MANCHESTER WEST HIGH SCHOOL

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING WORKING GROUP
DOCUMENTS

CSSR
The Center for Secondary School Redesign

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SUGGESTED PATTERNS FOR LEARNING IN THE BLOCK:

THE 3-STEP LEARNING CYCLE

1.

❖ TEACHER-FOCUSED ACTIVITY
   a. Lecture burst
   b. Video
   c. Present Assignment
   d. Prompt for QFT
   e. Teacher-led activities you usually do

2.

❖ COOP. GROUP WORK (student focus)
In small groups students process material taught in #1)
   a. Group Composition
   b. Social Skill or Behavior
   c. Positive Interdependence
   d. Monitoring
   e. Processing Academic & Behavioral Results

3.
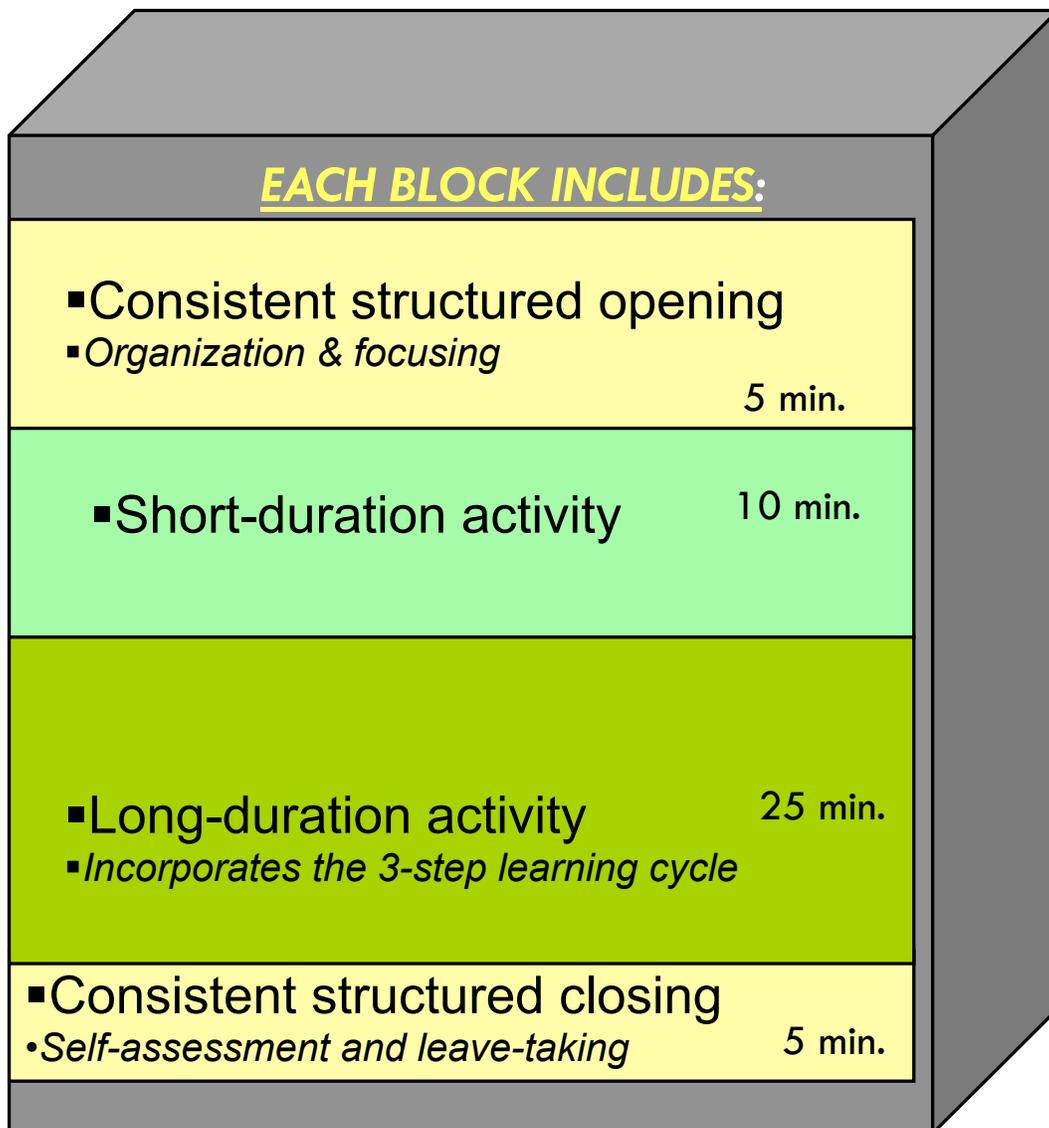
❖ CULMINATING ACTIVITY
❖ *Individual Student Responsibility*

Demonstrates Proficiency with the Material
   Presentations: group or individual
   a. Summative assessment
   b. Winners' Envelope/other assessment tool
   c. Portfolio Entry/Reflective essay
   d. Other demonstrations of understanding

SUGGESTED PATTERNS FOR STRUCTURING CLASS TIME

EACH BLOCK INCLUDES:

- **Consistent structured opening**
  - *Organization & focusing*
  - 5 min.

- **Short-duration activity** — 10 min.

- **Long-duration activity** — 25 min.
  - *Incorporates the 3-step learning cycle*

- **Consistent structured closing**
  - *Self-assessment and leave-taking* — 5 min.

