that impacts at all levels, you have to start by attending the spaces that already exist. Don't create your own spaces. That's on the one hand. And on the other: When you design these spaces, not every space must have an agenda. I think that's a big mistake we make. Not all spaces have to have a detailed agenda with a clear goal and action plan. A lot of times, when arriving to a community, we have some spaces where we can listen to each other in an authentic way and where we can create these safe spaces that allow us to talk about our most intrinsic motivations. That's a great start.

Leidy Cabrera
Mexico

We center our core purpose around an ambitious and contextually relevant student vision. From this vision comes everything — our organizational goals, priorities, and strategy. We didn't create this vision from within the walls of our office. Instead, we engaged our fellows, teachers, students, parents, and community members from 85 of our partner communities. We know that the only way to facilitate real change in public education is by empowering the voices of the communities we serve, and ensuring that they are at the forefront of creating this change.

Larisa Hovannisian
Founder and CEO of Teach For Armenia

Contribute to our "Listen and Envision" Digital Bulletin Board ([Here](#))

LEARN AND DESIGN

"When you plan a lesson, you start with the information you want students to know by its end. As a next step, consider what the key question for that lesson might be and how you can frame that question so it will have the right level of difficulty to engage your students and so you will respect your students' cognitive limitations."

Daniel Willingham
Psychologist

Perspective taking vs. the one right answer

Debating things that are introduced (like moral stories) instead of being a "specific" takeaway; allowing for perspectives of the students' discussion and debate.

Nalika

Vertical Learning

Almost as if the teacher works smarter (and less) while the students are more engaged than ever! Also reminds me of Pooja's class!

Maggie MacDonnell

Contribute to our "Learn and Design" Digital Bulletin Board ([Here](#))

FACILITATE AND CHALLENGE

Movement Breaks

At any time, if you notice you are losing the class, take a movement break or an outside break. I would sometimes stop mid-lesson to take everyone outside for an impromptu game of street hockey or lie on the ground and sketch some clouds. It often helped to bring back the sense of team, increase mood, and process/release any negative emotions that may have been building or that kids were carrying in with them.

Maggie MacDonnell

The One Thing All Great Teachers Do

Dr. Nick Fuhrman encourages us to recognize the profound personal impact that we can have on others — both in and out of the classroom.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WwTpfVQgkUo>

Regulation Stations

In my context where there were behavior issues and lots of "dysregulation" that often disrupted the classroom, what helped a lot was having "stations"/routines to help students independently calm down. This may be a journal for those who want to write privately, or a bean bag in a corner with some comic books, or a listening/headphone music corner, or even a basket with some quick snacks in it. When students arrived (mine often arrived late) they would choose a station and take like 10 minutes to independently relax then join the larger group.

Maggie MacDonnell

Contribute to our "Facilitate and Challenge" Digital Bulletin Board ([Here](#))

REFLECT AND GROW

The surgeon, writer, and public health researcher

Dr. Atul Gawande has studied the pursuit of excellence across and beyond the medical field. One of his realizations: “If you want to get great at something, get a coach.” Dr. Gawande has learned that a coach is key to several powerful levers of learning: providing a more accurate picture of our reality, instilling positive habits of thinking and breaking our actions down and building them back up again.

Anonymous

In designing learning, there’s a delicate dance between meeting students where they are and opening up new horizons. A process of deepening and broadening understanding. In order to open up new thinking, think carefully about factors like what background knowledge might be needed and what developmental assumptions you might be making.

Jude Heaton
Teach For All

Two Feet, One Breath

I learned from a friend who is a very busy doctor about this practice of stopping at the doorway, settling both feet and taking one big intentional deep breath. I find that little pause does so much to clear and calm my mind as I move quickly from one challenge to another.

Radha Ruparell

Contribute to our “Reflect and Grow” Digital Bulletin Board ([Here](#))



Contribute to our “Digital Bulletin Board” by sharing your thoughts, questions, challenges, validations, illustrations, and links by creating a note in our Co-learning Padlet ([here](#))

INTRODUCTION TO LOVE & CONNECT TO BUILD CULTURE

Caring and authentic relationships foster the trust, understanding, and honesty necessary for students, their families, and teachers to work together toward meaningful aims.

“HOW-TO” GUIDES

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

We take time to nurture authentic connections with and among all (including marginalized) students, families, colleagues, and others.

FOSTER BELONGING

We co-create with students an environment in which their identities, experiences, communities, and cultures are welcome and celebrated.

NURTURE CULTURE

We co-create and foster inclusive and welcoming norms, values, and expectations that encourage students to lead their own learning and support each other’s growth.

KNOW YOURSELF

We build awareness of our own perspectives, biases, socialized oppressions, motivations, traits, and strengths as a foundation for connecting with others.

BE HUMAN

We model vulnerability, honesty, and humility as co-learners on a shared journey with our students.

Connection and love are the starting and ongoing checkpoints in any education practice that dreams of being transformational. Why this is minimized by researchers, policymakers, publishers, education faculties, etc., is at best (I assume) based upon their discomfort in centering, naming, and validating such “soft” skills that evade standard measuring techniques designed for much less nuanced and complex data. Even the labeling of these relationship-building skills such as empathy and communication as “soft skills” and their associated value in the paid marketplace, only reflects how patriarchy constantly invades our language and value system. The most important lesson I have learned in the classroom is that love, which I will define as a deeply caring and emotional investment from you towards your students to be masters of their own destiny, is the enduring rock that any decent education system stands upon.



Maggie MacDonnell

Global Teacher Prize Winner, Inuit Community north of the Arctic Circle

In collaboration with Jim Collins, best-selling author of *Good to Great*, Teach For America studied “matched pairs” of teachers in the U.S. While both teachers in each pair attended the same training, were getting the same coaching support, and taught the same subjects in the same school, one of the teachers in each pair was leading students to dramatic academic progress and the other teacher was not. In this study, both teachers were interviewed, surveyed, and tested extensively to try to identify what differences between the teachers in each pair could account for those differences in student outcomes.

Among hundreds of data points, what most predicted student growth was not the teacher’s coach or training curriculum. One of the data points that were most predictive of student success was how strongly the teacher agreed with this statement: *The students in my classroom are people that I would like my own children to get to know.*

That small finding in that small study is representative of a massive theme in our crowd-sourced studies of strong classrooms: Love & Connection matter. Relationships, belonging, and trust are not nice-to-have additions to a good classroom; they are the foundation of great classrooms.

Additional Research & Resources

- [The Marshmallow Test Revisited.](#)
- [Transforming Teaching Through Understanding Trauma](#)
- [Dr. Pamela Cantor on the impact of stress on brain development.](#)

HOW TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

Listen. Ask questions. Be yourself. Be vulnerable. Stay close. Building relationships in and around classrooms is no different from building relationships in other areas of our lives. When we are fully present with and for other people, meaningful relationships emerge. Relationships are not a means to an end; building relationships is the work.

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS
We take time to nurture authentic connections with and among all students, families, colleagues, and others.

Concrete, Actionable Techniques for Building Relationships



Contribute your own techniques for **building relationships** to our growing library... and see what others have contributed [here](#).



Beyond “How Are You?”

Build on previous knowledge about a student each time you interact with them. Don’t say “How are you?” but instead “How is your parents’ restaurant doing?” or “Last time we spoke you were tired. Did you get more rest?”

Oindrila Sanyal

Currently working at Teach For India towards fostering relationships with external organizations, fellows, and alumni anchored in strategic partnership



Daily Bridge Builders

Start each class with a five-minute connector that goes beyond “breaking the ice.” Share something your class doesn’t know about you. Invite a student to do the same with the class. Then have pairs do the same. Every day.

Jean Arkedis

Head of research at Teach For All and has taught in a bilingual school in the Dominican Republic



Be Close, Be Reliable

Figure out where your students congregate before, during, and after school, and make a point to be in that space once a day. Playground before school? Lunchroom? Sports after school? Pick one and be there each day.

Nene Ibezim

Social entrepreneur and a project officer at Global Schools, UN SDSN



We try and humble and ground ourselves. The two words that come out of my mouth the most often — whether that’s to my team or to my fellows — are vision and relationships. Because I think we’re very clear that if we’re going to invest anywhere, yes, of course, strategy is important, management is important ... plans are important ... reflecting on data is important, but above all else, I think is vision and relationships—and we lead with those.

Khadija Shahper Bakhtiar

CEO & Founder, Teach For Pakistan

Other Sources

- Zero prep team building in the classroom [“Would you rather ask questions?”](#)
- [Community Circles](#) to engage with all students.

Relationship Mapping

I almost always worked with kids who did NOT want to be at school. They were often not interested in having a direct connection with me at all. I was a cultural outsider and associated with a school system that had a genocidal history in their context. Without being able to directly connect with them, I would mentally map out all the connections this kid might have. This could be parents, caregivers, grandparents, best friends, favorite cousin, favorite auntie, siblings, neighbor, a teammate, a coach—really any person of influence. In that mind map, I would also identify any bullies or challenging connections that they may also be dealing with. Then I would, with intent, begin to find ways to build relationships with whomever I could in their “circle” to eventually connect to that youth. I might begin by helping the grandmother carry groceries at the store, and then six weeks later finally get a connection to the kid and they are convinced to return to school.



Maggie MacDonnell

Global Teacher Prize Winner, Inuit Community north of the Arctic Circle

Just Ask

Just ask what students like and listen. Sit down with them and interview them about what’s happening in their lives. That builds relationships.

Anonymous

From the student perspective, I feel very protected when a teacher knows what is happening in my life. Often times teachers will ask about your home life but rarely does it influence how they treat you as a student. Teachers should try to get to know us and then let that inform our learning rather than use ice breakers just to feel acquainted. I believe knowing more about your students can help you better understand how they will respond to learning and allow the students to feel that their learning is important to you.



Ava Ward

Ava Ward is a Teach For All SLAC alumni and a current student at the University of Washington studying health sciences and biology

For my first three weeks, I just tried to learn from my students, to learn what they are like and what they like. I spent my first weekend up in the mountains where my students live, in their village. I slept there. I went to the farms. I met and talked to parents and community leaders about what students want and need. What are their dreams? I rented a house in the middle of the village, and I exercise every day by playing football with the community. I spent three weeks connecting, without focusing on teaching the content, but then my students knew me and I knew them. And now, it’s more like we are doing this together...I don’t think about my own wants and the community’s wants and students’ wants. Instead, we are doing this together.



Nopardol Boosatorn (Pao)

Alumnus Teach For Thailand (2018), where he learned that through collective vision and collective actions that enable everyone to be leaders, we can together achieve our goals

What Does Building Relationships Look Like?



Earning trust

Working to empower young people requires building relationships with them first. Explore how youth worker Susie Gray (TeachFirst, UK) has learned over time how to build relationships with vulnerable young people in this [video](#) from 2013.



Growing a learning community

In this [video](#) from 2015, Pooja Chopra (Teach For India) prioritized building relationships with students and their families with remarkable results.



Acknowledge trauma

In profoundly difficult circumstances but surrounded with loving relationships, Syrian refugee children Ahmad and Manal are not only coping but [thriving](#).



The power of relationships in schools

Research shows that students who feel safe and supported by adults at school are better able to learn. [Explore](#) the power of relationships in schools in this collaboration between Turnaround for Children and Edutopia.

Other Places to See Building Relationships

- Isaac Pollack's (Teach For America) experience of building relationships as a foundation for rigorously engaging content ([Video](#) from 2013).
- Teach For Thailand "[Selecting in Partnership With Community](#)" project.

Additional Research & Resources Related to Building Relationships

- [The 'How' of Building Relationships With Students](#), from Edutopia.
- [Relationships First: Creating Connections That Help Young People Thrive](#). Research from the MN Search Institute (2017).

HOW TO FOSTER BELONGING

Know, explore, and celebrate the identities that are important to students, especially those who are marginalized by the world around them. Create space to understand and appreciate the cultures and communities of students in school. Make your classroom a safe space for everyone, especially those who are different.

FOSTER BELONGING
We co-create with students an environment in which their identities, experiences, communities, and cultures are welcome and celebrated.



Contribute your own techniques for **fostering belonging** to our growing library... and see what others have contributed [here](#).



When I was given a safe space, I started working on what I believed in.

Rehan Shaikh

Student Leader, India

Quote taken from "[Rehan: Student Leadership in Action](#)" (2019)



Within the classroom itself, the learners have adopted a new collaborative behavior. They begin to see fellow learners as brothers and sisters.

Fenel Pierre

Training Director at Anseye Pou Ayiti (Teach for Haiti, 2013 up to now) and with experience working in strategic planning, and leadership development at the country management level

Concrete, Actionable Techniques for Fostering Belonging

Invite Cultural Leaders to Class

I worked in an Indigenous community where colonial systems have rarely valued local knowledge in the same way as "settler knowledge." To try to counter this, I would invite elders/ community members who carried influence to come to the class to share stories, make traditional food recipes with us, sew with us, sing with us, basically anything they wanted to share.



Maggie MacDonnell

Global Teacher Prize Winner, Inuit Community north of the Arctic Circle

Share Struggles

To reverse the shyness and fear of being wrong, openly talk about struggles, highlights, and funny stories that help build a connection with students so they're comfortable sharing what they feel.



Felicia Yoon

Co-founder of Arus Academy. Arus Academy provides meaningful education to vulnerable and underprivileged students in Malaysia.

Circle Time

Host a daily ritual of open space for sharing and practicing deep listening. For any age and any subject, circle time can be a foundation for building community.

Multiple Contributors

Personalized Walls

Let students see themselves in the classroom. Bring the walls alive with student artwork and photos. Include diverse images of success, so students see themselves, and people like them, in the physical environment.

Multiple Contributors

Maslow Before Bloom

Belonging is a fundamental human need; we need to consider people's need for safety, security, and community before we can push them to meet rigorous academics. Start the year and each class with strategies that get to know students and build community.

Multiple Contributors

Other Sources:

- [Fostering belonging with classroom norms.](#)
- [Fostering belonging with music.](#)
- [Storytelling in the classroom.](#)
- [Shine a light on each student.](#)

**Identity, awareness, & agency via loving & connecting in the classroom**

Award-winning teacher (and friend and collaborator of Teach For Romania) Anca Mezei [shares](#) her story of overcoming the discrimination that she faced as a Romani child and how this motivated her to work with her students and their families to reclaim pride in their identity and culture. Her journey and story are a powerful illustration of the interconnectedness among academic mastery, student leadership, and core issues of identity, wellbeing, awareness, and agency.

We need to change the agreement that good teaching and learning evolve from a model that distances teachers from students, separates teaching from learning, alienates students from what is to be learned, and focuses on noncollaborative monodisciplinarity.

**Laura Rendón**

Student advocate, scholar, contemplative education, and author of *Sentipensante Pedagogy: Educating for Wholeness, Social Justice, and Liberation*. (Photograph taken by AI Rendón)

What Does Fostering Belonging Look Like?**Feeling like you don't belong**

In discussions about education, student perspectives are rarely heard. Watch this short [video](#) from 2013 of Curtis, a young man growing up in Nottingham, England, to hear what he thinks about respect, relationships, and how feeling like he doesn't belong influences his perspectives about school and learning.

GLOSSARY

Mastery: We settled on the word "mastery" to describe the meaningfully rigorous learning needed to prepare students for leadership in the future. The term signals a focus on deeper learning, surpassing many current education models and systems.

Agency: By agency, we mean students' (or our own) conviction and ability to make changes in themselves and the world around them.

**Creating belonging in the face of prejudice**

When [Samia Habli](#) (Teach For Lebanon) started teaching in Sarafand she knew from personal experience that gender inequities both inside and outside of school affect many young people in Lebanon. Samia decided to create spaces, inside and outside of class, to explore the gender dynamics that affected their lives. These spaces provided opportunities for her students to develop the awareness and agency they needed to create change within themselves, their relationships, and the broader society.



I remember getting in trouble when I was invited to a birthday party of a kid in my class. They were from the Dominican Republic, and my family is also from there. My school principal said I was crossing a line by engaging with the family outside of school time. I tried to explain that culturally speaking, being present at these things is really important, that the family wants you there, and it will build trust. But I kept finding that I was discouraged from bringing in my own lived experience to guide me as a teacher – my family background, and my experience of learning English as a second language. Instead, I was expected to follow a narrow curriculum and put mastery ahead of any broader outcomes.

Denisse Arias

Former director of Equity & Belonging at Teach For All and Teach For America Alumna



Building a sense of belonging

Teach For Uganda teachers [Charles Obore](#) and [Carolyn Seera](#) worked together to ensure students and their families feel welcome in school. School attendance and engagement exploded.



Building marginalized students' sense of self-worth

As shown in this 2014 [video](#), Special Education teacher Michael Mahoney is determined that his students, often marginalized because of their special needs, will be “proud of who they are and have a sense of dignity and worth.” Mr. Mahoney builds students’ sense of belonging by ensuring they understand “how they bring something incredible and special to the table that nobody else can bring.”

Additional Research & Resources Related to Fostering Belonging

- [Lessons from culturally sustaining classrooms.](#)
- [Tips from critical pedagogy](#) on creating inclusive classrooms.
- [Self-determination theory](#) shows how meeting students’ psychological need to feel “relatedness” is vital for developing self-determination, which has been found to contribute to a wide range of beneficial long-term outcomes.
- [Teacher and Students Building Culture Together.](#)
- [Literature review](#) on how to build a sense of belonging in schools.
- [Lessons from a transformational classroom in Lebanon.](#)
- [Critical Practices for Social Justice Education.](#)

HOW TO NURTURE CULTURE

Work with students to co-create class rules, expectations, and norms that contribute to a culture of welcoming inclusiveness and trust. Determine together how progress and collaboration will be celebrated and conflicts will be resolved. Establish a regular (weekly) time to revisit, refresh, and practice those norms.

NURTURE CULTURE
We co-create with students the norms, values, and expectations that encourage students to support each other's growth and learning.

Concrete, Actionable Techniques for Nurturing Collective Responsibility



Arrange Your Room To Reflect the Culture You Want

Desks in groups, or in circles, or in semi-circles. Change your seating arrangements regularly to reflect the tone and culture you are working on, and to foster the forms of student collaboration you want.

Oindrila Sanyal

Currently working at Teach For India towards fostering relationships with external organizations, fellows, and alumni anchored in strategic partnership



Peer-to-Peer/Buddy Systems

Make buddy systems with stronger students helping the others out. Peer-to-peer teaching/learning has worked well in multiple setups. It allows students to develop the confidence to teach and at the same time other students develop mastery in other subjects

Yen Ming Teo

Head of Design and Training at Teach For Malaysia



Model Classroom Values

Are the values I want my students to show clearly shown in my behavior as a teacher? If I want my students to be lifelong learners, I have to model it as well. Am I modeling empathy and curiosity to my students? Am I still curious? Simple things like speaking English among ourselves as staff members to develop our language skills. A student mentioned that the way she improved her English was actually by listening to the teachers speak.

Felicia Yoon

Co-founder of Arus Academy. Arus Academy provides meaningful education to vulnerable and underprivileged students in Malaysia

Student Advisory Council and Roles

Creating roles and responsibilities for students. And give them a sense of pride when they hold those roles in their class. Having roles in the classrooms, e.g., blackboard, watering plants, and doing different things, always helps to build ownership, and it often leads to students sharing innovative ideas to do things even better.

Yen Ming, Sanaya, Mandira, Taylor, Kritika, Alejandra, Shaurya



Contribute your own techniques for **nurturing culture** to our growing library... and see what others have contributed [here](#).

You create a powerful class culture by trying to see the community through the eyes of its most marginalized members—those who are most vulnerable, most often oppressed and excluded, and most often harmed by societal dynamics of power and privilege. Are students who are most on the “edges” of social inclusion feeling welcomed, seen, heard, and appreciated in your classroom community? What rituals and routines are you putting in place to nurture that inclusiveness? How are students, especially those with marginalized identities, helping shape those decisions? How are you modeling that inclusiveness? These questions are a big deal because your classroom culture is the foundation for students’ growth.



Annastassia Baichorova

Supports the Teach For All network as it explores how to become more diverse, inclusive, and equitable

Other Sources:

- [Students as designers of their own vision](#) (Video from 2015).
- [Co-creating norms and values with students](#) (Video from 2015).
- [Team leaders inside the classroom](#) (Video from 2015).

STRATEGIES



What I've learned the most from my students is that when we create a safe environment for them to express themselves and be who they are they can get so creative and do amazing things in the classroom. They surprise me with their unique way of expressing their talents and diverse perspectives and it feels magical when I see their work. They remind me that as adults we should embrace the wonder within and keep our inner child alive.

Albulena Ajeti
Teacher, Kosovo

Some of the best discussions have been ideas proposed by students, it has been a very humbling experience. I have learned how to approach students from different viewpoints. It's the students taking charge of the topics.

Teacher
[Global Teacher and Teacher Coach Study](#)
(2022)



As a teacher in Muwangi Village in Uganda's Luwero District, Teach For Uganda alumna Carolyne Seera recognized that focusing on gender dynamics was critical to addressing the inequities facing her students. The school and the community treated girls with less respect than boys, and they were often subject to unwanted physical attention.

Carolyne and her co-teacher Charles Obore decided that supporting the education and empowering the girls in their class needed to be a key component of their teaching and for the outcomes they envisioned for all of their students. In this [video](#), Carolyne, a Teach For All Global Girls' Education Fellow, describes how she helped her students of both genders evolve their perspectives and behavior so that their classroom could be a safe, respectful, equitable place for everyone.

