



## Protocol Families

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*Original by Gene Thompson-Grove; revised by Frances Hensley, May 2011; revised by Thomas Van Soelen, November 2013.*

At their very core, protocols emanate from a particular place. Certain features and components of protocols may be found in protocols that look similar, but the very reason for the protocol existing may be different — its essence is unique.

### **Looking at Work Protocols**

When giving a presenter feedback on student or adult work, four families of protocols emerge:

#### **Descriptive**

Some protocols exist in order to provide structure for participants to slow down and *describe* work, either their own or their students. These descriptive processes differentiate between the literal, the interpretive, and the evaluative. Often used with open-ended assignments.

*Examples:*

ATLAS  
ATLAS: Looking at Data  
Collaborative Assessment Conference  
Examining Assessments  
Art Shack

#### **Dilemma Management**

Asking well-crafted probing questions is a particularly critical part of *dilemma management* protocols. When “beautiful” questions are posed, they prompt the presenter to think more deeply or expansively about the question, but not necessarily give an answer. Thus, the presenter may leave with better thinking about how to manage the dilemma.

*Examples:*

Issaquah  
Consultancy  
Peeling the Onion

#### **Refining**

Gaining feedback from others often germinates from a need to check in on the quality of our work. *Refining* protocols allow presenters to listen in as others pore over work samples and offer feedback, focused with a question or a goal.

*Examples:*

Tuning  
Slice  
Ghost Walk  
Gap Analysis

## **Generative**

The final family of Looking at Work protocols provides opportunities for the presenter (individual or group) to listen and observe (and perhaps participate), while others *generate* ideas, understandings, questions, and possibilities for consideration.

*Examples:*

Chalk Talk

Charrette

Constructivist Protocol

Fears and Hopes

Realms of Concern and Influence

Success Analysis

Wagon Wheel Brainstorming

The World Café

## **Protocols Where Adult or Student Work is Not Central**

### **Shared Understanding**

Hearing the multiple points of view or ideas around a common question, experience, or other prompt such as text(s) is a first step to build shared understanding. These protocols provide processes to capture multiple points of view held by members of the group and then, through guided discussion, arrive at some degree of *shared understanding* of the issues, challenges, agreements, and opportunities facing the group.

*Examples:*

Block Party

Coffee Talk

Continuum Dialogue

Making Meaning Adapted for Text

Multiple Perspectives Adapted for Text

Norm Construction

ProMISE for texts about equity

Questions and Assumptions

Text Rendering

Text-Based Seminar

The 4 "A"s

The Final Word