COOPERATIVE vs. TYPICAL CLASSROOM GROUPS

(Adapted from work by Dee Dishon)

TYPICAL CLASSROOM GROUPS	COOPERATIVE LEARNING GROUPS
Often *homogeneous* or *random*	*Heterogeneous (by gender, ethnicity and often academic performance level)*

No Interdependence
• *Success of individual is unrelated to success of groupmates*
• *Individual*
   ○ *Materials*
   ○ *Products*
   ○ *Goals*
	Positive Interdependence
	• *Success of individual is positively related to success of groupmates*
	• *Group*
	   ○ *Materials*
	   ○ *Products*
	   ○ *Goal*
	• *Individual Accountability*

One Leader • *Chosen by teacher or group* • *Self-appointed*	*Shared Leadership* • *All members learn and perform leadership skills and roles* • *All members sign product to signify full participation*
Assumption: *Students will somehow learn to cooperate by working together*	*Social Skills are* • **Assigned** • **Defined** • **Discussed** • **Observed** • **Processed (with the whole class)**
Teacher Intervenes *Interrupts to* • *Solve problems* • *Give feedback* • *Keep order*	Teacher Interacts *Encourages group problem-solving by* • *Answering only group questions* • *Giving feedback during processing* • *Guiding from the sidelines*
Priority: • *Get the job done!* • *Maintain order*	Priorities: • *Get the job done and include everyone* • *Teach skillful behaviors as well as academic skills*

TEACHING SOCIAL/BEHAVIORAL SKILLS
(Adapted from work by Dee Dishon)

Social skills are behaviors consciously learned and performed by all group members. They lead the group to successful completion of its task. There are two types of social skills—task & maintenance. Allotting class time to develop each type systematically is critical to the development of successful cooperative groups.

TASK SKILLS	MAINTENANCE SKILLS
Focus on *what* to do	Focus on *how* to do it.
Help the group to • reach its *goal* ….AND • get the *job* done successfully.	Help the group to include • the *ideas*…. AND • *opinions* of *all* group members
TASK SKILLS TO TEACH: • *Check for understanding* • *Check for accuracy* • *Contribute ideas* • *Stay on task* • *Ask questions* • *Seek information* • *Get group back to work* • *No drivers, no hitchhikers* • *Brainstorm* • *Keep track of time* • *Share information* • *Stay in your own space*	MAINTENANCE SKILLS TO TEACH: • *Encouragement* • *Respond to ideas respectfully* • *Check for agreement* • *Encourage others to talk* • *Disagree agreeably* • *One person talks at a time* • *Paraphrase* • *Listen and give feedback* • *Use names* • *Active listening* • *Reduce tension* • *Acknowledge others' work*

WHY PROTOCOLS?

What are Protocols?
• A protocol consists of agreed upon guidelines for a conversation. It is the existence of this structure, which everyone understands and has agreed to, that permits a certain kind of conversation to occur —often a kind of conversation that people are not in the habit of having.

• Protocols help us build the skills — and culture — necessary for working together effectively and efficiently. Using protocols often allows groups to build trust as they work on important issues together.

Why use protocols?
Protocols create a structure that makes it safe to ask challenging questions. They also ensure that all voices are heard and that time is shared fairly among all participants. As a result no one voice dominates the discussion.

Protocols also create space for listening actively. They encourage us to listen deeply to each other instead of planning what to say next. This gives us a chance to understand different opinions and gain new insights. Everyone has the opportunity reflect on and understand the issues and problems deeply before making important decisions.

In schools, many people say that time is of the essence, and time is the one resource that no one seems to have enough of. Protocols are a way to make the most of the meeting time we do have. They help us stick to the point and not talk in circles. As a result we make decisions based on a thorough understanding of the issues.

Finally, it is important to remember that the protocol has no power by itself. It is a tool that lets us hold in-depth, insightful conversations about the issues we face in our schools. Everyone can learn to use them and lead meetings. When we use them well we build a sense of trust and community as we work together. They enable us to use our minds and our time to come to the best conclusions. They keep us from getting lost in words and arguments and keep us focused on the real goal.

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Microlabs

These guidelines and questions were adapted from those developed by Julian Weissglass for the National Coalition for Equity in Education based at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Purpose
To address a specific sequence of questions in a structured format with small groups, using active listening skills.

Time allotted
About 8 minutes per question — this works best with a series of no more than three questions.

Group format
Form triads — either with the people you're sitting near — or find others in the group you don't know well. Number off — 1, 2, 3.

Facilitation Tips
"I'll direct what we will talk about. Each person will have one minute (or, sometimes, 2 minutes, depending on the group and the question) to talk about a question when it's their turn. While the person is speaking, the other two in the group simply listen. When the time is up, the next person speaks, and so on. I'll tell you when to switch." Emphasize that talk has to stop when you call time, and conversely, that if the person is done speaking before time is up, the three people should sit in silence, using the time to reflect. Review the Guidelines (previous page).

The quality of the questions matter in this exercise. The questions should be ones that are important to the group.

The Activity
After instructing the group, read the first question aloud (twice). Give everyone time to write in preparation. Then, tell people when to begin, and then tell them when each one/two minute segment is up. On the first question, begin with person #1, then #2, then #3. Then read the next question aloud. On the second question, begin with #2, then #3, then #1. On the third question, begin with #3, then #1, then #2.

Reflection questions following the activity
• What did you hear that was significant? What key ideas or insights were shared?
• How did this go for you? What worked well, and what was difficult? Why?
• How might your conversations have been different had we not used this protocol?
• What are the advantages/disadvantages of using this activity? When would you use this protocol?
• What would you want to keep in mind as someone facilitating this activity?