What Does Nurturing Collective Responsibility Look Like?



Welcoming culture for newcomers

This [video](#) project showcases the ways in which Michigan's Dearborn Public School District is helping its immigrant students succeed, featuring Salina Elementary School and Salina Intermediate School in the South End of Dearborn.



Culturally sustaining culture

Kia Aroha is a public secondary school in South Auckland, New Zealand, working with 300 students, mostly Maori or from the Pacific Islands. This [video](#) from 2017 shows how the school has taken a radically different approach to education, developing a special character and culture with its community that focuses on bilingual, critically conscious, culturally responsive, social justice education.



Pooja's favorite culture builders

We asked Pooja Chopra (whose powerful classroom culture you can learn about by exploring these videos from 2018 [here](#) and [here](#)) about her favorite strategies for building an inclusive culture of collective responsibility:

- **Ask children first.** What are their expectations of you as a teacher before you communicate yours? Once you are willing to listen, children are willing to reciprocate.
- **Co-create culture.** Have students help decide how the class celebrates success and the consequences when we disrupt the culture. Teachers and students should both be responsible for the culture, celebrations, and consequences. Have visual imagery in the classroom as a reminder of what was co-created
- **Daily reflection.** Use reflection as a daily tool for self-correction and appreciation.
- **Giving tree.** Get students to acknowledge where they witnessed values the previous day, write it, and post them on the tree. And/or a child writes the value they displayed the previous day outside the classroom.
- **Norms of the day by the mood.** Begin the day by setting the norms of the day by understanding the moods and emotions everyone is going through. Each day is different and starting the day by really understanding what each one in the classroom is feeling enables everyone to start from a space of empathy.
- **Team spaces.** Create spaces where children work in teams and groups. Enable each team to create their own culture, which aligns with the classroom culture but at the same time brings a different flavor.

Pooja Chopra is a Teach for India alumni. She co-founded Khwaab Welfare Trust to empower mothers from her student's community to become financially independent and dream big for their children. Pooja is currently the Program Head at The Circle, where she is working with entrepreneurs to design, launch, and run reinvented schools and after schools for children coming from low-income communities across India.

HOW TO KNOW YOURSELF

The path to engaging authentically with others leads through knowing yourself. Take time to build awareness of your own perspective. Where does it come from? What are your blind spots? What motivates you? What identities do you have? How do they intersect? How has society supported or oppressed these identities?

KNOW YOURSELF
We build awareness of our own perspectives, biases, socialized oppressions, motivations, traits, and strengths as a foundation for connecting with others.



Contribute your own techniques for **knowing yourself** to our growing library... and see what others have contributed [here](#).



When you don't know yourself, you don't give yourself the value you deserve. When something good happens to you, you feel like you don't deserve it or sometimes you're unable to set your own boundaries. Teachers are like second parents, what they think of us is extremely important, whether it's a gesture or a reaction, all of that leaves a mark on the student: it can have a negative impact or help them continue to grow.

Mikaela Valenzuela

Participant in the Student Leadership Program in Enseña Perú

Knowing others is intelligence; knowing yourself is true wisdom. Mastering others is strength; mastering yourself is true power.

Tao Te Ching

Classic Chinese text and foundational work of Taoism

Concrete, Actionable Techniques for Knowing Yourself

Examine *Intersectionality*

Invest in real-time reflecting on your own perspectives of privilege, marginalization, and oppression. How are your age, race, disabilities, education, sexual orientation, class relation, and lived experiences influencing you, and how do those dynamics play out in your classrooms? This is especially crucial for people who are in any way “outsiders” to the community where they are teaching.

Maggie MacDonnell

Global Teacher Prize Winner, Inuit Community north of the Arctic Circle



Take a Breath

Whether it's taking three deep breaths when you start feeling angry, or longer meditation practice, taking a step back is one of the best ways to grow self-knowledge. Rather than identifying with your experience, just take time to notice what arises. For example, rather than saying “I am angry,” try saying “I experience anger.” Does this create space to learn and see what might be behind your emotion?

Know Your Strengths

Take a moment to reflect on when you've been at your best. Notice what this tells you about your strengths. Are you resilient, creative, kind, curious, disciplined, or something else? When faced with a challenging situation, remember to start by asking yourself: What strengths do I have within me that I can use in this situation?

Seek Diverse Feedback

The perspective of other people is vital in helping you to see yourself. But be careful to get the balance right. Too much challenge, and you'll constrict. Too much support, and you risk stagnation. Find the right balance for you, that helps you stretch but not freeze.

Try Journaling

If you let yourself write whatever comes to mind in a free flow, this can help you to gain a new perspective on yourself. Don't hold back or censor yourself, just take a few minutes each day to see what comes out.

Other Sources:

- [5 Ways to Become More Self-Aware](#) (Harvard Business Review).
- [9 Best Self-Awareness Activities & Tools](#) (Positive Psychology).
- [Leading With Strengths](#).
- [The Meaning Wheel](#).
- [Strengths spotting](#).



When I was a teacher, one of the most shocking moments was in one class in which we were doing this kind of self-knowledge exercise and we had to draw ourselves. When we drew ourselves, we had to do it with a lot of detail. When I picked up the drawings, I started seeing that a lot of the drawings didn't look like my students. Many of them had drawn themselves with a lighter skin color, blond, and with their eyes blue. We asked them what from their body they didn't like and what they would change about themselves. The answer that caught my attention the most was one of my students' answers. She told me: "I would change the color of my skin because I want to look more like," and she mentioned a TV star, "and because I don't like neither the color of my skin nor my eyes." And as for her response, there were a lot of similar answers.

I began to question a lot of things because everywhere I looked there were these types of models that looked nothing like my students. I saw them in the books delivered by the Ministry, on the TV, on the Ministry of Health Campaigns, they were everywhere (...). Every message was like, "The way you look is not pretty." That was hard at that moment and made me think about what messages we are giving our students so that they love themselves and that made me think about how I felt that way in high school... At that point, I didn't have much awareness of privilege and oppression. With time, I started to find out that I was in a privileged situation compared to other people, but that I was also in situations of oppression against other people.

Miguel Nique

Educator and social communicator. Specialist in designing learning ecosystems and a competency-based approach. Currently leading Training at Enseña Perú. Explore Miguel's reflections more deeply through this [video](#).

What Does Knowing Yourself Look Like?



Change yourself first

Explore Ignacio Brea's (Enseña Por Argentina) path through this 2014 [video](#). At first, he felt like he was failing his students. His classes lacked direction, students were not engaged, and he was miserable. His first breakthrough was realizing that he could never motivate them without understanding their reality. His second breakthrough was realizing that he would have to better know himself.



The power of shared identities

As mentioned in this [video](#) from 2018, lived experience of inequities and shared identity with students can provide additional value to cultivating belonging and building relationships that promote rigorous learning.

I had to take what they already had and say, "This is enough. You are enough just as you are. And you bring your good, I'll bring my good, and let's see if we can add to each other."



Esther Rakete

Ako Mātātupu Teach First NZ Alumna. Quote taken from "[Esther Rakete: The Conflicting Pathways of Success](#)" (2018)

Other Places to See Know Yourself

- [My Stroke of Insight](#), brain scientist Jill Bolt Taylor's astonishing story of learning about herself after having a stroke.
- [The Power of Self-Awareness](#), a TED talk in which a professor explores what we can learn from our shadow.

Additional Research & Resources Related to Knowing Yourself

- From Maggie MacDonnell: *I am a facilitator of [TRUE COLORS](#) one-day workshops. I have found this to be a fantastic way to jump into personal and group discovery. The model can be adapted for teachers and students.*
- [What Is Intersectionality?](#)
- A deeper look at [intersectionality](#).
- Research paper on how to measure [self-awareness](#), and the effects of self-awareness.
- [Literature review](#) of self-awareness in the context of adult development.
- Bring your strengths to life through the [VIA Institute on Character](#) resources and free survey.

HOW TO BE HUMAN

It might seem absurd that “being human” needs a “how-to guide,” but for many of us being our honest, vulnerable, true selves as teachers requires intentional effort. Our egos, anxieties, and self-doubts may make us want to invent a separate “teacher persona” that is more confident, more strict, or more certain than we feel inside. What we see in transformational classrooms, however, are teachers who manage to be themselves.



Contribute your own techniques for **being human** to our growing library... and see what others have contributed [here](#).

GLOSSARY

Transformative Classroom: These are classrooms where students seem to be on a different trajectory. They are making dramatic progress in their wellbeing, connectedness, awareness, agency, and mastery. That growth is transforming their paths and opportunities going forward.



I was living in an Awajun community in the jungle. I was an outsider, and there was distance between me and my students. I was working very hard, and it was very challenging. One day, in a moment of frustration, I broke down and told my students that I was struggling and I said “I can’t do this alone.” When I look back on that year, I think it was showing vulnerability that helped bring us closer. After I shared that the students started working together, and together with me, in a different way. And that opened up other conversations. I started having more conversations with the community and gained informal authority to start hard conversations with them.

Angela Morales

Enseña Perú Alumna and Social Communicator, with experience in project management and development of educational ecosystems

Concrete, Actionable Techniques for Being More Human

Make Mistakes, On Purpose

To help my students feel confident in speaking up, and to recognize the knowledge they already had, I would deliberately make mistakes when writing on the board. I would wait for students to challenge me. If they didn’t, I would turn around and ask if they saw a mistake. To begin with, they said they had seen a mistake, but didn’t think it was right to challenge the teacher. I would then use Socratic dialogue to help the students see the value of challenging me.



Zain Maken

Teach For Pakistan Alumnus (2013)

Say “I Don’t Know”

Consistently this same phrase is coming up...at some point, you need to say out loud to students... “I don’t have all the answers.” I admitted that I did not know everything, I did not have all the solutions to solve challenges. Tap into the wisdom of the students in your classroom. The students are your greatest asset and can solve the challenges occurring in the classrooms. Teachers can choose to co-create alongside their students.

Multiple Contributors

Apologize

So often, students expect us teachers to have the answers and be sources of authority. However, this positions an uneven power dynamic in and out of the classroom. When we cause harm, accidentally or purposefully, we must apologize. This seemingly simple action 1) allows our students to see us as human, imperfect, and willing to love ourselves even when we make mistakes and 2) models not just a behavior we might hope to see replicated, but also a way of walking through this world.

Multiple Contributors

Ask About Feelings

My best teachers speak from their emotions. How do you feel today? How does the topic we are going to talk about make you feel? Asking questions and discussing issues from their experience and what they would do by solving situations.

Former student of an Enseña por Colombia fellow



Ask for Help (From Students)

Be honest to your students about your problems; allow them a problem and how the whole class as a team needs to work towards it.

Pooja Chopra

Alumnus of Teach for India from the 2013 cohort, co-founder of the Khwaab Welfare Trust and currently serving as the Program Head at The Circle

What Does Being More Human Look Like?



Brené Brown on Teaching with Vulnerability

What would it mean for our schools and classrooms if we showed up for tough, honest conversations about what it takes to bring our best, most authentic selves to work? These conversations may sound risky and vulnerable, but risk and vulnerability are essential to courageous schools. A daring classroom is a place where both teachers and students commit to choosing courage over comfort, choosing what is right over what is fun, fast, or easy, and practicing values rather than professing them.

Brené Brown

Research professor at the University of Houston. Photo from Kristina Bowman Photography



My students were interested in so many things in which I had *LITTLE to NO* expertise. For example, my students wanted to run half marathons, become bike repair experts, crochet, sew fur-lined winter parkas, hunt geese, make sushi, write and perform rap music, create stained glass, become nail art/manicure technicians, and more! In order to support their interests, I had to follow their passions and try to learn enough about these subjects to at least be able to facilitate a learning environment on the topic. This generally meant I was operating outside of my comfort zone *A LOT!* I made this clear to my students. I laughed openly and *HARD* at my own mistakes as I bumbled through things. I tried to model that learning is not direct/linear — that you have all sorts of mistakes and “mini-failures” along the way — and one of our greatest strengths is to keep trying.

Maggie MacDonnell

Global Teacher Prize Winner, Inuit Community north of the Arctic Circle



We all, myself included, shared deeply personal experiences of our younger selves, of when we were at school. The good and the painful were equally welcomed and equally valuable. We heard of teachers who attended classes 30 or 40 years ago and experienced physical punishment, humiliation, and a complete lack of agency in their own process as students. We also delved into stories where teachers reminisced about the most magical interactions that produced learning for them. We jointly were striving to create a safe environment for us to share authentically, change opinions, and evolve new mindsets. It's through the discomfort of shifting your mindset that you can create change.

Franco Mosso

Former CEO & Co-founder at Enseña Perú, Alumni from the Harvard Graduate School of Education and Fellow from the Salzburg Global Seminar. [Learn more](#) about Franco's reflection on how agency can lead to systemic change, at scale

Other Places to See Being Human

- [Teachers Are Humans Too!](#)
- [“Trust-Based Collective Leadership: Mobilizing Through Real Connections.”](#) Essay (Page 137).
- [Mindfulness](#) and other social-emotional exercises to connect on a more human level

Additional Research & Resources Related To Being More Human

Researchers [Margaret Bearman](#) and [Elizabeth Molloy](#) recommend intellectual candor because they found that to help students learn to cope with feedback, teachers should open up about their own failures.

SHARE

Make your voice heard:

Help us evolve and improve these ideas and resources

Teaching As Collective Leadership is a collective effort. It has been developed through contributions from thousands of people: teachers, coaches, students, families, researchers, and others from all around the world. Please join us in continuing to evolve this work by sharing your perspective.

Below is our “digital bulletin board,” which we are constantly updating with the input of generous readers who share their ideas. Please take a moment to click [here](#) on our **Co-learning Padlet** to contribute your thoughts, questions, challenges, illustrations, and links.

LOVE AND CONNECT

#NurtureCulture

“There was lots of resistance at first with students communicating their needs. But I stayed with them, giving them tips, building trust and being open, and this has helped students gain confidence, and slowly but surely have become leaders. Some of the best discussions have been ideas proposed by students, it has been a very humbling experience. I have learned how to approach students from a different viewpoint. It’s the students taking charge of the topics.”

Teacher

(Global Teacher and Teacher Coach Study, 2022)

#FosterBelonging

Art-based therapy session. Small group session with eight children. Include what the children want in the session. Every session, 5 to 10 minutes, children would share what they would like to do. Goal is shared belonging in the group.

Drashti

#BuildRelationships

A recent study of over 25,000 students in the U.S. found that less than a third of middle-school students said they had strong relationships with their teachers. By high school, only 16 percent reported they had those relationships. And, for children in low-income communities, those numbers are even lower.

Eugene Roehlkepartain, Kent Pekel, Amy Syvertsen, Jenna Sethi, Theresa Sullivan, and Peter Scales

Relationships First: Creating Connections That Help Young People Thrive. Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute. 2017)

#BeHuman

“Don’t be an asshole.” All good teachers I meet fit this. Have we created a system that assholes like but non-assholes run from? “Don’t be an asshole, be super curious.”

Brent Maddin

Co-founder and Provost at the Relay Graduate School of Education

#BuildRelationships

Develop relationships with each student. Two ways: They should know you as well as you know them and go on the learning journey with the students.

Sanaya



Contribute to our “Love and Connect” Digital Bulletin Board ([Here](#))

INTRODUCTION TO LISTEN & ENVISION TO CO-CREATE PURPOSE

Perfecting current ways of learning and teaching will not fulfill my students' potential as leaders of a better future, so we collectively question and reimagine the purpose of our classroom, building sustainable coalitions for change.

LISTEN & ENVISION to co-create purpose

BROADEN PERSPECTIVES

We seek insights and wisdom from multiple perspectives in diverse contexts to grow a collective sense of possibility.

HOST DIALOGUE & DISCUSSION

We hold space for authentic dialogue and discussion by being fully present, listening deeply, and exhibiting curiosity over judgment.

PARTNER WITH FAMILIES & COMMUNITY

We connect and collaborate with students' families and others in the community, engaging them in classroom purpose and practices.

CRITICALLY EXAMINE HISTORY

We explore the systemic roots of inequality, listening closely to those with lived experiences of inequity and seeking to understand the assets of the community.

COLLECTIVELY ENVISION SUCCESS

We listen and contribute to conversations among students, families, and educators about the purpose of education.

When I first made my vision for my students, I didn't take into account the needs of the community. I didn't think about the things that the community already had. And so I had to do it all over again... What I did was—I talked with each of my students and their families. And listened, just listened a lot. I think that was the first step.

Miguel Ñique

Educator and social communicator. Specialist in designing learning ecosystems and a competency-based approach. Currently leading Training at Enseña Perú



Our families get to sit and reflect and think about what are your hopes and dreams for their child's education. And many families say "I have never been asked that before. I have never been asked by a teacher, a school leader, or a school about what my hopes and dreams are for my child. Thank you for giving me that opportunity, because it makes me step back and think about what is all this for, and what can education really do for my family and my child."

Veronica Palmer

Co-founder of RISE Colorado and Teach For America Alumna

In the first chapter of this guide, we explored the ways that **PURPOSE** is showing up in our collective studies of transformational classrooms. The teachers we have studied are questioning education's purpose (the WHY), and are asking who should define that purpose and who has historically done so (the WHO).

This classroom strategy, LISTEN & ENVISION, maps five concrete actions teachers can use to collectively develop and align actions to a clear vision of students' success.

GLOSSARY

Transformative Classroom: These are classrooms where students seem to be on a different trajectory. They are making dramatic progress in their wellbeing, connectedness, awareness, agency, and mastery. That growth is transforming their paths and opportunities going forward.

Leaders of a Better Future: This is a concept that emerged years ago, when Teach For All hosted a collective, year-long reflection process among students, teachers, teacher developers, CEOs, community leaders, and families about the aims of our network. One clear theme in those conversations was the changing and challenging world today's students are inheriting, and the need for education to prepare them to face and improve that future for themselves and others.

Contextualized Vision of Student Success: A locally informed, collectively evolved picture of what education is aiming for.



Collective, Contextualized Vision

Through this [video](#) from 2014, virtually visit communities and classrooms around the world, hearing from educators, families, and students about the power of asking WHY. Explore the power of contextualized visions of student success to inform classroom practices.

Tools That Help Align Daily Actions to the Classroom Vision of Student Success

	I aim to teach this (the best teacher I ever had)	I aim to ensure every student gets a chance to give an assessment on an assessment	I aim to phrase my private teacher (clubs, or organization)	I aim to ensure reading skills and get a good habit here	I aim to ensure to the end of the day	I aim to... (see this to capture other reflections)
When planning my lessons...	(fill in your answer here)	(fill in your answer here)	(fill in your answer here)	(fill in your answer here)	(fill in your answer here)	(fill in your answer here)
When delivering my lessons...						

Teach For All | A Global Network Developing collective leadership to ensure all children can fulfill their potential

ALIGNING ACTIONS WITH PURPOSE

Teach For All | A Global Network

Implications of Vision: Exercise

Instructions
This tool is aimed at helping you to reflect on the daily implications of visions of student success. Read the three teacher reflections below, and consider the student outcomes, teacher actions, and teacher mindsets in the context of each.

Proda (Ethiopia)
My students will grow into adults who are hardworking and passionate about their work. They will be curious, will challenge and question me (also will be using logical ideas, and will respect their country and their environment. They will be able to collaborate with others to solve real world problems.

What student outcomes at the end of the year give confidence students are making progress toward the vision?
(fill in your answer here)

What teacher actions define successful teaching?
(fill in your answer here)

Teach For All | A Global Network Developing collective leadership to ensure all children can fulfill their potential

DAILY IMPLICATIONS OF VISION

Teach For All | A Global Network

Self-diagnosis on Vision

Instructions
This tool is aimed at helping you to reflect on your vision for student success. There are no right or wrong answers - it is purely designed for your own reflection and growth. To complete this self-assessment:

- Go through each question below, and mark an X where you are, and an O where you want to be. Try not to overthink it.
- Once you have completed the questions, look over your results, and take a few minutes to reflect and, if helpful, do some journaling to note what is coming to your mind.
- If possible, find a peer or coach to go through the exercise as well, and compare your thoughts on what arises.
- Identify at least 2 points where there is a gap between where you are and where you want to be, and next steps you will take to address those gaps.

Generic / Contextualized
How uniquely reflective of my local context is my vision of student success?

My vision applies to any point in my country	100%	90-99%	80-89%	70-79%	60-69%	50-59%	40-49%	30-39%	20-29%	10-19%	0-9%	All vision could only be applicable from being community
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Product / Process
Is my vision of student success viewed as a product that is completed or as an ongoing and evolving conversation?

My vision is viewed as a product that is completed	100%	90-99%	80-89%	70-79%	60-69%	50-59%	40-49%	30-39%	20-29%	10-19%	0-9%	My vision is viewed as an ongoing and evolving conversation
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Teach For All | A Global Network Developing collective leadership to ensure all children can fulfill their potential

SELF-DIAGNOSIS ON VISION

HOW TO BROADEN PERSPECTIVES

Be with (and help students be with) people with different life experiences than your (their) own. Listen intently. Reflect on how and why you see and make meaning of the world differently from others.

BROADEN PERSPECTIVES
We seek innovations and insights from multiple perspectives in diverse contexts to grow a collective sense of possibility.

