



Collaborative Assessment Conference Protocol

Developed by Steve Seidel and colleagues at Harvard Project Zero

1. Getting Started

- The group chooses a facilitator who will make sure the group stays focused on the particular issue addressed in each step.
- The presenting teacher puts the selected work in a place where everyone can see it or provides copies for the other participants. S/he says nothing about the work, the context in which it was created, or the student, until Step 5.
- The participants observe or read the work in silence, perhaps making brief notes about aspects of it that they particularly notice.

2. Describing the Work

- The facilitator asks the group, "What do you see?"
- Group members provide answers without making judgments about the quality of the work or their personal preferences.
- If a judgment emerges, the facilitator asks for the evidence on which the judgment is based.

3. Asking Questions About the Work

- The facilitator asks the group, "What questions does this work raise for you?"
- Group members state any questions they have about the work, the child, the assignment, the circumstances under which the work was carried out, and so on.
- The presenting teacher may choose to make notes about these questions, but s/he is does not respond to them now--nor is s/he obligated to respond to them in Step 5 during the time when the presenting teacher speaks.

4. Speculating About What the Student Is Working On

- The facilitator asks the group, "What do you think the child is working on?"
- Participants, based on their reading or observation of the work, make suggestions about the problems or issues that the student might have been focused on in carrying out the assignment.

5. Hearing from the Presenting Teacher

- The facilitator invites the presenting teacher to speak.
- The presenting teacher provides his or her perspective on the student's work, describing what s/he sees in it, responding (if s/he chooses) to one or more of the questions raised, and adding any other information that s/he feels is important to share with the group.
- The presenting teacher also comments on anything surprising or unexpected that s/he heard during the describing, questioning and speculating phases.

Protocols are most powerful and effective when used within an ongoing professional learning community such as a Critical Friends Group® and facilitated by a skilled coach. To learn more about professional learning communities and seminars for new or experienced coaches, please visit the National School Reform Faculty website at www.nsrffharmony.org.

6. Discussing Implications for Teaching and Learning

- The facilitator invites everyone (the participants and the presenting teacher) to share any thoughts they have about their own teaching, children's learning, or ways to support this particular child in future instruction.

7. Reflecting on the Collaborative Assessment Conference

- The group reflects on the experiences of or reactions to the conference as a whole or to particular parts of it.

8. Thanks to the Presenting Teacher