



DIG INTO learner AGENCY

Aim: To provide members of a learning community with a framework for exploring the properties and attributes of agency in order to develop a shared understanding.

Subject links: Learning community development organisation

Included in the resource:

- How to use and ideas for use pages
- DIG thinking routine cards specifically for exploring agency.
- Generic DIG routine cards for other inquiries

Teaching resources that move [Beyond Conventional Wisdom](#).

Our resources are designed to support learner choice, voice and agency. The resources are ideal for all teaching styles, but particularly suited to inquiry (constructivist) teaching.

Our aim is to move beyond conventional teaching tools, consultancy and training by creating tailored resources, strategies and training opportunities that enable teachers to implement supportive, differentiated, challenging and innovative learning experiences.



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"BCW will now use 'they - themselves' as a singular, gender-neutral pronoun in all material and resources generated. Just as the use of 'he - man' disappeared women's voice and identity, use of the binary 'she - he' and related pronouns has disappeared and rendered voiceless marginalised groups that do not identify with the 'he -she' pronouns. Until some wider grammatical agreement has been reached about what pronouns will be used to embrace the diversity of gender experience, in text we will use 'they - themselves' in our materials. Given that words/language create reality, using language that is acknowledging and inclusive of all people who identify across a wide gender spectrum is an issue of power, politics, respect and visibility. "



DIG: IDEAS FOR USE

PURPOSE

- This thinking routine is used to help uncover and enrich understandings and ideas about what learner agency is and is not, about what helps, hinders and hijacks the opportunities learners have to be agents in their own learning.
- Learning community members will need an opportunity to examine and understand beliefs, perspectives, problems and possibilities connected to learner agency as they DIG into ideas.

IDEAS FOR USE

- This thinking routine and process can be used by adults or children alike. It can be done in a staff meeting to develop shared understandings and a language of agency or with a learner-based learning community.
- Individually, in pairs, or as a group reflect on your ideas, experiences and understandings about agency and sites of agency within a learning community. Use critical and reflective thinking to analyze and explore the various layers of agency from what it looks like through to what its foundations are.

EXAMPLE: Examining agency in the learning environment

- *Divide the learning community into self chosen groups based on their interests, experiences or beliefs about agency.*
- *Have the learners work through various layers of agency from D to I to G levels using understandings of agency from their own personal lives, current work/learning situation or in other real-world situations they know about.*
- *Invite the learners to make visible the many factors that are negotiable and non-negotiable around learner agency and how it will get played out in each context. Learners can record ideas about the various layers, noting what will help, hinder or hijack the sites of agency the learners may have*

Having learners (whether they be teachers, learners, or parents) go through this process, ideas, perspectives, biases and beliefs about agency can be uncovered and explored constructively, thus helping to create a situation where a shared vision for the learners and their voice and choice in learning can begin to develop.

This process helps uncover beliefs and biases about learner agency that could help or hinder its implementation.

- Sites of agency in the learning community and environment are connected to
 - Teachers/ Parent intent - Quality of choices
 - Sites of agency- Prior knowledge, scaffolding and experience choice making
 - Learners being response-abled
- Sites of agency in the learning community and environment are built upon the some of the following beliefs
 - Ideas about learner capabilities
 - Power, accountability and choice
 - Values and trust

D

DESCRIBE it

Give DETAILS



Describe and give details about what agency in your learning community already looks, feels and is like.

Describe and give details about other places and experiences where you have experienced agency.

Describe and give details about what agency in your learning community could look, feel and be like.

I can see...

I feel...

There is a ...

I can hear...

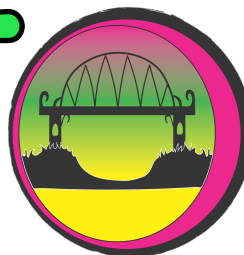
Some choices are...

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I

It connects to..

I can INFER...



Having choice and voice in learning is connected to...

What experiences, facts and support might be needed to support learner agency?

What does it mean to be response-abled?

What does it remind me of?

What is it connected to?

Why is it like this?

What inferences can we make about...?

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G

GO deeper



What big ideas are hiding in ideas and choices connected to learner agency?

What beliefs, values or understandings underpin agency (choice, voice and ownership)?

What ideas about agency could be found across a variety of times and places?

What values or beliefs might be influencing the choices and sites of agency do learners have?

What history or context may be affecting learner agency?

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D

DESCRIBE it

Give DETAILS



Look at what can be seen and describe the attributes, properties or features of learner agency.

Remember experiences and describe the facts and details connected to agency.

Find and describe the 'right-there' evidence and details about learner agency.

I can see...

I feel...

There is a ...

I can hear...

It is like...

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I

It connects to..

I can INFER...



Find connections and patterns connected to having agency.

Connect experiences, memories and facts about having sites of agency.

What inferences can be drawn about how people support sites of agency and skilling up learners to be becoming response-abled.

What does it remind me of?

What is it connected to?

Why is it like this?

What can we infer?

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G

GO deeper



Explore big ideas (absent but implicit) in ideas that are hiding below eye level when it comes to supporting people to have agency in the learning process.

What beliefs, values or understandings underpin ideas and practices connected to having agency?

Ideas that stretch across time and place connected to having agency.

What values or beliefs might be influencing ...?

What history may be affecting the present?

What is absent but implicit in these ideas?

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