Concrete, Actionable Techniques for Broadening Perspective



Community Connections

Invite community members into school to give presentations or to be part of events. Make community interviews part of the assignments. I have heard of school libraries that don't just have books but have "community experts" that students or a class can reserve time with. This could be an artist, an author, a grandmother, a small business owner, etc. So cool!

Maggie MacDonnell

Global Teacher Prize Winner, Inuit Community north of the Arctic Circle



Guest Instructors

Sometimes there were some topics that I was not confident about. Invite other people who can deliver those contents to them. More exposure for students as well. Learning needs to go beyond the teacher and the four walls of the classroom. We need to enable students to learn from diverse people and immerse in spaces around them, especially their community — that is when education gets real and relevant and children are inspired to be changemakers.

Pooja Chopra

Teach For India Alumna, co-founder of Khwaab Welfare Trust, and Program Head at The Circle



Listening With an Open Mind

Plan to listen and take your time. Digest every word of student participation. Accept a variety of participation methods while encouraging all students to contribute. Avoid linking participation to grades/marks.

Taylor Delhagen

Former professor at Relay Graduate School of Education and Teach For America Alumnus

ART AS INSTIGATOR

Using visual art, poetry, or a song can be a very effective way to open up discussion when you are with your students or engaging in a group setting with community members.

CLASSROOM VISITS

Observe and help in other classrooms. Notice how other teachers do things differently and why. Reflect on what you want to learn and borrow from those other classrooms.



Contribute your own techniques for **broadening perspective** to our growing library...and see what others have contributed [here](#).

Every time I [engage with the Maori community], I learn so much. A lot of what I learned is to actually let go. To actually be able to listen to what people want to say instead of me setting the agenda about what there is to learn. I have to be honest, it's really really difficult as a Pākehā [New Zealander of European descent] to do that. It's really hard because I think I know what I want to learn. And I'm always delighted to discover that that wasn't actually the learning at all, and I learned something completely different. And it's wonderful.



Mike Hughes

Ako Mātātupu: Teach First NZ Alumnus. (Quote taken from "[Letting go of the agenda](#)," 2015)

Other Sources:

- [Culturally Responsive Teaching Guide](#).
- [Learning walks](#) for broadening perspectives between teachers.



Collectively discovering contextualized vision in Nepal

Teach For Nepal has found it essential to understand the historical context of marginalization as a foundation for their work. Explore this [video](#) from 2015, to learn how by recognizing that we always come into any context with our own perspectives, values, and vision, we can start to recognize the limitations of our own perspective and work towards a deeper collective effort.

It's never too late to think big. Widen your horizons. Look beyond your normal limits. See things in a larger picture. Consider the next step. The flow-on effect. Opportunities will become evident. Motivations will become clear. Perspective will emerge. One must live the way one thinks or end up thinking the way one has lived.

Paul Bourget

Nobel Prize-winning French poet and novelist

What Does a Broadening Perspective Look Like?



Hearing the wisdom of community elders

Through this [video](#) from 2019, visit a classroom and community in the desert center of Australia and see how a new teacher connects, listens to, and collaborates with a veteran leader in the community to build pathways for student success.



The Danger of the Single Story

Our lives, and our cultures, are composed of many overlapping stories. Novelist [Chimamanda Adichie](#) tells the story of how she found her authentic cultural voice — and warns that if we hear only a single story about another person or country, we risk a critical misunderstanding.



Community as the source of visions of student success in Haiti

Anseye Pou Ayiti has made collective co-construction of purpose a daily commitment. Watch this [video](#) from 2017, on how through recurring rituals that hold space for sometimes difficult conversations, educators and coaches seek to listen and understand local values, challenges, and aspirations.



Diverse perspectives to shape purpose in Mexico

A nation with tremendous potential to expand and improve educational opportunities for its youth, Mexico also faces a diverse range of challenges. In this [video](#) from 2014, Enseña Por México's former CEO, Erik Ramírez Ruiz, shares that the key is embracing the idea that Mexico's diverse challenges require solutions from many different perspectives.

Additional Research & Resources Related to Broadening Perspective

- [Reimagining Education](#) is a participatory process through which adolescents and young people with different trajectories and educational profiles, from all over Uruguay, create proposals to reimagine secondary education. (In Spanish.)
- [Listen](#) as Delia, a public school teacher of the Cajamarca Region in Peru, reflects on the power of broadening her perspective. (In Spanish with optional English subtitles.)



When you arrive at a community for the first time and you really want to generate systemic change that impacts at all levels, you have to start by attending to the spaces that already exist. Don't create your own spaces. That's on the one hand. And on the other: when you design these spaces, not every space must have an agenda. I think that's a big mistake we make. Not all spaces have to have a detailed agenda with a clear goal and action plan. A lot of times, when arriving in a community, having some spaces where we can listen to each other authentically and where we can create these safe spaces allows us to talk about our most intrinsic motivations.... That's a great start.

Leidy Cabrera

Alumna of Enseña Por México, collaborated for five years as a regional director in the same organization, and is a co-founder of Casa Mujer

HOW TO HOST DIALOGUE & DISCUSSION

Learn to listen. Listen to learn. Lead with questions. Create the conditions in which students are learning from each other, and you are stoking, shaping, and guiding that learning.

HOST DIALOGUE & DISCUSSION
 We hold space for authentic dialogue and discussion by being fully present, listening deeply, and exhibiting curiosity over judgment.



Contribute your own techniques for **hosting dialogue and discussion** to our growing library... and see what others have contributed [here](#).



Holding space means treating all the participants as humans. It means we listen to each other and feel beyond each others' words. This means everyone will have their own emotions, histories, and understandings of life. Holding spaces come with all these human elements, which I sometimes find missing in other technical spaces.

Maliha Fawzia
 Former Senior Director of Programs, Teach For Bangladesh & 2015 Alumna

GLOSSARY

Holding Space: This phrase refers to a facilitator's role and responsibility to create conditions that allow for genuine and authentic learning.

Concrete, Actionable Techniques for Hosting Dialogue & Discussion

Crafting Spice Questions

This is one of the most important aspects of our role as facilitator. We need to ask students something that is worth asking. Something provocative and responsive to who they are. It's our job to plan purposeful questions that reach a multitude of Bloom's taxonomy (identify, summarize, evaluate, interpret). It's a massive misconception to believe this happens naturally. We must prepare, pre-think, and practice text-based conversations with fellow teachers and/or small groups of students. Test-drive it again and again not to ensure students answer in a cookie-cutter fashion, but to become fluent in the text yourself so you can somehow meet the creativity we know is waiting to be unleashed in our classrooms.



Taylor Delhagen
 Former professor at Relay Graduate School of Education and Teach For America Alumna

Teacher/Student Circle Time

Create space to share about life experiences, because leaders do need empowerment sessions, and even they have feelings. Topics are what resonates with them/what they feel is relevant for the class. This is a space that builds community as students become problem solvers.

Former students of Teach For India fellows

"We Interrupt Our Regularly Scheduled Programming..."

Take "responsive" space during classes to stop the regular plan in order to discuss and hear your students, perhaps an issue has arisen. Things that might not matter to the particular goal of a class, but matter to students.

Leo Graham
 Teach First (UK) Alumna

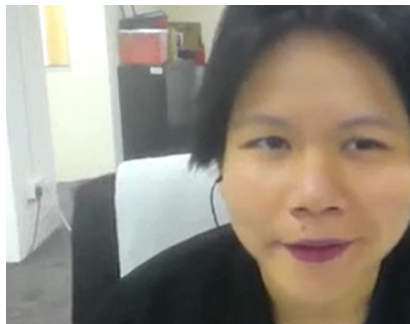
The Issues Jar

We had a jar where we wrote anonymously the issues we struggled with. Personal or with someone else. At least once a week we'd discuss one issue from the jar and discuss practical approaches to addressing it. It helped the students realize I didn't have all the answers, and that their peers were caring and able to provide potential solutions

Anjali Sabnani
 Teach For India

Other Sources:

- Tips for encouraging [speaking and listening](#) between students.
- Write, pair, share, and other actionable [techniques](#).



The art of “holding space”

Educators and teacher coaches from across the Teach For All network came together to explore what facilitating meaningful reflection, dialogue, discussion, and learning looks like, why it is important, and how those spaces are best created. You can watch this [video](#) synthesis from 2019 with key insights from those workshops here.



Engaging with families to explore purpose in rural China

This [video](#) from 2013 explored how Teach For China approached their work in rural Yunnan province. In this community, not every student had a seat waiting for them in middle school and rote learning was still the most dominant practice. Meanwhile, the economy and future of China were changing before their eyes. What should a teacher and students work towards?



How To Host A Dialogue On A Difficult Topic

When hosting dialogues about difficult topics, there are several aspects to consider. One of the most important factors, even before the dialogue takes place, is the willingness of people to be there. Not everyone will arrive at the meeting with the desire to attend; it may be challenging for some participants to show up. In such cases, it may be necessary to have preliminary conversations with these individuals and remind them why it is so relevant for their voices to be heard in that space. Ideally, there should be a shared level of willingness among the participants, and we should be open to accepting that it's ok if they don't agree or have different opinions than ours.

Ángela Morales

Enseña Perú Alumna and social communicator, with experience in project management and development of educational ecosystems

What Does Hosting Dialogue & Discussion Look Like?



Ako-Responsive, reciprocal learning relationships

Through this [video](#) from 2015, learn about a community of educators and students who are hosting dialogue and discussion in ways that affirm the knowledge, experiences, culture, and identities of the students.



Questions as the currency of a classroom

In his history class, Teach For America alumnus Taylor Delhagen facilitated discussions with a combination of provocative sources and questions. Watch this [video](#) from 2013 on how he uses a Socratic approach to create dialogue that grows students' critical thinking skills.

Additional Research & Resources Related to Hosting Dialogue & Discussion

- [Dispute resolution](#): The science of influence. Using six principles of persuasion to negotiate and mediate more effectively.

Other Places to See Dialogue & Discussion

- [A Case Study on Holding Space](#): Learning to Listen; Listening to Learn at Teach for Bangladesh and Enseña Ecuador.

HOW TO PARTNER WITH FAMILIES & COMMUNITY

Connect with students, their families, their supporters, and other members of the community. Spend time in their presence in their community, and bring them into the classroom to learn and share together.

PARTNER WITH FAMILIES & COMMUNITY
We connect and collaborate with students' families and influencers and others in the community, engaging them in classroom purpose and practices.

Concrete, Actionable Techniques for Partnering with Families and Communities

MAKE YOURSELF VISIBLE

Help remove barriers that prevent parents and community members from being involved with school by learning through what channels they communicate and their schedule. Engage through those channels. If they are active on social media use it too!

BRING THE SCHOOL TO THE HOME

Focus on building a relationship outside the school gates. So instead of asking parents to come to the school, plan visits to their homes. This helps build the trust needed to create pathways of collaboration and ways of partnering.

BUILD SHARED PURPOSES

Start by engaging in conversations with parents about their own (and their kids') expectations, dreams, interests, and struggles. After this, define (together) one first thing you want to change or improve and make it a collective purpose by designing a small plan and defining responsibilities. In the process, celebrate the small wins!



Contribute your own techniques for **partnering with families and communities** to our growing library... and see what others have contributed [here](#).

What we know is that so many of the solutions and so many of the strengths of our people happen in community. And so at the end of the day, Anseye Pou Ayiti is measuring progress by seeing the extent to which we can tear down the wall that's been erected, built up between the classroom and the community. At the end of the day, we want the classroom and community to be indistinguishable from each other. Because if we're really doing our work well, so much of the power and the solutions and the cultural assets that exist in the community will show up every single day in the classroom.



Nedgine Paul Deroly

Lifelong educator and co-founder/CEO of Anseye Pou Ayiti



Working collectively within the school is important to me because it's like the legs of a table: if we're missing one leg, the table will simply collapse. One leg represents the student, another leg represents the teacher, another leg represents the parent, and the last leg represents the resources available to the school. If we manage to make these legs work together, then we'll be standing on a solid table. Otherwise, it will eventually collapse.

José Goicochea

Parent of a participant of the Student Leadership Program in Enseña Perú. (Quote taken from "[Colaborar para la transformación: Un criterio clave para liderar en colectivo por la educación](#)", 2022)

Other Sources:

- [A playbook for family-school engagement](#) (Brookings).
- [Principles of effective family engagement](#), by NAEYC Engaging Diverse Families (EDF) project.



The biggest lesson we've learned as we've done this work [in Chicago] is we didn't create an enduring coalition for change. . . . So much of this work was done in spite of students, families, and community leaders' wishes, desires, and will. And as a result, what you see is a lack of trust amongst different stakeholders. Chicago is a city of 77 neighborhoods, each with its own unique and distinct culture. And so we thought it was important that we start to immerse our corps members in those neighborhoods. We piloted that approach in a couple of neighborhood contexts last year and moving forward we're going to scale that up to be a part of how we do our program model for every single corps member that comes in. And the idea is you pair that with leadership development opportunities that build the skills and orientation of our corps members to center family and community perspective and build trust across multiple stakeholders and view them as assets in our children's education.

Aneesh Sohoni

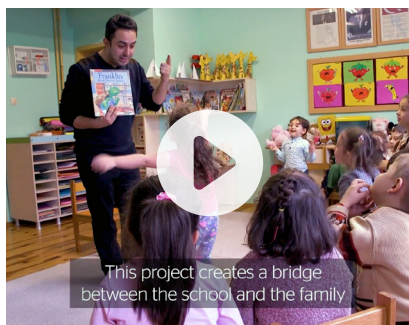
CEO of One Million Degrees, an organization focused on supporting community college students on their career pathways to upward mobility, and the former Executive Director of Teach For America for Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana

What Does Partnering with Families and Communities Look Like?



Reducing school violence through parental engagement

[Explore](#) how a group of dads from Louisiana are transforming a crisis of violence and changing a whole school culture.



“Daddy, tell me a story”

To remedy the low level of family participation in children's education, Global Teacher Prize Winner Nurten Akkus started a program in Turkey called [“Daddy, Tell Me A Story.”](#) This led to fathers' participation in education, both in her county and across Turkey. As a result of seeing their fathers in class, the children's motivation and engagement with education increased dramatically.

Starting from the bottom and working with the local leaders is very important. And this is what we did since we started with Teach For Morocco and we were able to sign different agreements with community councils and with district councils that allowed us to move to the regional level. And we moved to the regional level with a very strong foundation. We have partnerships with the community leaders, the parents' associations, and all the other stakeholders locally. And we moved to the academy and the regional academies. We were able also to convince them that there is a high demand from the public, and they need us. And moving from the academy to the regional level, then we move to the Ministry of Education.



Mohamed El Idrissi

Social entrepreneur, public servant, and a lifelong learner. Former Mayor of Nador for more than 10 years, in charge of overseeing the local governance and public service of a municipality

Other Places to See Partnering with Families and Communities

- [A school garden](#) brings together Spanish-speaking parents and English-speaking teachers.
- [Tele-sikai](#): Learning in a new reality.
- [Growing With Love](#): Teachers in partnership with volunteers from different regions work together to strengthen socio-emotional bonds between parents and their kids. (In Spanish.)

Additional Research & Resources Related to Partnering with Families and Communities

- From the Inter-American Development Bank blog, [“Rebuilding the relationship between parents and school to enhance learning.”](#) (In Spanish.)

HOW TO CRITICALLY EXAMINE HISTORY

Study the history of the education systems you are working in today and those that you experienced as a student. Support students to question the design and choices behind what they are learning.

CRITICALLY EXAMINE HISTORY
We explore the systemic roots of inequality, listening closely to those with lived experiences of inequity and seeking to understand the community's assets.

Concrete, Actionable Techniques for Critically Examining History

BRING HISTORY TO YOUR SUBJECT

Whatever the subject matter, use the ways people have seen those ideas differently over time ([even math and science](#)) to foster students' critical thinking about their own and others' perspectives.



Contribute your own techniques for **critically examining history** to our growing library... and see what others have contributed [here](#).



Learning History from Local Community Leaders

Support students to interview community members about their experience of a historic event. Open dialogue can surface how historical events impact community members differently and continue to have significance today.

Jared Hove

Leadership Director, Global Leadership Accelerator, Teach For All



Study Local History

At Anseye Pou Ayiti we firmly believe that the education system is a direct result of colonial heritage. It is not enough to talk about active pedagogy, learner equality, and transformational leadership, without understanding the historical roots of our current reality. We need to dive deep into the current reality, we need to understand very clearly what inequity is... equity, oppression, slavery, settlers — we need to discuss all these aspects.

Nedgine Paul Deroly

Lifelong educator and co-founder/CEO of Anseye Pou Ayiti

To harness the power of education for social change, educators must consider how we — as individuals and school communities — are shaped by our own social and historical contexts. [In this workshop](#) from 2020, the Global Learning Lab collaborated with [Facing History and Ourselves to learn](#) from educators in South Africa and Colombia about the powerful role of educator reflection in creating and sustaining inclusive and equitable learning environments.

It is dangerous when we are unaware of the wounds caused by the educational system. For many years, schools have been useful to colonial interests and have contributed to the spread of racist and classist ideas, along with the erasure of cultures under the pretext of “civilizing” people. The educational system has a lot to repair because it has its roots in colonialism, and by accepting this, as painful as it may be, we can better understand the wounds that teachers, students, parents, and, of course, our own wounds have because we have also been socialized within this educational system. If we want to collaborate in educational transformation, it is not enough to simply ask, “What are we going to transform?” We must also ask, “What do we need to heal? What do we need to repair?” To address these issues, I believe that we could start by investing time and resources in listening and observing deeply.

Miguel Ñique

Educator and social communicator. Specialist in designing learning ecosystems and a competency-based approach. Currently leading Training at Enseña Perú

Other Sources:

- [Exploring complex issues.](#)



It opened my mind a lot. You can't really just believe everything you read, everything you hear, everything you see. I am more open to looking at things from my perspective, and not just what someone has told me.

Khyna Davis

Former student of U.S. History teacher and Teach For America alumnus Taylor Delhagen. (Quote taken from the video [More than a Number](#), 2013)

Check out [this virtual visit](#) to Taylor's classroom, exploring ways to help our students understand the challenges they face within a historical narrative.

What Does Critically Examining History Look Like?



Colonial roots of inequity in Uganda

In this [video](#) from 2020, Charles Obore (Teach For Uganda alumnus) shares a powerful reflection on the colonial roots of inequity in Uganda and the need for culturally relevant education and community-centered leadership.



Decolonizing education in New Zealand

Kia Aroha is a public secondary school in South Auckland, New Zealand, attended by 300 students, mostly Maori or from the Pacific Islands. Watch in this [video](#) from 2017, how Kia Aroha focuses its curriculum on a critical analysis of the historical and present realities that affect students' lives, empowering them with the skills and knowledge to explore their experiences, contextualize them, and examine how they have shaped their sense of self.



To change the future we need to know our past

"It is not enough to talk about active pedagogy, learner equality, and transformational leadership, without understanding the current reality. We need to dive deep into the current reality, we need to understand very clearly what inequity is. Equity, oppression, slavery, settlers — we need to discuss all these aspects." See what that looks like at Anseye Pou Ayiti (Haiti) in this 2022 [video](#).



Understanding indigenous histories

In this [video](#) from 2017, Shayla Yellowhair (Teach For America - New Mexico alumna) explains why teachers who are coming to work in Native communities need to first understand the history and be willing to learn from the community. She talks about what it means to come from a Western-dominant system and then "do the work" acknowledging that there is shared learning between teachers and the community.

Other Places to See Critically Examining History

- [Historical inequities' influence on today's education system in Colombia](#) (Enseña Por Colombia, 2018).
- [Teach For Malaysia's examination of local history and its implications for its work to improve education](#) (2020).
- [Teach For Australia: Aboriginal Studies Class](#) (2018).
- [Teaching resources](#) for activist history.
- [Using a barometer exercise for students](#) to map perspectives and opinions.
- [How to Broaden Students' Sense of History](#).

Additional Research & Resources Related to Critically Examining History

- [Research on why talking about historical systemic social barriers](#) can have important long-term benefits.
- [Research on the role of teachers](#) in decolonizing education.

If you know the history of public schools in this country, you know exactly what public schools were designed to do. You know that they are doing exactly what they were designed to do. And you know that they were designed to create this social hierarchy that is, by design, unequal, unfair, structurally unjust, that created an unequal distribution of resources and opportunity and at the same time normed that in society such that there is not massive social unrest. It was completely deliberate.

Jeff Duncan-Andrade

Founder of Roses in Concrete Community School in the USA. (Quote taken from "[Jeff Duncan Andrade: The game is rigged \(inequity by design\)](#)," 2017, a video on the oppressive history of public schooling)

HOW TO COLLECTIVELY ENVISION SUCCESS

Join and facilitate exploration of education’s purpose, and who decides that purpose. Consider the community’s history, future, assets, and challenges alongside students and their families. Develop and evolve a clear vision of student success.



Contribute your own techniques for **collectively envisioning success** to our growing library... and see what others have contributed [here](#).

When I went to their home, I asked about their childhood. I asked about what responsibilities they have at home. What’s the relationship between the parents and the student? What is the parents’ philosophy or expectations for their kids?

Cai Hanyun

Teach For China Alumna. (Quote taken from [“A vision for rural China,”](#) 2013)



Something very important when (our new teachers) arrive in their community is for them to understand the context, the strengths in that context, and the areas of opportunity and to achieve an impact in the areas where it is more needed.

It has to be something that lasts, and for that we have to involve the students’ circle of influence.

Marta Pujado Morato

Tutor, Enseña Por México.

(Quote taken from [“Agents of Change: Building a Vision for Mexico,”](#) 2014)

Other Sources:

- [Globally Informed, Locally Rooted Visions of Student Success](#)
- [Detailed Insights: Visions of Student Success](#)

Concrete, Actionable Techniques for Collectively Envisioning Success

MEET FAMILIES ON THEIR TERMS

Talk to parents. Rather than trying to persuade or enlist parents, let go of the agenda and hold space to listen to what they most want. Have the conversation somewhere they feel most comfortable.

ASK & LISTEN

Ask your students. Take the time to ask students what they want from education, and share your own perspective with them.

PRACTICE PROXIMITY

Go where the action is. Where do parents and other members of your community talk and share their point of view? Find those places, and go there to listen and learn.

Create Rituals to Revisit

Describing co-creation to the fellows, I drew a diagram starting with a stick figure with a speech bubble. This speech bubble represents what you yourself really really want. But then there are two other stick figures, and they have their own speech bubbles. And these three bubbles form a Venn diagram together. So your task is to not just move towards your own speech bubble but to understand what is the Venn diagram of the visions of those different people. How can you go forward together? And what we experience is that it’s immensely difficult to give up what you want and to create something together with other people.



Kristi Klaasmägi

Former CEO, Noored Kooli

Success for my students is to get to know what they really want and to set a goal that they can achieve thanks to their academic development. To decide who they are and where they come from, so they have the social awareness to search for solutions for their community. It’s not just numbers. It’s not just graphics. It can be turned into reality.

Jacobo Mendoza Saul Alvarez

Enseña Por México Alumnus. (Quote taken from [“Agents of Change: Building a Vision for Mexico,”](#) 2014)

What Does Collectively Envisioning Success Look Like?



Contextualized local visions of success around the world

Check out this [compilation](#) from 2015 of powerful reflections from teachers all around the world who are collaborating with students, families, and communities to envision student success.



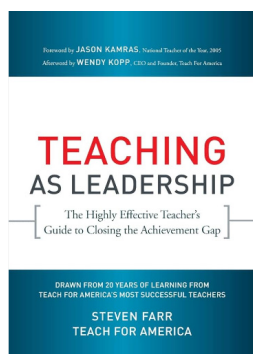
The role of respect and relationships in envisioning success in Nepal

What does it take to develop a locally rooted vision? What becomes possible when you approach education in a way that listens deeply to the community? In this [video](#) from 2015, Shisir Khanal of Teach For Nepal argues that while this takes time and patience, the outcome is an approach to education that is sustainable, as everyone is invested in the work.

My vision for my students has been evolving ever since I joined them. They were moving at a really fast pace, but I kept thinking, what's next? Fine, they can read and they speak, but how much do they understand? How much can they think critically? What can they do on their own? How brave are they in front of other people? It was something that was evolving from being with them. It was consciously not planned. I just see change happen and it makes me want to go back and redraw what I want for them.

Nirali Vasisht

Teach For India Alumna. (Quote taken from [My Vision: 'No limits!'](#), 2012)



What's the difference between BIG GOALS and VISION?

Many organizations in the Teach For All network have used Teaching As Leadership's concept of "big goals" to show new teachers how clear, ambitious aims can help align and motivate hard work in the classroom. Our collective studies of transformational classrooms are confirming that ambitious aims are powerful but also that who decides those aims is just as important. Rather than the teacher deciding the "big goal," educators should host ongoing conversations among students, families, and communities about how, together, they are defining student success.

Other Places to See Collectively Envisioning Success

- [Wendy Kopp's reflections on a community-based exploration of purpose in North Carolina.](#)
- [Stories on Vision: "Why Is this Family So Satisfied, and Why Is This Teacher So Angry?"](#)



In Spain, [Empieza Por Educar](#) brought together students, families, and educators to reflect on how their classrooms were and were not aligned with the collectively developed vision. Not only did educators report the ritual helped them make adjustments in classrooms, but student and family input challenged and changed the vision of success, empowering them to feel ownership of the education process.



Anseye Pou Ayiti (Haiti) has made collective co-construction of purpose a daily commitment. Local relationship building is the foundation. Grandmothers, students, and others have space to collaborate in the organization's offices. Through recurring rituals that "hold space" for sometimes difficult conversations, educators and coaches seek to listen and understand about local values, challenges, and aspirations.



Against the backdrop of a history of genocide, enormous national pride, and a struggling post-Soviet economy, **Teach For Armenia** facilitated conversations with students, families, historians, economists, educators, and staff members about the purpose of education. An evolving collective vision has emerged of students as the builders of a new Armenia — entrepreneurial problem solvers who are not only providing for themselves and their families but also advocating for education for all children in Armenia and "contributing to the systemic development of Armenia and her position in the changing global economy."

This vision is helping Teach For Armenia recognize ways that the country's current classroom models are falling short of — if not inhibiting — that vision. Now, Teach For Armenia is critically reimagining everything from student outcomes to teacher development to education policy by asking, "How do we align ourselves to that collective vision?"

SHARE

Make your voice heard:

Help us evolve and improve these ideas and resources

Teaching As Collective Leadership has been collectively developed with input from teachers, teacher coaches, students, families, researchers, and others from all around the world. We intend to continue that collective development as it is being tested, contextualized, and implemented. We encourage you to make this possible!

Below is our “digital bulletin board,” which we are constantly building (and rebuilding) with the input of generous readers who [share](#) their ideas in our **Co-learning Padlet**. Contribute to the evolution of the model by sharing your thoughts, questions, challenges, validations, illustrations, and links in our Co-learning Padlet.

LISTEN AND ENVISION

#CollectivelyEnvisionSuccess

Swastika Shrestha, Community at the Centre of Movement Building in Nepal

<https://vimeo.com/290068114>

#PartnerWithFamilies AndCommunities

BRAZIL: Mom literacy program to combat school dropout rates of youth.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hq5Ghjz8K6c>

#CollectivelyEnvisionSuccess

Vision-aligned work calls us to look outward to have a systemic perspective on our work, seeing the complex histories and contexts in which we are working. And it requires us to look inward at how we are behaving, and the ways our own perspective and mindset might be replicating, or transforming, the systems in which we work. We see this type of vision-aligned approach as an essential ingredient in our aim to achieve our goals as a network.

Anonymous

#CollectivelyEnvisionSuccess

(NEPAL, Unicef) TELE LEARNING Program between moms and kids, improving literacy and relationships.

<https://www.unicef.org/rosa/stories/tele-sikai-learning-new-reality>

#CollectivelyEnvisionSuccess

Sometimes our job is just to turn up and be there, to be present, and to listen. These moments are becoming more and more precious. Create a sense that you are not alone in this. Protect fellows and their time. This can be in tension with the idea of urgency, setting projects.

How are we showing up to a conversation? What can we do as organizations to make this a part of our culture?

Ulf Matysiak
CEO Teach First Deutschland

#Collectively Envision Success

REVITALIZE LANGUAGE: Indigenous Rural Canada

Award-winning teacher using lots of the language that TFA likes. Could also be a spotlighted “music teacher” as that part gets developed.

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=6-m7397CckE>

Maggie MacDonnell



Contribute to our “Listen and Envision” Digital Bulletin Board [\(Here\)](#)

INTRODUCTION TO LEARN & DESIGN TO PLAN LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Most of the work of strong teaching happens before and after classroom lessons. Careful planning ensures that learning experiences align with our vision, meet the needs of all students, and align with how we best learn.

LEARN & DESIGN to plan learning experiences

BUILD CRITICAL KNOWLEDGE

We develop expertise in the subjects we are teaching, in content pedagogy, and in child development.

PLAN BACKWARDS

We design and sequence lesson and unit plans with “the end in mind,” ensuring that teacher and student efforts lead to classroom vision and goals.

VALUE LEARNER VARIABILITY & OWNERSHIP

We seek to understand our students’ strengths, interests, experiences, and ways of learning to inform plans to maximize student growth and ownership of learning.

EXPECT HIGHER-ORDER THINKING

We design lessons that build from students’ understanding and application of new ideas to analysis, evaluation, and creation.

LEVERAGE LEARNING THEORY

Intentionally chooses and metacognitively teaches learning principles to design experiences that accelerate student growth.

Our goals can only be reached through a vehicle of a plan, in which we must fervently believe, and upon which we must vigorously act. There is no other route to success.

Pablo Picasso
Artist

Without leaps of imagination or dreaming, we lose the excitement of possibilities. Dreaming, after all, is a form of planning.

Gloria Steinem
Civil rights leader

The transformational teachers studied in the Global Learning Lab’s “learning loops” have described what we see in the classroom as the “tip of the iceberg.” Most of what we are seeing in classrooms is the result of thoughtful preparation and planning, even if teachers are adjusting those plans as they implement them.

The LEARN & DESIGN strategy attempts to capture the most important actions surfacing in those studies of transformational classrooms and teachers, but perhaps the most important insight is that the preparation and planning of great teachers are too often undervalued.

In the words of the 16th U.S. president, Abraham Lincoln, “Give me six hours to chop down a tree, I will spend the first four sharpening the ax.”

Being teachers during the pandemic challenged us to rethink how our students were learning. Despite being in different schools, we decided to plan learning experiences together, with one big idea in mind: putting the student at the center without neglecting pedagogical rigor.

We learned the importance of proper planning, including what we called “pre-planning,” in order to design transformative learning experiences. Before starting the design process, we would analyze the context of our students, the resources they had access to, their interests, their relationship with their families, and their needs.

By taking all these factors into account, we created meaningful and relevant learning experiences that catered to our students’ unique circumstances. The collaboration and pre-planning allowed us to adapt our teaching methods and ensure that our students continued to receive a quality education, even in challenging times.

Leslie Ordinola and Alexandra Vassallo
Alumnae of Enseña Perú

HOW TO BUILD CRITICAL KNOWLEDGE

Study both the content you will be teaching and how your students will perceive and misperceive that content. Familiarize yourself with the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development milestones of your students.

BUILD CRITICAL KNOWLEDGE
We develop expertise on the subjects we are teaching, in content pedagogy and in child development.

Concrete, Actionable Techniques for Building Critical Knowledge

BE A STUDENT OF YOUR CONTENT

Find an online course, a website, a book. Stretch your own knowledge of your subject matter while you are asking students to stretch theirs. Khan Academy's [free online repository](#) of rich content lessons (and others like it) is a favorite resource for teachers who need to refresh their own understanding of content.

ACKNOWLEDGE TO STUDENTS YOU ARE LEARNING TOO

The strongest teachers acknowledge to their students they do not know all the content and invest students in helping them learn it together. Call out when you don't know something. Call out when you make a mistake you are learning from. Celebrate moments when students are helping you learn the content.



Nerd Out With Colleagues

Find a park or pub or any space and regularly nerd out with other colleagues who teach and love the content they are teaching. VISIT THEIR CLASSROOMS. This will bring out the passion you bring to the classroom!

Brent Maddin

Executive Director, Next Education Workforce Initiative at Arizona State University

Walk the Talk

Always complete assignments yourself before teaching and assigning them. You'll better understand how students will receive, understand, and misunderstand your lessons.

Nancie Atwell

Global Teacher Prize Winner. Quote taken from [Teach For All Talks](#) (2016)



Guess the Confusion

When planning the lesson, try and figure out where students might be most confused. You can then prepare in advance to address these troublesome spots. After class, reflect on how accurate your guesses were and refine your lesson for the future.

Gaurav Singh

A Teach For India Alumnus and the founder of 321 Education



Contribute your own techniques for **building critical knowledge** to our growing library... and see what others have contributed [here](#).

Our own content knowledge affects how we interpret the content goals we are expected to reach with our students. It affects the way we hear and respond to our students and their questions. It affects our ability to explain clearly and to ask good questions. It affects our ability to approach an [new] idea flexibly with our students and to make connections. It affects our ability to push each student at that special moment when he or she is ready or curious. And it affects our ability to make those moments happen more often for our students.

Glenda Lappan

Former President of the U.S. National Council of Teachers of Mathematics

Critical thinking only develops when we have a strong foundational knowledge of content to think about.

Doug Lemov

Author of Teach Like a Champion

Get “Meta” About Your Content

Explore how the subject is taught in different countries. Explore how it has been taught in different historical eras. At a minimum, you will gain a deeper understanding of curriculum choices, and at best you will get lots of enhancements to use in your own teaching.



Gaurav Singh

A Teach For India Alumnus and the founder of 321 Education, an organization built around helping teachers facilitate effective learning

Recommended Resources for Teachers Who Want to Refresh Their Content Knowledge

Reading & Writing

- [Literacy Strategies That Work](#)
- [Supporting Equitable Literacy Instruction through Text Selection, Analysis, and Use](#)
- [Bridging Foundational Reading Gaps in Middle School](#)

Science & Math

- [Khan Academy](#)
- [How to Learn Math: For Students](#)
- [Designing Effective Numeracy Programs in Low- and Middle-Income Countries](#)
- [The Liberating Quality of Open, Creative Mathematics](#)

Art, Drama, Physical Education

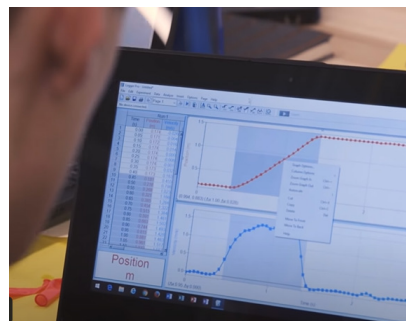
- [Art & Ideas: Teaching With Themes](#) (MoMa)
- [Teaching Critical Thinking Through Art With the National Gallery of Art](#)

What Does Critical Knowledge Look Like In the Classroom?



Prapti’s STEM classroom

Teach For India Alumna [Prapti Bhasin](#) used active, discovery-based, collective learning to help students learn square roots.



Mission to Mars

[Physics students in the U.S.](#) learn physics by assuming the role of aerospace engineers to explore the real-world problem of how to land a rover on Mars.



Kenyan science classroom

Global Teacher Prize Winner [Peter Tabichi](#) engages with the community and families to draw students into rigorous science content in and outside of his classroom.



Singapore's education revolution

By cultivating strong school leadership, committing to ongoing professional development, and exploring innovative models like its technology-infused Future Schools, Singapore has become one of the top-scoring countries on the PISA tests. [Check out](#) a rich, fun, activity-driven primary math classroom here. And check out an overview of Singapore's 21st-Century Teaching Strategy [here](#).

Other Places to See How Teachers Build Critical Knowledge

- [Insights from Teach For All's "Global Learning Loop" on Rigor in STEM.](#)
- [Thinking, Doing, Talking Science](#), an [Education Endowment Foundation \(EEF\)](#) program that makes lessons in primary schools more practical, creative, and challenging.

Children know what's best for them. They need to play. They need to learn. They need to be physically active. So, today we are in our math class, but we are outside because we are combining mathematics and physical activity and movement... They are finding out how these lines need to be parallel and vertical. They are doing it by themselves. This is very important for the kids because of their self-confidence. They are finding it out and having a successful feeling.



Marie-Christine Ghanbari Jahromi

Teacher, Germany. Quote taken from [Raising self-esteem with sport](#) (2018)

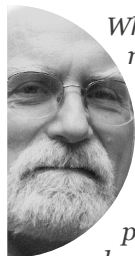
HOW TO PLAN BACKWARDS

Clarify your daily objectives and unit/year goals and concretely imagine and design how you will know your students have reached them. Plan classroom learning experiences to lead students to succeed on those measures.

PLAN BACKWARDS
We design and sequence lesson and unit plans with “the end in mind,” ensuring that teacher and student efforts lead to classroom vision and goals.



Contribute your own techniques for **planning backwards** to our growing library... and see what others have contributed [here](#).



What we need to see more clearly is that the common learner’s failure to transfer is not a student weakness or a teaching deficit but a mistake in planning. You have to design backward from

the goal of transfer if you want to achieve it. Too often, though, teachers merely teach, then ask in their tests: Did you learn my lesson?

Grant Wiggin

President and director of programs for the Center on Learning, Assessment, and School Structure (CLASS). Author of Understanding By Design. Quote taken from [“What is UbD? Grant Wiggins Answers, with Video Cases,”](#) (2012)

TRADITIONAL LESSON DESIGN

- Decide on the content that needs to be covered.
- Plan a series of lessons that cover that content.
- Create an assessment to cover that content.

BACKWARDS DESIGN

- Identify what students should know and can do by the end of the learning cycle.
- Create an assessment to measure that learning.
- Plan a sequence of lessons that prepares students to successfully complete the assessment.

Concrete, Actionable Techniques for Planning Backwards

Exit Tickets

Start with thinking about the bite-sized objective of a lesson and what opportunities students have to demonstrate that learning. Build your lessons backward from there, providing enough time for students to engage with content and material. Think beyond little surveys to multiple forms of authentic checks for understanding.



Robbie Dean

Director of Research, Evaluation, and Network Learning at Teach For All

Walk Through Your Plans

Don’t ask students to do anything you wouldn’t do or haven’t done. Follow your own instructions and complete your own assignments when planning to identify gaps and misconceptions prior to rolling them out with students.



Wisdom Amouzou

Full-time artist at Remix Designs, 10 years of experience working within the public education system

Two Key Questions

To plan any learning experience (a lesson, a unit, a year) start by answering two key questions: (1) After this learning experience, what will students know and be able to do that they couldn’t before? and (2) How will I know that they know/ can do this?



Gaurav Singh

A Teach For India Alumnus and the founder of 321 Education

Know and Show What “Good” Looks Like



Have a clear example of what success looks like at the end of a learning experience. These could be examples of exemplary student responses or finished projects. Show them to the students at the start (show; don't just tell) so they can tangibly see what success looks like. Tangible examples give clarity and motivation.

Gaurav Singh

A Teach For India Alumnus and the founder of 321 Education, an organization built around helping teachers facilitate effective learning

Activate Prior Knowledge

Before covering new content, encourage students to share what they already know about this topic. This could be through KWL charts (Know; Want to Know; Learned), word splashes, or guessing games. This helps students connect new learning to existing knowledge.

Gaurav Singh

A Teach For India Alumnus and the founder of 321 Education, an organization built around helping teachers facilitate effective learning

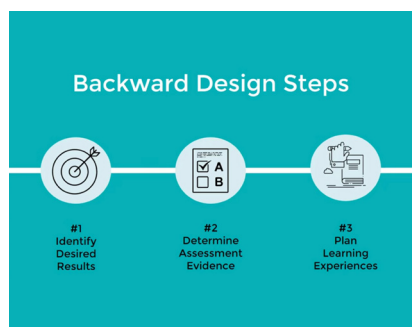
GLOSSARY

Transformative Classroom: These are classrooms where students seem to be on a different trajectory. They are making dramatic progress in their wellbeing, connectedness, awareness, agency, and mastery. That growth is transforming their paths and opportunities going forward.

Global Learning Loop: This concept is what we have called the mini-courses we host in which people from around the world virtually visit classrooms in different countries and share what they think we can learn from them. The Global Learning Lab has also worked with many partner organizations to host their “learning loops,” where staff come together to learn from their strongest classrooms.

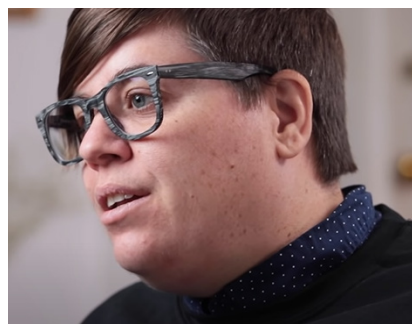
We asked students in some of the **transformational classrooms** studied in our **learning loops** about how they experience backward planning:

- *I appreciate when my teacher co-creates timetables with us at the beginning of the day, and we have goals to complete by the end of the week.*
- *I like when we can manage our own time and day in school. We were given a checklist to finish by the end of the week.*
- *My teacher let us, the students, set our goals and make plans to reach the goals, and after one week, we will review it.*



Guide to backward design with examples

Designing lessons with the end in mind is different from traditional lesson planning. This [video](#) explores those differences.



Backward design: A great way to move forward

Canadian educator Shelley Moore explores and illustrates backwards planning, suggesting that the first step in making curriculum responsive is to make a plan and know what curricular goals we are aiming to achieve. This [video](#) also emphasizes the importance of communicating clear goals to students and their families, because if the learning intention is clear, we can figure out multiple ways to get there.

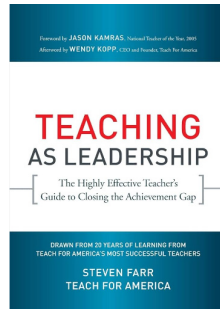
Other Places to See Backwards Planning

- *Teaching As Leadership* chapter on Backwards Planning.
- [Backwards Planning Takes Thinking Ahead.](#)
- Jay McTighe's [The Fundamentals of Backward Planning.](#)
- [Deepening Learning With Understanding by Design.](#)



Design thinking for educators

Design experts at IDEO have created [a set of tools](#) and resources to help teachers bring design thinking to their classrooms.



Success in any meaningful endeavor — from brain surgery in the operating room to brain development in the classroom — begins with purposeful planning. Before taking any action, strong leaders define the ultimate result they want, make clear how they will know they have succeeded, and only then choose and design strategies to that end. Mapping a path to success means imagining, with all the gritty detail possible, leading your team to that vision of success.

From *Teaching As Leadership: The Highly Effective Teacher's Guide to Closing the Achievement Gap*

Tools That Help Align Daily Actions to Classroom Vision of Student Success

	I aim to reach the target student by the end of the year	I aim to ensure every student gets an opportunity to learn	I aim to ensure every student has a voice in the classroom	I aim to ensure every student has a chance to lead	I aim to ensure every student has a chance to grow	I aim to ensure every student has a chance to shine
When planning my lessons...						
When delivering my lessons...						

ALIGNING ACTIONS WITH PURPOSE

Implications of Vision: Exercise

Instructions
This tool is aimed at helping you reflect on the daily implications of vision of student success. Read the three teacher reflections below, and consider the student outcomes, teacher actions, or teacher attitudes that are implied by each.

Teacher Reflection 1
My students will grow into adults who are hardworking and passionate about their work. They will be curious, self-directed and capable of taking on challenges, and will enjoy their careers and their communities. They will be able to influence each other to make real-world positive changes.

What student outcomes at the end of the year give confidence students are making progress toward the vision?
[Text box for response]

What teacher actions define successful teaching?
[Text box for response]

DAILY IMPLICATIONS OF VISION

Self-diagnosis on Vision

Instructions
This tool is aimed at helping you reflect on your vision for student success. There are no right or wrong answers - it is purely designed for your own reflection and growth. You should use it as a guide.

- Do the things each question is asking, and think about what you are doing to make it happen.
- Think about how you are doing, and what you need to do to make it happen.
- Identify at least 3 areas where there is a gap between what you are doing and what you need to do, and write down what you will do to address these gaps.

Consistency of Content/aligned
How regularly reflective of my teaching is my vision of student success?
[Scale: 1 (Never) to 5 (Always)]

Product of Processes
Is my vision of student success viewed as a project that is completed or an on-going and working conversation?
[Scale: 1 (Never) to 5 (Always)]

SELF-DIAGNOSIS ON VISION

HOW TO VALUE LEARNER VARIABILITY AND OWNERSHIP

Informed by your understanding of your student's strengths, needs, interests, and challenges, give students choice and responsibility wherever possible—content, process, rules, learning styles, and routines.

VALUE LEARNER
VARIABILITY & OWNERSHIP
We seek to understand our students' strengths, interests, experiences, and ways of learning to inform plans to maximize student growth and ownership of learning.

Concrete, Actionable Techniques for Valuing Learner Variability & Ownership

ALLOW FAILURE AND REFLECTION

Plan moments that allow your students to embrace [failure and reflection](#). Having the freedom to fail is as important as having the time to reflect and learn from their experiences.

Choice, Choice, Choice

Many of the teachers we studied emphasized the power of involving students in key decisions, classroom design, research topics, challenge problems, classroom roles, etc. And give space for students' passions.

Franco, Ale, and Morayma
Teach For All network members

Have Students Teach!

Encourage students to conduct research on the designated topic and exchange their findings with one another.

Nicole Ames
Enseña Perú Alumna



Contribute your own techniques for **valuing learner variability and ownership** to our growing library... and see what others have contributed [here](#).

Active Learning as a Way to Be Inclusive

In my school, there are many students with special educational needs. Several of them are mathematically gifted. But there are also many students who have great difficulty in learning mathematics.

One of my biggest challenges was finding a compromise in teaching math to students of all abilities while developing 4Cs competencies. I realized that in order to make math education more inclusive, I needed to focus on project-based learning.



Patrycja Janekankit

Teach for Poland fellow. Quote taken from the article ["STEAM projects are a pathway to modern education"](#)

Other Sources:

- [10 Ways to Empower Students With Choice.](#)
- [Self-Paced Learning in Middle School Math.](#)
- [Differentiation to challenge.](#)

On an individual scale, we start from the cognitive and social science premise that a multitude of factors influence learning. For example, processing and attention differences, mental health, cultural and stereotype threats, and socioeconomic status all contribute to one's ability to access, process, and retain information. In a given setting, individual students widely differ in how they read, understand lectures, take notes, retrieve and link knowledge, and communicate with others. Research has demonstrated that individual learner variability in a classroom, or any environment, is the norm.

Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, & Equity

Quote taken from "[Student Engagement in Assessments: What Students and Teachers Find Engaging](#)," (2016)

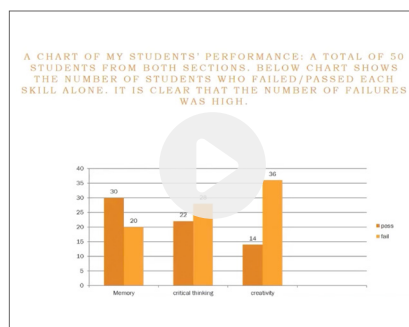
GLOSSARY

Agency: By agency, we mean students' (or our own) conviction and ability to make changes in themselves and the world around them..

How do you inspire self-efficacy in students who have spent years believing they have limited potential? How do you build students' courage to dream when they've been deprived of opportunity? How do you develop the independence and leadership in students that are necessary for them to take ownership of their dreams and make them a reality? These are the hard questions [Claudia Araya](#) (Enseña Chile, 2012) confronted when she first met her students in Limache, Chile. Claudia started to think about how she could create a space in her classroom for students to build confidence and develop independence in order to successfully pursue an unlimited vision for their own lives.



What Does Valuing Learner Variability & Ownership Look Like?



Metacognition fosters learner ownership

Metacognition, or "learning to learn," is a critical component for supporting students to grow and develop their own agency and awareness of who they are and how they learn. Watch this [video](#) from 2020 summarizing a Teach For All workshop, hosted by Rachel Brody, to reflect on your own learning and hear from Teach For Lebanon alumna and 2020 Oak Foundation Fellow Lubna Al Majthoub on how she applied metacognitive practices in her own classroom.

Other Places to See Learner Variability and Ownership

- [Four Simple Steps to Providing Free-Choice Learning.](#)
- [Self-Paced Learning in Middle School Math.](#)
- [Seven Things that Happen When Students Own Their Learning.](#)
- [Europass: The Seven C's of 21st-Century Teaching and Learning.](#)



What do students want to learn?

Consider giving students the opportunity to communicate to your classroom or the school [what they are interested in learning.](#)



Students describe their need for ownership

In this [video](#) from the National Institute for Excellent Teaching, you can hear students' experiences with learning, experiences that do and do not center their agency, as well as concrete advice from students for teachers about how to ensure student ownership.

Additional Research & Resources Related to Valuing Learner Variability & Ownership

In 2022, Teach For All network partner teachers and teacher trainers participated in the [Global Teacher and Teacher Coach Study](#), beta-testing classroom observation and reflection tools built from these Teaching As Collective Leadership insights. Among the recurring themes in that study was the importance of student ownership and differentiation. As one teacher in the study put it:

There was lots of resistance at first with students communicating their needs. But I stayed with them, giving them tips, building trust, and being open, and this has helped students gain confidence, and slowly but surely become leaders. Some of the best discussions have been ideas proposed by students, it has been a very humbling experience. I have learned how to approach students from different viewpoints. It's the students taking charge of the topics.

In reading, I would often bring four different stories and students would get to choose the one that captured their interest. I had chosen the stories so that all of them were at the same level of content/rigor, but their ability to choose added to their motivation.



Morayma Jiménez

Certified bilingual teacher for primary school, 2011 Teach For America Alumna, Enseña por México former Head of Training, and current Global Lead, Participant Leadership Development at Teach For All

HOW TO EXPECT HIGHER-ORDER THINKING

Build your awareness of the ratio of student effort that focuses on understanding, remembering, and applying rather than analyzing, evaluating, and creating. And design lessons that balance that ratio.

EXPECT HIGHER-ORDER THINKING
We design lessons that build from students' understanding and application of new ideas to analysis, evaluation, and creation.



Contribute your own techniques for **expecting higher-order thinking** to our growing library...and see what others have contributed [here](#).

Too many students are in classrooms that center on basic remembering and understanding (at the bottom of Bloom's), and never draw students farther toward higher cognitive demand of application, analysis, evaluation, and creation. While we should not "skip" the lower levels of Bloom's Taxonomy, we cannot stop there if we aspire to grow students as leaders of a better future.

GLOSSARY

Grow Students: We have chosen the verb "grow" in this phrase because we feel it's more active and meaningful than more traditional terms like "develop." We made this intentional choice to inspire readers to pause and think about the opportunity and responsibility we have to help students be prepared for a very different future than the one that shaped conventional classroom models.

Leaders Of A Better Future: This is a concept that emerged years ago, when Teach For All hosted a collective, year-long reflection process among students, teachers, teacher developers, CEOs, community leaders, and families about the aims of our network. One clear theme in those conversations was the changing and challenging world today's students are inheriting, and the need for education to prepare them to face and improve that future for themselves and others.

Bloom's Taxonomy

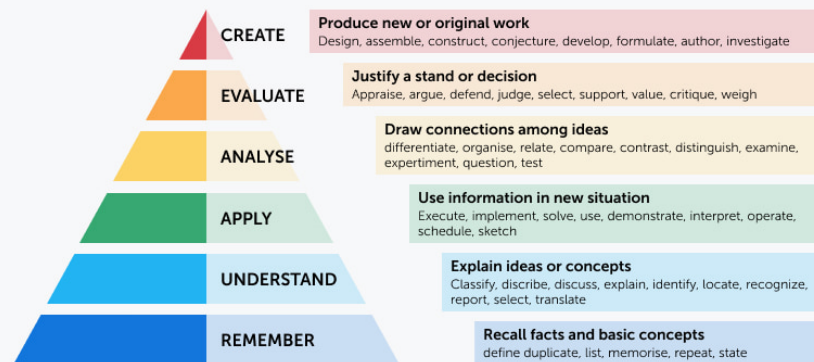


Image source: Bloom's taxonomy by Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching (adapted).

If you are not familiar with Bloom's Taxonomy, check out this [Teacher's Guide to Bloom's Taxonomy](#).

Concrete, Actionable Techniques for Expecting Higher-Order Thinking

Lean Toward "Open" Assignments

Sometimes I give pretty detailed instructions about how students need to complete a project. But I also try to give more open tasks where our focus is on the goal and outcome and students have to figure out the path.

Sahithya Anumolu
Co-founder at Inqui-Lab Foundation





Delay the Answer

The moment the right answer comes out in the class, everyone stops thinking. Delay the right answer for as long as possible to promote thinking. You do this by asking a question and giving students thinking time and giving hints to encourage all students to think.

Gaurav Singh

A Teach For India Alumnus and the founder of 321 Education, an organization built around helping teachers facilitate effective learning



No One Answer!

Ask students questions that have multiple answers, and have them explain their thought process on how they arrived at said answer.

Claudia Anthony

Teach For Malaysia Alumna

Teach Design Thinking

Teach students skills of design thinking. Identify a problem, define the problem, come up with an idea, and prototype the idea. Both techniques and processes and to build a problem solver mindset.

Sahithya Anumolu

Co-founder at Inqui-Lab Foundation

Expectations Rubrics

Giving a rubric of what is expected, setting students up to do independent projects and figure out how to fulfill that rubric (without the teacher).

Anjali Sabnani

Teach For India

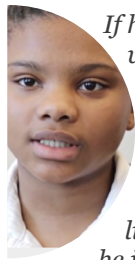
Other Sources:

- [Teaching Strategies That Enhance Higher-Order Thinking.](#)
- [“Essential Questions” as Foundation for Higher-Order Thinking.](#)



Classrooms Meet Higher Order Thinking

Amsterdam educator [Dylan Hyman](#) wants to inspire teachers and students to create their own world and practice the sort of thinking skills they will need to make their wildest dreams a reality. She incorporates activities that encourage higher-order thinking in the classroom and is a champion of bringing innovative “20 percent time” to schools.



If he would just tell me what he thought, I wouldn't really think about what I think. I wouldn't have an opinion. I feel like I would be a robot just listening to whatever he is saying... but I would still have my own opinion in my head that I couldn't really share.

Chandler Palmer

Former student of Taylor Delhagen (Teach For America alumnus) who uses difficult, probing, critical questions to help students develop critical thinking, analysis, and problem-solving skills. Quote taken from ["Critical Minds"](#) (2014)

Additional Research & Resources Related To Expecting Higher Order Thinking

- [Factors Influencing Students' Higher Order Thinking Skills Development.](#)
- [Using Visual Thinking Strategies in the Classroom.](#)



Encouraging critical thinking

What kind of questions teachers and parents ask children has a great effect on whether they can develop critical minds. [In this TEDx talk](#) from Xiguan, China, teacher evaluator Brian Oshiro shares what he has observed in the classroom that contributes to higher-order thinking and offers three simple questions we can ask to encourage critical thinking by the children and ourselves.

What Does Expecting Higher-Order Thinking Look Like?



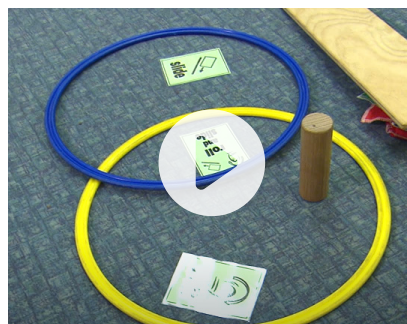
Real-world problem solving in Thailand's alternative schools

From hands-on lessons in the river, to teaching students to cook their own lunch as well as other survival skills, [here's](#) how Thailand's alternative schools take a different approach to education from mainstream schools.



Design for change: Feel-Imagine-Do-Share

This simple [design-thinking framework](#) cultivates the "I Can" mindset in all children and centers teaching and learning in higher-order thinking. This approach builds "Creative Confidence" in children.



Expecting higher-order thinking with younger students in Australia

Virtually [visit](#) a classroom where the teacher is using critical thinking, discovery, analysis, and evaluation even with young students. Notice how much the students (and teacher) enjoy learning in these ways.

Other Places to See "Developing Higher-Order Thinking"

- [Video introduction to Bloom's Taxonomy.](#)
- [A Pixar movie's illustration of Bloom's Taxonomy.](#)
- ["Vertical learning" – A model of collective critical thinking.](#)

HOW TO LEVERAGE LEARNING THEORY

Make the lesson fun. Connect to students' lives. Invite debate and multiple perspectives. Be clear on the question you want students to explore. Design space for students to make their own meaning. Challenge student assumptions. Use principles from development theory to help structure your design.

**LEVERAGE
LEARNING THEORY**
Intentionally choose
and metacognitively teach
learning principles to design
experiences that accelerate
student growth.

As we have studied the growth journeys of transformational teachers across and beyond our network and married those stories and experiences with expertise and research in adult learning and development, several key qualities of transformational learning experiences have emerged. We are expressing those insights as “**polarities**,” since it seems that the most powerful learning experiences capture healthy tensions between two ideas that might, at first, seem incompatible. These polarities are “yin/yang” not “good/bad.” They are “interdependent opposites” not a “spectrum.”

We are finding that the key to designing exceptional, meaningful, transformational learning experiences is to think AND not OR. Transformational classrooms seem to create learning experiences for students that are both:

WELCOMING
*ensuring safe inclusion
for all identities*

&

DISORIENTING
*dismantling assumptions
that inhibit growth*

COLLECTIVE
*learning with and
from each other*

&

PERSONAL
learning in our own best way

DIRECTIVE
*communicating, showing, and telling
in clear and accessible ways*

&

EXPLORATORY
*questioning, exploring, and discovering
in unexpected ways*

STRUCTURED
*building in planned and predictable
ways on what is known*

&

RESPONSIVE
*adjusting to address learners' curiosity,
questions, and confusion*

REFLECTIVE
*gaining awareness
of ourselves and others*

&

ACTIVE
*applying, practicing,
and creating*

For a much deeper exploration of these learning principles, and some foundational insights about how humans learn (that we are conditioned to ignore), go to our chapter on [“Learning About Learning.”](#)



Contribute your own techniques for **leveraging learning theory** to our growing library... and see what others have contributed [here](#).

*I never attempt to teach my pupils.
I only attempt to provide the
conditions in which they can learn.*

Albert Einstein
World famous physicist

*In designing learning,
there's a delicate dance
between meeting
students where they
are and opening
up new horizons. A
process of deepening
and broadening
understanding. In
order to open up new
thinking, carefully consider what
background knowledge might be
needed and what developmental
assumptions you might be making.*



Jude Heaton
Former partner, Learning Design Through
Insights & Storytelling, Teach For All. Worked
on developing Teaching As Collective
Leadership for the last six years

Structure your lessons the way stories are structured, using the four Cs: causality, conflict, complications, and character. This doesn't mean you must do most of the talking. Small group work or projects or any other method may be used. The story structure applies to the way you organize the material that you encourage your students to think about, not to the methods you use to teach the material.

The material I want students to learn is actually the answer to a question. On its own, the answer is almost never interesting. But if you know the question, the answer may be quite interesting. That's why making the question clear is so important. I sometimes feel that we, as teachers, are so focused on getting to the answer, we spend insufficient time making sure that students understand the question and appreciate its significance. To us, the question and its importance are obvious. To them, they aren't.

Daniel T. Willingham

Cognitive Scientist at the University of Virginia. Quote taken from his book *Why Don't Students Like School?* (2009)

Concrete, Actionable Techniques for Leveraging Learning Theory

Get Students to Present and Teach

Ask them to write to someone/something that will be shared and presented to an actual audience. This helps make the task real.

Sahithya Anumolu

Co-founder at Inqui-Lab Foundation



Let Students Explore and Discover

The thing I found the most fun learning at school, for example, my history teacher would teach us a topic, supposing it's WWI and she would show us a video instead of explaining everything in detail and she would always start the class with music, the music from that period.

Mihaan

Student

Plan Your Lesson Like a Journey

Think of the different stages of the lesson and how it fits together. Think of the different energy needed at each stage. Think of the emotional journey. That doesn't mean you have to map out each part, but it helps you put yourself in the learners' shoes, and think of the lesson as a whole. It also gives a structure to balance different elements like times of uncertainty and disorientation, alongside discovery.

Jude Heaton

Former partner, Learning Design Through Insights & Storytelling, Teach For All. Worked on developing Teaching As Collective Leadership for the last six years



Don't Be Boring

Research tells us that if we fail to invest our students within the first five minutes of class it is nearly impossible to hook them back to our topic. Thus, we cannot be boring. Our time with our students is immensely precious and we all deserve time that is fun, exciting, and worth digging into.

Virtually every teacher and student we have studied and spoken with

Manage Pace

The solution to working memory overloads is straightforward: slow the pace, and use memory aids such as writing on the whiteboard to save students from keeping too much information in working memory.

Daniel T. Willingham

Cognitive Scientist at the University of Virginia. Quote taken from his book *Why Don't Students Like School?* (2009)

Other Sources:

- [Vertical learning.](#)
- [Sharing your planning.](#)
- [Learning stations.](#)

Other Places to See Leveraging Learning Theory

- [Strategies for Teaching Metacognition in Classrooms.](#)
- [Insights from Teach For All's Global Learning Loop on Metacognition.](#)
- [Metacognition and Self-Regulated Learning in Student-Centered Learning Environments.](#)

SHARE

Make your voice heard:

Help us evolve and improve these ideas and resources

Teaching As Collective Leadership has been collectively developed with input from teachers, teacher coaches, students, families, researchers, and others from all around the world. We intend to continue that collective development as we test, contextualize, and implement it. We encourage you to make this possible!

Below is our “digital bulletin board,” which we are constantly building (and rebuilding) with the input of generous readers who share their ideas in our **Co-learning Padlet**. Contribute to the evolution of the model by sharing your thoughts, questions, challenges, validations, illustrations, and links in our Co-learning Padlet ([here](#)).

LEARN AND DESIGN

#PlanBackwards

“When you plan a lesson, you start with the information you want students to know by its end. As a next step, consider what the key question for that lesson might be and how you can frame that question so it will have the right level of difficulty to engage your students, and so you will respect your students’ cognitive limitations.”

Daniel T. Willingham

Cognitive scientist at the University of Virginia. Quote taken from his book *Why Don't Students Like School?: A Cognitive Scientist Answers Questions About How the Mind Works and What It Means for the Classroom*

#ExpectHigherOrderThinking

Education Buzzwords Defined: What Is Blended Learning?

[Blended Learning Visual Thinking](#)

#LeverageLearningTheory

Perspective taking vs. the one right answer

Debating things that are introduced (like moral stories) instead of being a “specific” takeaway; allowing for perspectives of the students; discussion and debate.

Nalika

#ValueLearnerVariability andOwnership

The 20-Minute Rule: While still debated, I found on average, my students’ attention will fade every 20 minutes (or less). This is true even for mature adults with fully developed brains! So try to imagine you are a youth, still developing so many skills and literally growing your brain and neuro pathways! So, when designing a class, break it down into smaller 20-minute (or less) blocks/activities. Create little transitions between these blocks. Like telling a funny story, having a stretch, laughing at a meme, playing 60 seconds from a popular song, etc. Also, the more you lecture the more attention issues you may have. The more “active learning,” the more focus you will have.

<https://www.teachstarter.com/us/blog/10-ways-to-improve-student-concentration-us/>

#LeverageLearningTheory

[Vertical Learning](#)

Almost as if the teacher works smarter (and less) while the students are more engaged than ever! Also reminds me of Pooja’s class!

Maggie MacDonnell

#ExpectHigherOrderThinking

PHILIPPINES SCHOOL: The video states that the teachers integrated their various subject expertise, but did not give examples, because it is like a 3-minute video. But I think the scale of this project and the meaning just demand excellence and show how learning can come alive.

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=-FCfCB-QueU&pp=QAFIAQ%3D%3D>

Maggie MacDonnell



Contribute to our “Learn and Design” Digital Bulletin Board ([Here](#))

INTRODUCTION TO FACILITATE & CHALLENGE TO INSPIRE LEARNING

Our classroom creates opportunities for students (and me) to joyfully and productively struggle with rigorous challenges and content at the frontiers of our knowledge and abilities.

FACILITATE & CHALLENGE to inspire learning

FACILITATE EFFECTIVELY

We communicate clearly, listen actively, and question strategically to build collective learning.

MANAGE NORMS & RITUALS

We co-create and uphold rituals and systems that minimize inefficient distractions and maximize productive engagement.

FOSTER COLLECTIVE DISCOVERY

We create the conditions for collective student-led exploration by sharing responsibility and de-centering ourselves from the learning process.

FLEXIBLY ADJUST COURSE

We respond and adjust to students' needs while staying true to lesson objectives and purposes.

MONITOR LEARNING & PROGRESS

We check for learning during and after lessons, highlighting and celebrating progress while diagnosing root causes of learning challenges.

Robust, rigorous meaningful learning rarely happens when students are passively listening to or watching a teacher. (The same is true for adult learners. Passive listening is weak learning.)

If we are aspiring to grow students as leaders, and if we care about growing students' wellbeing, connectedness, awareness, agency, and mastery, classrooms must be built around active, collective, discovery-oriented learning. Students, not teachers, must "carry the weight" of the learning. Of course, knowledge, modeling, provocations, and resources come from the teacher, but in transformational classrooms, we see that the ratio of teacher-to-student ownership of learning time is flipped from the traditional model where the teacher talks a lot and then the student practices a little. In transformational classrooms, the teacher is the catalyst, the "space holder" and the facilitator of students' exploratory engagement with rigorous content.

Many of us were taught with an "I do, we do, you do" type classroom model. Many of us, as new teachers, were taught similar lesson-planning models. The truth is, that the conventional way of planning lessons is simpler and easier for new teachers, but it has enormous costs in the long run. Facilitating more active, discovery learning is much more engaging and enjoyable, and effective as a path to meaningful mastery through (not at the expense of) wellbeing, connectedness, awareness, and agency.

One of the most obvious distinguishing characteristics of transformational classrooms I visit around the world is that students are enjoying working together on difficult content. The work is hard. And the work is fun. Sometimes that learning is led by the teacher, sometimes by students, but in every case, students are enjoying wrestling with rigorous knowledge and skills. And I am always struck by how much the teacher is enjoying teaching with that aim.



Wendy Kopp

Co-founder and CEO, Teach For All

Author Amanda Ripley studied exceptional schools around the world

One thing was clear: To give our kids the kind of education they deserved, we had to first agree that rigor mattered most of all. That school existed to help kids learn to think. To work hard. And yes, to fail. That was the core consensus that made everything else possible.

Amanda Ripley

American journalist and author. Quote taken from *The Smartest Kids in the World and How They Got That Way* (2013)

HOW TO FACILITATE EFFECTIVELY

Try to see and hear yourself as your students see and hear you, focusing on what you and your students are learning. Emphasize questions over answers, student voice over your own, and discovery over delivery. Give instructions clearly, hold space for students to lead learning, and check for understanding.



Contribute your own techniques for **facilitating effectively** to our growing library... and see what others have contributed [here](#).

GLOSSARY

Agency: By agency, we mean students' (or our own) conviction and ability to make changes in themselves and the world around them.

Mastery: We use this word to describe the meaningfully rigorous learning needed to prepare students for leadership in the future. The term signals a focus on deeper learning, surpassing many current education models and systems.

Transformative Classroom: These are classrooms where students seem to be on a different trajectory. They are making dramatic progress in their wellbeing, connectedness, awareness, agency, and mastery. That growth is transforming their paths and opportunities going forward.

Grow Students: We have chosen the verb "grow" in this phrase because we feel it's more active and meaningful than more traditional terms like "develop." We made this intentional choice to inspire readers to pause and think about the opportunity and responsibility we have to help students be prepared for a very different future than the one that shaped conventional classroom models.

Leaders Of A Better Future: This is a concept that emerged years ago, when Teach For All hosted a collective, year-long reflection process among students, teachers, teacher developers, CEOs, community leaders, and families about the aims of our network. One clear theme in those conversations was the changing and challenging world today's students are inheriting, and the need for education to prepare them to face and improve that future for themselves and others.

Concrete, Actionable Techniques for Facilitating Effectively

Vary (Very) Clear Instructions

I plan for and practice giving clear instructions, but try to do so in different ways. Sometimes we use call and response. Sometimes students give instructions. I also was trying to find the balance between giving freedom but also providing a structure that enables exploration.

Felicia Yoon

Co-founder of Arus Academy. Arus Academy provides meaningful education to vulnerable and underprivileged students in Malaysia



Gaurav's Top Tips

The aim of good facilitation is to activate student thinking. Success is not measured in how engaging your performance is but in how much you get students to think.

Gaurav Singh

A Teach For India Alumnus and the founder of 321 Education, an organization built around helping teachers facilitate effective learning



These are Gaurav's top tips:

WAIT FOR STUDENT DEMONSTRATION OF UNDERSTANDING

The most common mistake with Check for Understanding is that the teacher repeats the learning instead of the student doing it. Do not repeat and move on until students can correctly share their understanding.

DELAY THE ANSWER

The moment the right answer comes out in the class, everyone stops thinking. Delay the right answer for as long as possible to promote thinking by asking a question and giving students thinking time, giving hints to encourage all students to think, and not going immediately to the student who might have the right answer.

TEMPERATURE CHECK

During planning, decide on three to four questions you will ask to get a good sense of student understanding. Use methods that show you all students' answers: hand signals, red-green cards, and student boards. Then adjust as needed by addressing misconceptions, moving on, etc.

WHAT COULD BE CONFUSING?

Ask students to guess something that someone might be confused about (no naming, pointing) and how to clarify that confusion. This improves student understanding and will bring out points of confusion that you could never have anticipated.

EXPLORE MISTAKES, TOGETHER

When a student gives a wrong answer, instead of immediately supplying the right answer, explore the mistake. This helps everyone learn from it. Ask students for alternative responses, ask students to compare the different responses, and share their views on them.

GLOW & GROW

When giving feedback to students, instead of just correcting their mistakes also tell them all the things they did well. Maintain a good balance of encouragement and nudging. The student gets tangible evidence of their success and a clear direction to move toward for improvement.

RIGHT, WRONG, RIGHT

Demonstrate new skills by showing the right way to do something, the wrong ways to avoid, and then ending with the right way again. This way students will know what not to do but you start and end with what's right.

SPOTLIGHT

Ensure that all students are paying attention by letting them know that you can put the spotlight on anyone at any time. Give students a heads-up before turning on the spotlight. Ask a question, give some wait time, and then you can select a student to answer (spotlight).

Doug Lemov's *Teach Like a Champion* is a [widely used guide to the basics of strong teaching](#). Doug and his colleagues made a list of indicators of rigor:

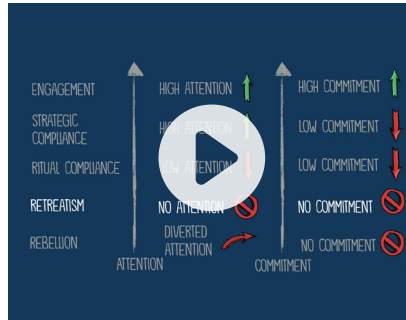
- Students process academic ideas in writing that requires complete sentences.
- Students discuss ideas using technical vocabulary.
- The teacher consistently asks students to improve and develop their own and their classmates' initial answers.
- About 75 percent of the time students are doing cognitive work (writing, reading, problem-solving).
- Students read challenging texts and answer text-dependent questions about it.
- Students consistently give evidence for their answers.
- The teacher asks at least five why/how questions.

**What Does Facilitating Effectively Look Like?****Connect learning to culture**

Global Teacher Prize winner [Jesus Insilada](#) in the Philippines uses indigenous textile patterns to use students' own cultural heritage to bridge their anxieties about learning math.

Additional Research & Resources Related To Facilitating Effectively

- [Five keys to rigorous project-based learning](#) to grow lifelong learners for the real world.
- [Teach Like a Champion Online](#) offers shared online resources for practicing and supporting teaching fundamentals and content pedagogy virtually and without students.
- [Firki](#) is Teach For India's online teacher training portal.
- [Impulso Docente](#) is an organization led by an Enseña Chile Alumnus focused on building foundational teaching skills (in Spanish).
- [How Productive Struggles Fires Up Learners.](#)
- [The Power of Productive Struggle.](#)
- [Exploring Productive Struggle in Math.](#)



Critical questioning and learning failure as a path to rigorous engagement

In this [video](#) from 2014, Taylor Delhagen helps students develop critical thinking, analysis, and problem-solving skills with curiosity and critical questioning and valuing the teachable moments in failure.

Schlechty's Levels of Engagement

[This model](#) provides a useful framework for thinking about what it means for students to be genuinely engaged in their learning. Schlechty defined it this way, "Engagement is active. It requires the students to be attentive as well as in attendance; it requires the students to be committed to the task and find some inherent value in what he or she is being asked to do. The engaged student not only does the task assigned but also does the task with enthusiasm and diligence."

Other Places to See Facilitating Effectively

- [How to Give Feedback to Develop Great Learners.](#)
- [The Ultimate Guide to Academic Rigor.](#)

Research Into The Power Of "Productive Struggle"

The idea that struggle is essential to intellectual growth has a long history. Dewey referred to the process of engaging students in "some perplexity, confusion, or doubt" (1933, p. 12) as essential for building deep understanding while Piaget (1960) wrote of learners' struggle as a process of restructuring their disequilibrium toward new understanding. Cognitive theorists have referred to cognitive dissonance as an impetus for cognitive growth (e.g., Festinger, 1957) while others have identified experimentation (Polya, 1957) and sense-making (Handa, 2003) as important ingredients for understanding (Hatano 1988) related cognitive incongruity with the development of reasoning skills that display conceptual understanding. Brownwell and Sims (1946) argued, like Dewey, that students must have opportunities to "muddle through" (p. 40) in the process of resolving problematic situations rather than conditioning students through repetition. More recently, Hiebert & Wearne (2003) stated, "All students need to struggle with challenging problems if they are to learn mathematics deeply" (p. 6).

Hiroko Warshauer

Associate Professor at Texas State University. Quote taken from "[The Role of Productive Struggle in Teaching and Learning Middle School Mathematics](#)" (2011)

HOW TO MANAGE NORMS & RITUALS

Choose a small number of logistical and cultural challenges in your classroom that are most likely to interfere with collaborative learning if not done well. Attendance? Grading? Getting started? Ending class? Co-design with students simple systems to limit their distraction and maximize the benefit of your classroom's inclusive culture of rigorous engagement.

MANAGE NORMS & RITUALS

We co-create and uphold rituals and systems that maximize welcoming and productive engagement for all students.

Concrete, Actionable Techniques For Managing Norms & Rituals



Secret Signals to Colleagues

I had a secret plan with my principal where we would “catch” my students doing good! When my students were engaged in something really positive, I would send my principal the signal. He would leave his office and appear to randomly “drop in” on my class and “catch” my students doing amazing work. Then, in front of all of them, he would shower them with praise! My students were used to being the number one students in school suspensions. They had hostile relationships with most teachers and the administration. So this new interaction was such a game changer. Over a few months they built very endearing relationships with the principal. And it changed everything for us at the school.

Maggie MacDonnell

Global Teacher Prize Winner, Inuit Community north of the Arctic Circle

The Warm Welcome Doorway

Stand at the door to the classroom every time students are coming in or going out and say something personal to each and every one of them. It changes the culture so quickly.

Multiple teachers and students

Redirect Behavior with Student Agency

When a student does behavior that goes against the class norms, you can help the student correct it while maintaining their agency. Some ways to do it: Offer choice (“X, you can put it away or give it to me”), Offer help (“How can I help you with this, Y?”)

Multiple teachers and students

Student Captains of Key Logistics

Students can take roll (silently with a clipboard; it takes 60 seconds), collect homework, and clean up the classroom. They want responsibility and, after some practice, they save lots of time.

Multiple teachers and students



Contribute your own techniques for **managing norms and rituals** to our growing library... and see what others have contributed [here](#).

(Students) behavior is key to the success of most classroom outcomes. What we call behavior is actually the sum of an enormous number of habits and attitudes and skills that adults frequently take for granted. None of these factors are innate, and they must be imparted or taught in some way.

Tom Bennett

Director and founder of researchED. Quote taken from [The Beginning Teacher's Behaviour Toolkit](#)

Because the teacher respects each child and refrains from interference, the children treat one another with the same respect and kindness.

Maria Montessori

Italian physician and educator.

Hanan Al Hroub grew up in a refugee camp in Palestine. As a teacher, she won the Global Teacher Prize for her work to center norms and rituals that promote non-violence, despite the trauma and oppression she and her students are experiencing. She has inspired her colleagues to review the way they teach, their classroom management strategies, and how they work with students. [Check out](#) the classroom systems she uses in her “Play and Learn” classroom.



Other Sources:

- [60 Must-Teach Classroom Procedures and Routines](#)
- [How to make your classroom a healing place](#)
- [The power of humor to manage classrooms](#)

What Does Managing Norms & Rituals Look Like?



Morning meeting

This may be the mother of all daily routines and is not just for young students. This Edutopia [video](#) shares some of the basics of strong, culture-building meetings that encourage collaborative learning.



Daily routines that create a collaborative culture of achievement

Take a [virtual tour](#) of a dozen powerful classroom routines this teacher uses to keep students focused on learning and growing.



Creating classroom rules

[In this clip](#), watch a veteran teacher host a conversation with students about how to organize and categorize all the possible rules that they proposed for the classroom.

Research On Culturally Sustaining Classroom Management

Building from the literature on culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2010; Howard, 2010; Milner, 2010), Weinstein et al. (2004) conceptualized several principles that shape what they called culturally responsive classroom management when they introduced the theory in an article published in the Journal of Teacher Education: (1) recognition of teachers' own ethnocentrism; (2) knowledge of students' culture; (3) understanding of the broader social, economic, and political systems in education; (4) appropriate management strategies; and (5) development of caring classrooms. Weinstein et al. (2004) stressed that developing and implementing culturally responsive classroom management is a frame of mind more than a set of predetermined skills, actions, ideas, or strategies, which is why it is so essential that teachers develop a set of understandings, beliefs, and mindsets to advance equitable classroom management strategies. When teachers develop mindsets that allow them to negotiate power structures, they reject attempts to control students. Culturally responsive management frameworks "incorporate elements of students' home, personal, and community lives into the classroom" (Monroe & Obidah, 2004, p. 259).

H. Richard Milner IV

American teacher educator and scholar of urban teacher education on the tenured faculty at the Peabody College of Vanderbilt University. Quote taken from [Culturally Responsive Classroom Management](#), Oxford 2019

Other Places to See Managing Norms & Rituals

- [Research-Backed Strategies for Better Classroom Management.](#)
- [Five Principles of Outstanding Classroom Management.](#)

HOW TO FOSTER COLLECTIVE DISCOVERY

Whatever your content area, ask “How can my students experiment to discover (and not just be told and shown) these insights and skills?” Intentionally guide practice, and enable students to lead learning and check for understanding. Organize learning around real-world questions that call for genuine exploration.

FOSTER COLLECTIVE DISCOVERY
We create the conditions for collective student-led exploration by sharing responsibility and de-centering ourselves from the learning process.



Contribute your own techniques for **fostering collective discovery** to our growing library... and see what others have contributed [here](#).

The test of a good teacher is not how many questions he can ask his pupils that they will answer readily, but how many questions he inspires them to ask him, which he finds it hard to answer.

Alice Wellington Rollins

Late-19th century American feminist writer, novelist, and educator

Concrete, Actionable Techniques For Fostering Collective Discovery



Let go of the bias that learning is dependent on the teacher; learning can happen both in the presence and absence of the teacher. Once the child learns how to learn, then they can attain infinite knowledge.

Pooja Chopra

Teach for India Alumna from the 2013 cohort, co-founder of Khwaab Welfare Trust, and currently serving as the Program Head at The Circle

We asked Pooja to share her advice for teachers aiming to foster collective discovery in their classrooms. These were her top tips:

MAKING MISTAKES AND CELEBRATING FAILURES

Encourage students to make mistakes and to see them as a key tool of learning in life. Shift students' focus toward effort and intention. Celebrate failures for the learning they offer.

IDENTIFYING AND MAPPING STRENGTHS

Identify the strength of all children, every child is good at something. Throughout the day, map these strengths to different parts of the day and allow children to lead in their areas of strength. For example, in my classroom, Faiza started the day by leading the entire class to play football, followed by Rtika who led them with ballet, followed by Meenu, Shagun, Radha, and Adiba as team leaders during classes, and Nandini in between classes to do energizers. Also, create spaces where they learn to take and incorporate feedback to lead their class better.

LEARNING CIRCLES

Each day or week have children sit in a circle and discuss something. The topics can vary across circles and each circle can last for 15 minutes. Each circle can have a leader/moderator who plays the role of ensuring learning happens; everyone voices their opinion. Encourage children to agree to disagree. Have each circle present their learnings on charts and get each circle to move around to see what the others have written. The circles can be imaginative, explorative, academic, creative, and a lot more. The teacher plays the role of a facilitator and observer. The teacher works closely with the moderators before and after to enable them to facilitate learning and discovery in their circles.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING THROUGH REAL-LIFE PROJECTS. DESIGN FOR CHANGE

Discuss real-life problems that exist in the lives of the children and their communities, encourage them to voice their opinions for the same, and ask those tough questions even outside the classroom. Group children based on what makes them most angry among all the problems and get them to work on solving these problems over the course of time using the Feel-Imagine-Do-Share process. Create spaces where children can come together to work on their problems, prototype, experiment, fail, reimagine, and share results. These spaces work well outside the classroom.

EXPLORING THE UNKNOWN

Expose children to situations where they don't have the answers but will have to find them. Don't give them the how but the why. Put them together in groups and let them explore possibilities that might work or not. Enable them to experience friction in working together and coming up with solutions to enable co-learning.

SILENT SPECTATOR

Have parts of the day where you become invisible. You are there in the class but only as an observer, listener, and learner. Start small and grow these periods over time. They can help you truly understand what knowledge, values, skills, and strengths the children are internalizing.

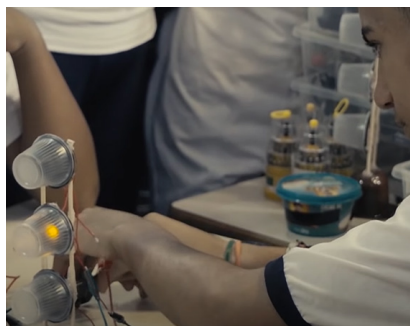
In Egoitz Etxeandia's classroom in Spain, students are growing mushrooms in a "[Funghi Thinking](#)" project, which is used to teach objectives from reading to writing to math to science. And, as you'll see in this video, the students are also raising their awareness of social challenges, learning to collaborate and solve problems, and having a lot of fun. And, so is Mr. Etxeandia.



Other Places to See Fostering Collective Discovery

- [Five Keys to Rigorous Project-Based Learning](#).
- A high-tech teacher's strategy: [Curiosity time](#).
- Applying math to community challenges: [Max's story on how he and his classmates cleaned a beach using math](#). (In Spanish)

What Does Fostering Collective Discovery Look Like?



Teaching with real-world problems

Débora Garofalo (Brazil) was a finalist for the Global Teaching Prize the million-dollar Global Teacher Prize for her discovery-oriented classroom in which students used the problem of garbage in the community as a challenge to address using robots. As she describes in this [video](#), the project had a wide range of positive influences on student growth.



Engaging with and learning alongside the community

[Peter Tabichi's classroom](#) in Kenya lacks the resources of many schools, but he finds ways to use the local community resources and needs as opportunities (farming, health, etc.) to help students explore and learn. "To be a great teacher," he says, "you have to do more and talk less."



Teaching with critical questions

In this [video](#) from 2014, watch Taylor Delhagen use challenging questions to put students' thinking and discovery at the center of learning.

They were infected by something I call the “I can” bug.... I got infected as a student at a design college, and I encountered adults who actually believed in my ideas, challenged me, and had lots of cups of chai with me. I was struck by just how wonderful it felt. And how contagious that feeling was. I also realized that I should have gotten infected when I was 7. So when I started Riverside School... it became a lab—a lab to prototype and refine a design process that could consciously infect the mind with the “I can” bug. I uncovered that if learning is embedded in a real-world context, that is if you blur the boundaries between school and life, then children go through a journey of aware (where they can see the change), enable (be change), and empower (lead the change). And that directly increased students’ wellbeing. Students became more competent and less helpless.

Kiran Sethi

Founder of Riverside School (India). Quote taken from her TEDTalk [“Kids, take charge”](#)

Additional Research & Resources Related to Fostering Collective Discovery

- [The learning theory of constructivism.](#)
- “The children said, ‘How do we do that?’ I said, ‘I don’t know, actually’ and I left.” — [What happens when students learn from the internet on their own.](#)
- [Self-determination theory](#) — Shed light on how supporting student autonomy is vital for learning.
- Research into the [power of curiosity in the classroom.](#)
- [Student Motivation: Why Autonomy Matters.](#)

HOW TO FLEXIBLY ADJUST COURSE

Read the room, check for understanding, and make adjustments. If students demonstrate mastery sooner or later than you imagined, your plans need to change. Take advantage of teachable moments.

FLEXIBLY ADJUST COURSE

We respond and adjust to students' needs while staying true to lesson objectives and purposes.

Concrete, Actionable Techniques For Flexibly Adjusting Course

SEIZE UNEXPECTED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

As one teacher put it, when you “keep your eye on the prize—focusing on the purpose of the lesson,” you will see opportunities to adjust how you get to that objective.

CHECK FREQUENTLY FOR UNDERSTANDING

Plan for regular opportunities for students to demonstrate what they are learning and expect to adjust your next moves based on what you learn. (Do not ask, “Do you understand?”)

CHANGE AND VARY PACE

A key variable a teacher can adjust is how quickly or slowly they move through learning engagements, based on students' confidence and mastery.

EXPERIMENT, EACH DAY

“What worked yesterday may not work today.” Strong teachers exhibit flexibility by trying new approaches and feeling out what works and doesn't work.



Contribute your own techniques for flexibly adjusting course to our growing library... and see what others have contributed [here](#).

I think one of my biggest lessons is the importance of thinking about how we seize the opportunities that emerge in front of us? If we're working collectively and if we're really working along with our communities, we can't just strategically plan and sequence the universe for impact and change. We're in an ongoing process of learning and discovering and finding out what works for the context of the community or the system. So, I think it's important to plan. Right. We've got to know, and have a direction of where we're going, but also have the ability to be agile and shift according to what emerges.



Chan Soon Seng

2012 fellow and current CEO of Teach For Malaysia



My context demanded that I be extremely flexible. Class numbers were always unpredictable, varying between three and 20 students who would arrive within a two-hour morning window. My students were living in vulnerable conditions so it was very likely that at least some of them would arrive hungry, tired, or having recently witnessed a traumatic event such as domestic violence. Initially, trying to be steadfast about narrow “academic-centered” goals while dealing with the irregularity of my students and their “baggage” was overwhelming. But I figured out there was something within my control: my personal mindset. I let go of any expectation that a day or week would go 1-2-3/A-B-C. My class would not be a “Pinterest cookie cutter class with beautiful, color-coded structures every day.” I needed to be dynamic to react to how many of my students would arrive and what would be in their “backpack.” I needed to meet them where they were at that day, not where the workbook said we should be. I needed to have plans A, B, C, and A1, A2, A3, etc.! Once I embraced this, things really started to flow!

Maggie MacDonnell

Global Teacher Prize Winner, Inuit Community north of the Arctic Circle

Other Sources:

- [A guide to flexibility in the classroom.](#)
- [Flexible classrooms as the path to student voice.](#)



When active listening is present, we can question ourselves and improve at the moment. It gives us the possibility to realize when our participants need something more or even when we need to raise the bar.

Miguel Nique

Educator and social communicator. Specialist in designing learning ecosystems and a competency-based approach. Currently leading Training at Enseña Perú

It is not the strongest of the species that survive, not the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.

Charles Darwin

English naturalist, geologist, and biologist

There are hundreds of paths up the mountain, all leading to the same place, so it doesn't matter which path you take. The only person wasting time is the one who runs around the mountain, telling everyone that his or her path is wrong.

Hindu proverb



Plans don't always go the way you imagine, you have to adjust plans and always find a way, even if it isn't the first option.

Edorela Beqiraj

Teacher, Kosovo

The work of teachers is we are making 1,000 mental calculations at any given moment. During class time, when I find that discussions are going on longer than I anticipated, I'm trying to, at the moment, negotiate and prioritize. What I'm doing in those moments, I'm listening to them and really trying to note and to capture what is at the heart? What is the common thread across the different comments, questions, and reflections that are being shared? And oftentimes what I will do in those moments is literally flip through my notes in my PowerPoint slides and make some decisions. I will do things like place stars next to 'OK, I know I want to get to this idea. Do I need the slide, or can I find a way to insert it into this discussion?' Maybe we won't get to this entire section, these 12 slides might be cut.

Christina Villareal

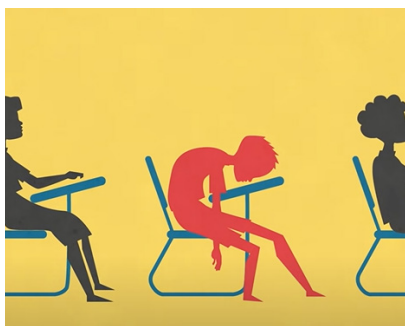
Harvard Graduate School of Education. Quote taken from [Instructional Moves: Adjusting lesson plans in real time](#)

What Does Flexibly Adjusting Course Look Like?



Celebrate mistakes

Great teachers are watching for teachable moments in students' efforts and adjust course to celebrate and learn from mistakes. This [video](#) shares ways to build a classroom culture that welcomes effort and errors.



Differentiate in the moment

Differentiating content and process does not have to be a major ordeal but can be a way of thinking that leads to in the moment adjustments. [Check out](#) this video for concrete examples of flexibly differentiating in the moment.

Other Places to See Flexibly Adjusting Course

- [Cognitive Flexibility and Adaptive Teaching: How Mental Flexibility Makes You a Stronger Educator.](#)

Additional Research & Resources Related to Flexibly Adjusting Course

- Lead with “the why” and adjust the “what and how” as needed. [Watch](#) one of the most popular TED talks of all time, in which Simon Sinek describes how great leaders lead with the why, and let the *what* and *how* follow from that focus on the why.

HOW TO MONITOR LEARNING & PROGRESS

Take stock of student growth—daily, weekly, and monthly. Publish that progress in ways that motivates students. Adjust your plans in light of incoming data and feedback.

MONITOR LEARNING & PROGRESS

We check for learning during and after lessons, highlighting and celebrating progress while diagnosing root causes of learning challenges.

Concrete, Actionable Techniques for Monitoring Learning and Progress

STUDENT REFLECTING & SUMMARIZING

After engaging with complex content, ask your students to reflect on what they have learned and summarize it in whichever way they prefer (text, a graphic organizer, a comic, etc.) and to share it with their peers.



Progress Principle

Motivation increases when we recognize progress toward an important goal. Schedule a consistent time (daily or weekly or monthly) when the class marks their progress. Pick meaningful measures of progress — topics mastered, task completion, lessons learned. Structure the reflection at an individual, group, or class level. Or a mix of all of them!

Gaurav Singh

A Teach For India Alumnus and the founder of 321 Education, an organization built around helping teachers facilitate effective learning



Showcase Events to Celebrate Progress

I sought out or created ANY type of event to showcase what my students were doing. This could even be some photos on a Facebook/social media post from the classroom celebrating what students were doing and sharing that with a wider community. It could be sharing classroom news on the community radio. It could also mean showcasing student work in different places in the community — from the grocery store to a youth house.

Maggie MacDonnell

Global Teacher Prize Winner, Inuit Community north of the Arctic Circle



Contribute your own techniques for **monitoring learning and progress** to our growing library... and see what others have contributed [here](#).

Many studies indicate that the most effective feedback is given immediately rather than a few days, weeks, or months later. Focusing on what students did correctly is far more powerful than focusing on what is wrong. Students can become defensive and anxious and blame others when what they have done incorrectly is pointed out and this often decreases resilience. Remember to notice extra effort or risk-taking.

Karen Tui Boyes

New Zealand Educator of the Year. Quote taken from [Feedback in the Classroom](#) (2018)

Toolkit: Assessment Bank

Teach For All's Global Learning Lab is building a library of tools for measuring students' growing wellbeing, connectedness, awareness, agency, and mastery. Choose and contextualize these tools to help track and monitor student progress to inform adjustments to plans.

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While asking questions may seem a simple task, it is perhaps the most powerful tool we possess as teachers. If we ask the right question of the right student at the right moment we may inspire her to new heights of vision and insight. A good question can excite, disturb, or comfort, and eventually yield an unexpected bounty of understanding and critical awareness. But even apart from such serendipitous moments, question-asking serves many functions that make it the stock in trade of the skillful teacher.

Brandon Cline

Chicago Center for Teaching, University of Chicago. Quote taken from [Asking Effective Questions](#)

Additional Research & Resources Related to Monitoring Learning and Progress

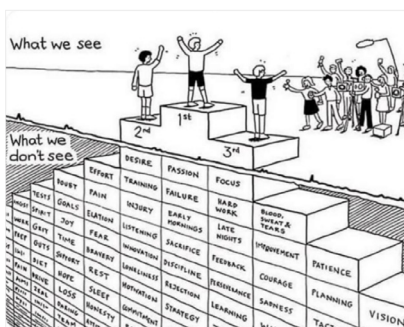
- [Better Ways to Measure Student Progress](#) by Matthew Campbell.
- [A Restorative Approach to Grading](#) by Juliana Ewing.
- Rebeca Anijovich and Graciela Cappelletti (2020). [La retroalimentación formativa: Una oportunidad para mejorar los aprendizajes y la enseñanza](#). Revista Docencia Universitaria, 21(1), 81-96. (In Spanish)
- [Empowering Students to Own the Assessment Process](#).

What Does Monitoring Learning and Progress Look Like?



Improving practice through student feedback

This animated [video](#) shares best practices for improving classrooms based on student input and progress.



“What feedback did you receive today to help you in your learning?”

New Zealand educator [Karen Tui Boyes](#) explores this question. She identifies concrete ways to act on student feedback and progress.



Monitor progress through feedback conversations with students

Giving strong feedback to students depends on knowing what they are finding easy and challenging, and their misperceptions and assumptions. World-renowned education researcher [John Hattie](#) shares what the research says about providing student feedback that influences student growth.

Other Places to See Monitoring Learning and Progress

- [The One Thing All Great Teachers Do](#).
- [Innovative ways to measure student progress](#).

SHARE

Make your voice heard:

Help us evolve and improve these ideas and resources

Teaching As Collective Leadership is a collective effort. It has been developed through contributions from thousands of people — teachers, coaches, students, families, researchers, and others from all around the world. Please join us in continuing to evolve this work by sharing your perspective.

Below is our “digital bulletin board” that we are constantly updating with the input of generous readers who share their ideas. Please take a moment to click [here](#) on our **Co-learning Padlet** to contribute your thoughts, questions, challenges, illustrations, and links.

FACILITATE AND CHALLENGE

#FlexiblyAdjustCourse

Movement Breaks

At any time, if you notice you are losing the class, take a movement break or an outside break. I would sometimes stop mid-lesson to take everyone outside for an impromptu game of street hockey, or lie on the ground and sketch some clouds. It often helped to bring back the sense of team, increase mood, and process/release any negative emotions that may have been building or that kids were carrying in with them.

Maggie MacDonnell

#ManageNorms&Rituals

BRAIN BREAKS

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/brain-breaks-restore-student-focus-judy-willis>

#FosterCollectiveDiscovery

Lead with “the why” and adjust the “what and how” as needed. Be “tight” on your goals but flexible and adaptive in how you reach them. Think of yourself as a captain of a sailboat who, to reach your destination, must frequently adjust course based on changes in winds and currents around you.

#FosterCollectiveDiscovery

Design Lessons with Room to Breathe

I used to work on a residential program to support young people’s access to university. A highlight for me was film night. I meticulously designed the session. What I lost sight of in the planning was holding space for the students’ creative reactions to the film. The focus was on what I wanted to teach, not what they were learning. After the session, I realized a beautiful moment had opened up as a student shared their reaction, and rather than building on that to branch out into broader themes, I had moved along to the next stage of my plan. The next year, my design looked totally different. It was more modular and open. I still had a really clear set of goals, and a whole bunch of content in my back pocket, but there was much more freedom as to how we might get there. I also focused on my own state of mind: rather than performing a lesson, being open and relaxed to respond to what emerged. Sure enough, the session really came alive!

Jude Heaton
Teach For All

#FlexiblyAdjustCourse

Regulation Stations

In my context where there were behavior issues and lots of “dysregulation” that often disrupted the classroom, what helped a lot was having “stations”/routines to help students independently calm down. This may be a journal for those who want to write privately, a bean bag in a corner with some comic books, a listening/headphone music corner, or even a basket with some quick snacks in it. When students arrived (mine often arrived late) they would choose a station and take like 10 minutes to independently relax then join the larger group.

Maggie MacDonnell



Contribute to our “Facilitate and Challenge” Digital Bulletin Board ([Here](#))

INTRODUCTION TO REFLECT & GROW TO FULFILL POTENTIAL

Learning is a lifelong journey fueled by humility and curiosity, as we improve our knowledge and skills and grow our capacity for understanding ourselves, each other, and the world.

One of the distinguishing characteristics of transformational teachers emerging from our “global learning loops” is that they identify as learners. As explored in the “Lenses” section of this model, we often hear the strongest teachers in the Teach For All network say something like, “I hope my students are learning as much as I am.”

Teachers who are growing students as leaders of a better future see themselves as lifelong learners who respond to challenges with curiosity, humility, and creativity. These teachers embrace this identity as learners intentionally, employing daily practices to fuel their growth.



In this “go-go-go” world, where it feels as if everything is urgent, and we don’t have a chance to slow down, this capacity to pause for a moment so we can reflect and grow is more important than ever. What the world needs from leaders today are those who can focus on the important not just the urgent, those who recognize that who we are being is just as important as what we are doing, those who can frame challenges not as failures but as opportunities to learn and grow, those who have the humility and self-compassion to ask questions and reach out for support, and those who are both willing to learn new things and unlearn limiting beliefs that don’t serve what they’re up to in the world. This spaciousness is what we need to be able to live into our full creativity and reimagine education systems so that they create opportunities for all ALL children.

Radha Ruparell

Head of Global Leadership Accelerator, Teach For All

Additional Research & Resources

- [Cambridge Assessment International Education’s Getting Started With Reflective Practice.](#)
- [Treating Reflection as a Habit, Not an Event Habit, from Edutopia.](#)
- [Practice Perfect: 42 Rules for Getting Better at Getting Better](#) by Doug Lemov, Erica Woolway, and Katie Yezzi.

REFLECT & GROW

to fulfill potential

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

We commit to a sustainable plan of daily practices that support our wellbeing and growth.

PAUSE & REFLECT

We commit to a regular practice of pausing to process how our work is going.

FIND & FOSTER ALLIES

We seek and nurture relationships and networks that support and stretch us.

SEEK FEEDBACK

We welcome diverse sources of feedback and data from which to learn and co-create a culture in which students are doing the same.

LEARN & UNLEARN

We set aside time to develop knowledge and skills and to shift ways of being and perspectives that may be inhibiting growth.

Critical reflection is the process by which adults identify the assumptions governing their actions, locate the historical and cultural origins of the assumptions, question the meaning of assumptions, and develop alternative ways of acting (Cranton, 1996). Brookfield (1995, 2004) added that part of the critically reflective process is to challenge the prevailing social, political, cultural, or professional ways of acting. Through the process of critical reflection, adults come to interpret and create new knowledge and actions from their ordinary and sometimes extraordinary experiences. Critical reflection blends learning through experiences with theoretical and technical learning to form new knowledge constructions and new behaviors or insights.

Hibajene M. Shandomo

Professor in the education department at Buffalo State College. Quote taken from [The Role of Critical Reflection in Teacher Education](#)

GLOSSARY

Global Learning Loop: This concept is what we have called the mini-courses we host in which people from around the world virtually visit classrooms in different countries and share what they think we can learn from them. The Global Learning Lab has also worked with many partner organizations to host their “learning loops,” where staff come together to learn from their strongest classrooms.

Transformative Classroom: These are classrooms where students seem to be on a different trajectory. They are making dramatic progress in their wellbeing, connectedness, awareness, agency, and mastery. That growth is transforming their paths and opportunities going forward.

Grow Students: We have chosen the verb “grow” in this phrase because we feel it’s more active and meaningful than more traditional terms like “develop.” We made this intentional choice to inspire readers to pause and think about the opportunity and responsibility we have to help students be prepared for a very different future than the one that shaped conventional classroom models.

Leaders Of A Better Future: This is a concept that emerged years ago, when Teach For All hosted a collective, year-long reflection process among students, teachers, teacher developers, CEOs, community leaders, and families about the aims of our network. One clear theme in those conversations was the changing and challenging world today’s students are inheriting, and the need for education to prepare them to face and improve that future for themselves and others.

HOW TO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Manage your wellbeing, energy, and health so you are available to support others. The key to taking care of yourself is figuring out your unique ways to relax, re-energize, and replenish yourself.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF
We commit to a sustainable plan of daily practices that support our wellbeing and growth.



Contribute your own techniques for **taking care of yourself** to our growing library... and see what others have contributed [here](#).

Don't ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive and go do it. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive.

Howard Thurman

Author, philosopher, theologian, educator, and civil rights leader (United States)

Concrete, Actionable Techniques For Taking Care Of Yourself

SCHEDULE WELLBEING

In the same way you would reserve time for any important event, set aside time for wellbeing in your calendar and honor it.

CHUNKING WELLNESS

List things you can do for your wellbeing that take five, 10, and 30 minutes. That way, if you find that you have a bit of extra time, you have a quick list you can go to that will also nourish you.

REFRAMING

Practice noticing your cognitive distortions and thought patterns, and develop healthier responses to them.

WHAT KIND OF WELLBEING?

Take the [POISE survey](#) to explore different components of wellbeing (physical, occupational, intellectual, etc.) and discover what's most present for you.

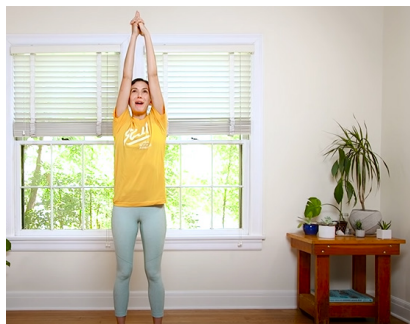
Other Sources:

- [Teachers of the year](#) reflecting on self-care (U.S.).
- Edutopia's [guide to Teacher Wellness](#).
- Columbia University's [guide to Teaching in Times of Stress and Challenge](#)

What happens when one million black women across the USA start walking in their communities? Morgan Dixon (Teach For America alumna) and Vanessa Garrison created an organization to find out. This [video](#) from 2016 shows how Dixon and Garrison, are fostering self-care and collective action toward building a grassroots health movement in African-American communities in the U.S. They founded GirlTrek, started walking in their neighborhood, and invited others to join them. Two years later GirlTrek had grown into a movement of 35,000 neighborhood walkers across the country who have made a personal commitment to living their healthiest, most fulfilled life.



What Does Taking Care Of Yourself Look Like?



Classroom yoga

A yoga instructor leads a simple 10-minute standing yoga sequence [designed especially for teachers.](#)



Working with my hands is my self-care

"That stress weighs heavy," explains veteran teacher Kenneth Robinson (Teach For America, '93). "It weighs so heavy. And if you don't have some type of self-management, you start having a displacement of aggression." Robinson draws on a combination of [art and exercise to stay centered in the face of daily challenges.](#)



The importance of self-care for teachers

Self-care is proving to be difficult to master and weave into our teachers' frantic lives. As human beings, we must prioritize our own wellbeing and as teachers as well we can begin to place the same emphasis on staff wellbeing in our schools as we do for the mental health of the children we teach. [Self-care starts with you and small acts every single day.](#)

Other Places to See Taking Care of Self

- [The Virtuous Cycle of Fostering Wellbeing in Our Schools.](#)
- [Teachers as Healers - Wellbeing Summit session.](#)
- [Teach For Malaysia teacher wellbeing playbook.](#)

"No Nonsense Nurturing" A Call To Everyone To Help Teachers Take Care Of Themselves

Former diplomat in West Africa, Nataki Gregory has built a career training, coaching, and supporting teachers. In this [TED talk](#), she calls on everyone to "choose a nurturing activity that is close to who you are" and bring it to teachers around you.

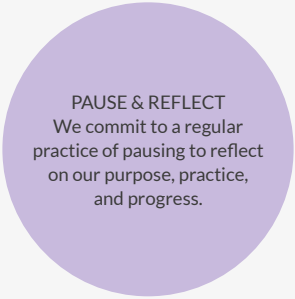


Additional Research & Resources Related To Taking Care Of Yourself

- [TeacherWISE: Wellbeing in School Environments.](#)
- [Six Causes of Burnout, and How to Avoid Them.](#)

HOW TO PAUSE & REFLECT

Slow down to go deeper and further. Adopt smaller and bigger habits and rituals that help you step out of daily work to consider your purpose, progress, and growth—and invest your students in those practices.



Contribute your own techniques for **pausing and reflecting** to our growing library...and see what others have contributed [here](#).



Engaging in the work of institutional transformation, such as creating a new dream of teaching and learning, can be exciting and fulfilling, yet difficult, painful, and frustrating.

The examination of our own positionality is an important aspect when considering how to change what we do in the classroom—the curriculum, the way we engage with students, how we choose to share power, and so forth. Taking time to slow down and reflect is as important as spending time and energy in action to transform the institution.

Laura Rendón

Student advocate, scholar, contemplative education, and author of *Sentipensante Pedagogy: Educating for Wholeness, Social Justice, and Liberation*. (Photo by AI Rendón)

Concrete, Actionable Techniques For Pausing & Reflecting

Most Important Question

Pick one question to reflect on and set aside five-15 minutes a week individually or with a colleague to reflect. It could be as simple as: What did I learn this week? Try to tie it to another existing habit (e.g., your morning cup of coffee or commute) so you stick to it.

Radha Ruparell

Head of Global Leadership Accelerator, Teach For All



Get Meta for You & Your Students

Call “time out” with students to reflect on how learning is happening, what is working and not working, and what patterns do students see in how they best learn. Ask yourself the same questions.

Alexandra Vassallo

Enseña Perú Alumna



Morning Reflection

“Circle time” to look where we’ve been and where we are headed, to feel gratitude, and to declutter our minds is not just for students. I am best on days when I take time early in the day to think intentionally about my ways of being and goals for the day.

Sanaya Bharucha

Global Head, Student Leadership & Voice, Teach For All, Teach For India Alumna, and Director of Maya the musical



Read Fiction

Reading fiction is a brilliant way to understand the different perspectives that exist. It humanizes people. You can step into 1,000 different shoes, and see 1,000 different lenses without deeming one right or wrong.

Zain Maken

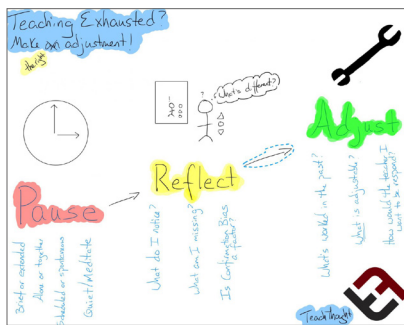
Teach For Pakistan Alumnus



In Japanese Zen Buddhism, the term “Mushin” describes a mind free of thoughts and distractions, and it can be useful to think of this concept when approaching Pause & Reflect; it can help clear the path for the adoption of a beginner’s mind. A beginner’s mind is another concept from Zen Buddhism that encourages openness, enthusiasm, and a denial of preconceived ideas or attitudes. It is in stark contrast to an expert’s mind or the notion of having expertise. When an individual or an organization is considered to be an expert, it closes doors to possibility and may also be the curse of knowledge. When organizations [or individuals] are open to possibility and adaptation, then opportunities for adaptation and improvement are more available to them.

[The Curve—A Guide to Pause & Reflect: Pragmatic Advice for Practitioners](#)

What Does Pausing & Reflecting Look Like?



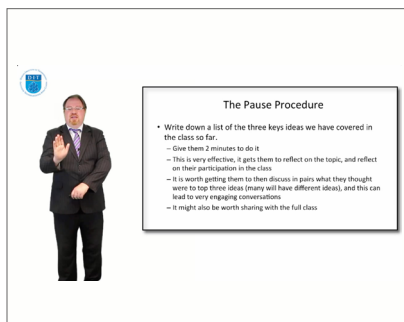
Pause, Reflect, and Adjust

In this [blog post](#), an exhausted teacher describes various ways to pause and reflect, and how those methods can lead to new perspectives and changed behaviors.



Reflecting on one’s perspectives

In Ako Matatupu’s (Teach First New Zealand) training, participants engage deeply with Maori communities. For participant [Jonathan Wieland](#), this triggered personal reflections that helped him discover assumptions he never knew he had and transformed his approach to teaching.



The pause technique

[Watch](#) Irish educator Damion T. Gordon introduce a very simple technique for boosting active learning in the classroom. The pause procedure (sometimes called Clarification Pause) is a strategy that uses strategic pauses in a lecture to provide students with time to review their notes, discuss in pairs, and clarify, assimilate, and retain the lecture material.

*We do not learn from experience.
We learn from reflecting on
experience.*

John Dewey

Philosopher and educator (United States)



Practice Awareness & Understanding Self Exercises (PAUSE)

By practicing mental wellness exercises together, teachers and students can boost mental and physical health, coping skills, and a positive outlook. [This article](#) at Edutopia suggests small changes that help rewire our brains and develop new habits.

At its simplest, reflection is about careful thought. But the kind of reflection that is really valuable to leaders is more nuanced than that. The most useful reflection involves the conscious consideration and analysis of beliefs and actions for the purpose of learning. Reflection gives the brain an opportunity to pause amidst the chaos, untangle and sort through observations and experiences, consider multiple possible interpretations, and create meaning. This meaning becomes learning, which can then inform future mindsets and actions. For leaders, this “meaning-making” is crucial to their ongoing growth and development.

Jennifer Porter

Quote taken from the Harvard Business Review article [Why You Should Make Time for Self-Reflection \(Even If You Hate Doing It\)](#) (2017)

Other Places to See Pausing & Reflecting

- [Stop and Think: Teaching Students to Reflect — Responsive Classroom.](#)
- [Extending Silence.](#)
- [The Value of Silence in Schools.](#)

HOW TO FIND & FOSTER ALLIES

Without allies, working to grow collective leadership can be exhausting and isolating. Take time to nurture friendships and support groups, as they will be essential for your growth, wellbeing, and sustainability. Find others who can both support you and push you. People who help you connect to what you most value, and help you to intentionally pursue these values.

FIND YOUR ALLIES
We prioritize nurturing relationships and networks that support and stretch us.

Concrete, Actionable Techniques For Finding Your Allies

SET UP A PLC

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are a powerful way to learn and build connections. There are many different forms this can take, depending on your needs and resources. Many network partners use this as a foundation for their fellows. Click [here](#) to learn more.

MEET REGULARLY

It's so easy to deprioritize meeting with valued colleagues and friends. It can get pushed aside by what feels urgent. But schedule time to regularly connect, and protect that time in your diary.

RELATIONAL, NOT TRANSACTIONAL

When you meet with your trusted circle, take the time to really listen and get to know each other. Try not to fill the agenda with things to do.

MAKE THE FIRST MOVE

When you meet colleagues who you really connect to or whose practice interests you, be bold and ask for time to connect. You'll be amazed at how positively people react and what can grow out of those connections.

MAP YOUR ALLIES

Take the time to think through who are the people or groups who share your views on a particular issue. To learn more, try out [this Spectrum of Allies](#) activity.

Other Sources:

- [Developing Voices: Students Are Your Allies.](#)



Contribute your own techniques for **finding and fostering allies** to our growing library... and see what others have contributed [here](#).

While we are convinced we can't ask others for help, we long to help those we love; hell, we even love helping strangers. Helping others is one of the things (and research bears this out) that settles our nervous systems into its "rest and digest" mode, and it brings us into closer, stronger relationships with one another when we do. When we don't ask for help, we're not just continually choosing the stress, overwork, feelings of isolation, and the like, but we're also robbing those close to us of the transformative energy of helping and getting closer to us. We're playing a role, whether we want to admit it or not, in continuing the toxic individualism that is poisoning our land, acidifying our oceans, and keeping us locked in "power over" dynamics in our relationships.



Athena Palmer

Leadership coach and founder of No Ducks Coaching, and former Memphis Teach For America Executive Director



In my two years as a teacher in Nuevo Progreso, my great ally was the teacher with more years at the school. We shared a lot of common worries about parents' involvement with their kids' education, which pushed us to work together and co-design with the community [Growing with Love](#). When I returned to the community, I got a surprise to find the room I rented didn't have a door or windows installed because the carpenter had died from Covid. For weeks I used a whiteboard to cover the wind and the cold weather until Nilton offered to come and install the door. He was there not only as a professional ally but also as a friend!

Alexandra Vassallo
Alumna of Enseña Perú

What Does Finding Your Allies Look Like?

PARTNERING WITH FAMILIES TO ACCELERATE TO DEEPER LEARNING
As a teacher in the community of Catayoc (Perú), Nicole has seen enormous value in connecting subjects to the context and families of her students. In this sense, she works in partnership with families in the process of designing and implementing learning experiences. For example, while her students were doing research on the use of wood for cooking in the community, they conducted fieldwork to observe how the moms cooked and interviewed them. With that information, they developed charts and analyzed information.



Moving forward with her students and the community

When the principal resigned from this community-led school, [Angela](#), a first-year fellow, relied on her students and community leaders to learn how to manage the school. Together, they redesigned their working methodology and started their journey to be recognized by the Regional Education Direction as a public school and gain access to government funding (which they achieved a few years later!).



At Teach For India Delhi, every member from a student to a staff member works towards building and strengthening their tribe of 20.

Mansi Joshi
Former City Director, Teach For India. At Teach For India, Mansi led regional strategy and operations in Delhi, managing a team of over 300 Fellows and impacting more than 10,000 students in the region

Promoting a green and sustainable school through powerful partnerships

Seven years ago, Mauricio Bayona, an Enseña Por Colombia alumnus, decided to partner with the teachers at his school and local companies to build awareness among his students around the environmental issues of the city of Barranquilla. The impact of this partnership allowed the project to grow and went from involving 20 students to, seven years later, having more than 200 students leading the project and the school becoming a center for residues management for the community.



Other Places to Find Your Allies

- [Parents' engagement in school](#) (in Spanish).

Additional Research & Resources Related to Finding Your Allies

- [Trust-Based Collective Leadership: Mobilizing Through Real Connections](#) Essay (Page 151).

HOW TO SEEK FEEDBACK

Seek out regular critical friendships with colleagues, students, and others. Work on softening feelings of defensiveness, so that you can learn from what you hear. Take time to process setbacks and successes. Let go of perfectionism and focus on the process of improvement.

SEEK FEEDBACK
We welcome diverse sources of feedback and data to learn from and co-create a culture in which students are doing the same.

Concrete, Actionable Techniques for Seeking Feedback

GET FEEDBACK FROM STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND COLLEAGUES (MORE THAN YOUR MANAGER)

Defining moments throughout the year when you will seek feedback is important. Approach these conversations with an open mind and encourage others to share their opinions regarding your strengths and areas for improvement.

DON'T ASK FOR "FEEDBACK." BE MORE SPECIFIC

A phrase like, "Do you have any feedback for me?" is bad, says *Radical Candor* author Kim Scott, because most people will simply respond "No." It's easier to pretend everything's fine than to enter the awkward zone of giving criticism. Better to ask, for example, "What can I do, or stop doing, to make it easier to work with me?"

MODEL RECEIVING FEEDBACK WITH YOUR STUDENTS

Ensure the [feedback cycle](#) is targeted and productive by modeling feedback. As an option, you can provide sentence starters to help your students to gain more confidence on how to deliver feedback.

MAKE YOUR OWN FEEDBACK WITH DATA

Use the data from your students' progress and your own progress to identify your strengths and areas of improvement. Consider this information to make decisions about the next steps in your personal and professional growth.

Close Every Class with Feedback



End every day by asking the students for feedback. What did they do well and what could they do better; what did you (teacher) do well and what could you do better. Then act on the feedback!

Sanaya Bharucha

Global Head, Student Leadership & Voice, Teach For All, Teach For India Alumna, and Director of "Maya" the musical

Other Sources:

- [A Report Card for the Teacher: Five Tips for Getting Feedback From Students.](#)
- [Feedback That Empowers Students.](#)



Contribute your own techniques for **seeking feedback** to our growing library... and see what others have contributed [here](#).

Critical feedback is an act of love.

Allison Ohle

Executive Director, Diamond Educational Excellence Partnership (DEEP)

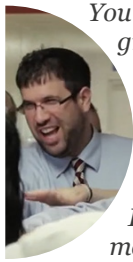


[Our teacher] Nacho always makes surveys and questions about our opinions of him. So we always tell him what bothers us or what is missing and he always tries to fix it. He is an example. He changed gradually. He is showing us that we can change and adapt ourselves to other things.

Ana Laura Aranda

Former student of Ignacio Brea, Enseña Por Argentina Alumna. Quote taken from "[Cambia Tú Mismo Primero \(Change Yourself First\)](#)"





You can't expect kids to grow if we don't expect ourselves to grow. If we see ourselves as developing, then the kids see themselves as developing. . . . It's messy. Love the messiness of it. And just try to be better tomorrow than you are today.

Isaac Pollack

Former principal of New Orleans' Carver High School and Teach For America alumnus. Quote taken from [Growth, not perfection](#). Check out this video from 2010 with powerful reflections from Pollack, his colleagues, and his students about the role of students' voices in shaping teacher development.

GLOSSARY

Agency: By agency, we mean students' (or our own) conviction and ability to make changes in themselves and the world around them.

Mastery: We use the word "mastery" to describe the meaningfully rigorous learning needed to prepare students for leadership in the future. The term signals a focus on deeper learning, surpassing many current education models and systems.

Additional Research & Resources Related to Seeking Feedback

- [Research on centering student voice and learning in Asian classrooms.](#)
- [Cultural Variation in the Effectiveness of Feedback on Students' Mistakes.](#)
- [Impact of teacher feedback on learning in Vietnam.](#)
- [Avraham Kluger's research](#) finds that feedback is usually ineffective and offers an alternative. We think highlighting a problem will lead to a change, but the real problem is often that people "don't have the inner resources to change."

Student Surveys As Feedback Tools

[Check out](#) Teach For All's growing library of assessment tools that measure progress on students' wellbeing, connectedness, awareness, agency, and mastery. In some cases, those student assessments are in the form of student surveys that also provide valuable feedback for teachers.

What Does Seeking Feedback Look Like?



Austin's butterfly

[Watch](#) a teacher lead a powerful lesson with young students that models the value of loving feedback for learning. In just 10 minutes, the teacher engages student perspectives in ways that excite them about giving and receiving feedback.



"The flock" – teachers getting feedback from other teachers

In this Edutopia [video](#), groups of teachers build circles of support for critical friendship. Teachers report both improved effectiveness and happier, more fulfilled work experiences.



Using anonymous surveys and their impact on learning

One physics teacher at Trinidad Garza High School in Texas was concerned about student performance and motivation. He implemented a [system of anonymous surveys](#) that not only changed his approach but dramatically increased student ownership.

Other Places to See Seeking Feedback

- [How to Get the Feedback You Need – Harvard Business Review.](#)
- [Simple Ways to Solicit Peer Feedback.](#)
- [Take an implicit bias test](#) and reflect on both the results and your response to them.

HOW TO LEARN & UNLEARN

Stay curious. Seek out your own blind spots and seek out new perspectives. Ask questions and lean into discomfort. Find a diverse community to support and challenge you. And as you grow your awareness, practice, practice, practice!

LEARN & UNLEARN
We set aside time to develop knowledge and skills, and to shift ways of being and perspectives that may be inhibiting growth.

Concrete, Actionable Techniques For Learning & Unlearning

Bernice Han, a fellow with Teach For Malaysia, found that adopting the lens of teacher as learner was a powerful way to develop literacy with her students. She took the time to learn the language of the local indigenous community where she was teaching: “I believe that if I want them to learn a language that is foreign in their environment, I must also learn their language. And when I started speaking Temiar, it made them feel safe, seen, and heard,” she said.

“What Did You Learn Today?”

I heard Jim Collins suggest that all work meetings should start not with “What have we accomplished?” but “What have we learned?” I tried that with my students and colleagues and it really changes the culture of our collaborations.

Anonymous

Lean Into Discomfort

Supporting teacher development in growing awareness of these issues takes two approaches: examining one’s positionality and the roots of injustice within a given context, and the pedagogy of discomfort. These two approaches are not mutually exclusive; indeed, one way for discomfort to be generated is through inquiry.

Mark Boylan and Ian Woolsey

Quote taken from [Teacher education for social justice: mapping identity spaces](#) by Mark Boylan and Ian Woolsey. (Published in *Teaching and Teacher Education*, February 2015)

Other Sources:

- [Learning How to Learn](#) (a TED talk with Barbara Oakley).
- [Using Video to Practice Practice.](#)



Contribute your own techniques for **learning and unlearning** to our growing library... and see what others have contributed [here](#).

The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn.

Alvin Tofler

American writer, futurist, and businessman. Quote taken from his book [Future Shock](#) (1970)

Intelligence can only be led by desire. For there to be desire, there must be pleasure and joy in the work. Intelligence only grows and bears fruit in joy. The joy of learning is as indispensable in study as breathing is in running. Where it is lacking there are no real students, but only poor caricatures of apprentices who, at the end of their apprenticeship, will not even have a trade.

Simone Weil

French political activist and philosopher. Quote taken from [Waiting for God](#) (1950)

Teaching is the art of sharing not just what you know but what you don't know. I think I am becoming a better teacher because I am becoming a better student. I used to walk into a classroom . . . to tell them what I know. Now I come in to share what I know in hope of sharing what they know because I want to learn too. So I show up for a class with the desire to learn. The only reason to share whatever thoughts or ideas or knowledge I have is so that together we can grow. It's made me a better teacher for sure. I think all the best teachers are the best students.

Simon Sinek

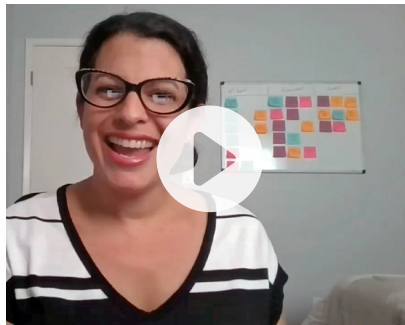
Author of *Start With Why* and proponent of [The Golden Circle centers WHY over WHAT and HOW](#). Quote taken from [How To Be a Better Teacher by Not Being the Expert](#) (2014)

What Does Learning & Unlearning Look Like?



The backwards brain bicycle

A learning-oriented engineer shares an amazing [experiment](#) in “learning” using a modified bicycle: “I had set out to prove that I could free my brain from a cognitive bias, but at this point, I’m pretty sure that all I’ve proved is that I can only redesignate that bias.”



Implementing strong learning theory to develop teachers

Hear, in this [video](#) from 2018, from teacher developers in Bangladesh, Mexico, and the U.S. about how they are innovatively acting on learning principles in their training and support programs for new teachers.



Learning to embrace mistakes as learning

This [video](#) from 2018 shows how when Óliver Jabato Rodríguez embraced learning and unlearning with and from his students, he turned around his dysfunctional classroom.

Other Places to See Learning & Unlearning

- [The Brain Science Behind Habits](#).
- [“Ako” – Responsive, Reciprocal Learning Relationships](#) (New Zealand, 2015).

Additional Research & Resources Related To Learning & Unlearning

- Best-selling author and researcher Jim Collins (*Good to Great*) worked with us to study how we develop teachers. In this [video](#) from 2018, he challenges us to realize the need for more collective learning.
- Take a more in-depth visit to Enseña Por Mexico, through this 2019 [video](#), to learn how that program is reimagining teacher development with these learning principles.

SHARE

Make your voice heard:
Help us evolve and improve these ideas and resources

Teaching As Collective Leadership is a collective effort. It has been developed through contributions from thousands of people — teachers, coaches, students, families, researchers, and others from all around the world. Please join us in continuing to evolve this work by sharing your perspective.

Below is our “digital bulletin board” that we are constantly updating with the input of generous readers who share their ideas. Please take a moment to click [here](#) on our **Co-learning Padlet** to contribute your thoughts, questions, challenges, illustrations, and links.

REFLECT AND GROW

#LearnAndUnlearn

Dr. Gawande has studied the pursuit of excellence across and beyond the medical field. One of his realizations: “If you want to get great at something, get a coach.” Dr. Gawande has learned that a coach is key to several powerful levers of learning: providing a more accurate picture of our reality, instilling positive habits of thinking, and breaking our actions down and building them back up again.

Anonymous

#PauseAndReflect

Two Feet, One Breath: I learned from a friend who is a very busy doctor about this practice of stopping at the doorway, settling both feet and taking one big intentional deep breath. I find that little pause does so much to clear and calm my mind as I move quickly from one challenge to another.

Radha Ruparell

#FindAndFosterAllies

There are no words to express the abyss between isolation and having one ally. It may be conceded to the mathematician that four is twice two. But two is not twice one; two is two thousand times one.

G. K. Chesterton

“We need more leaders like Delia: leaders from the community itself working to develop even more leadership from within; unstoppable at creating collaboration; humble but extraordinary at believing in and energizing others, especially in the parents, teachers, principals, and students; wise in crafting flexible teams that work across different groups of people; leading with an open heart and mind and an infinite ability to grow.”

Franco Mosso

Former CEO of Enseña Perú, referring to Delia Cieza, Director of Pedagogical Management at the Cajamarca region (Perú), in [What Leadership Do We Need Now?](#)

#LearnAndUnlearn

In designing learning, there’s a delicate dance between meeting students where they are and opening up new horizons. A process of deepening and broadening understanding. To open up new thinking, it’s vital to think carefully about factors like what background knowledge might be needed and what developmental assumptions you might be making.

Jude Heaton
Teach For All

#PauseAndReflect

The more their lives speed up, the more they feel hurt, frightened, and isolated. Despite their good hearts and equally good intentions, their work in the world rarely feels light, pleasant, or healing. Instead, as it all piles endlessly upon itself the whole experience of being alive begins to melt into one enormous obligation. It becomes the standard greeting everywhere: I am so busy.

Wayne Muller, Sabbath

#LearnAndUnlearn

I know that most men, including those at ease with problems of the greatest complexity, can seldom accept the simplest and most obvious truth if it is such as would oblige them to admit the falsity of conclusions that they have proudly taught to others, and which they have woven, thread by thread, into the fabrics of their life.

Leo Tolstoy, *What is Art?*



Contribute to our “Reflect and Grow” Digital Bulletin Board ([Here](#))