

This facilitator's guide is designed to provide principals, coaches, teacher leaders with processes, strategies, and protocols to effectively facilitate professional conversations around the Foundational Knowledge Conversation Guide Series.

References:

Education Business Plan 2016-2019

<https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/cea65c12-a239-4bd9-8275-3ab54d84f5b3/resource/580cb6dd-1c03-408f-93a2-ed45dca541db/download/education-2016-19.pdf>

FNMI Facilitator Professional Development Resource

http://inclusiveeducationpdresources.com/fnmi/pdf/fnmi_pd_resource_binder.pdf

Essential Terminology

<https://www.teachers.ab.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/ATA/Publications/Human-Rights-Issues/Terminology%20%20%28PD-WT-16a%29.pdf>



The intent of the **Conversation Guide Series** is to create teachers' and system leaders' awareness and understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit:

- Perspectives, experiences and ways of knowing
- History and legacy of residential schools and treaties
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendations for education.

Successful facilitation of meaningful professional conversation is complex work. This facilitator's guide is not intended to provide a specific approach to these professional conversations. Instead, it offers a menu of processes, strategies and protocols to allow you to make decisions tailored to the content of the work and the unique context of the participant learners. You are encouraged to select and use processes, strategies and protocols that match the intent of the session and the learning needs of the participants.

This facilitator's guide is divided into three sections: Getting Ready for Professional Conversations; Engaging in Professional Conversations; and Reflecting on the Professional Conversations.

Getting Ready for Professional Conversations

As facilitator, it is critical that you spend time prior to the session to become familiar with the contents of the Conversation Guide to be discussed.

- Review and become familiar with all sections of the Conversation Guide, including the references, resources, content, *Questions for Reflection and Discussion* and the *For More Information* section.
- Reflect on your responses to the questions posed in the *Questions for Reflection and Discussion* section. Anticipate participants' responses. The content of the Conversation Guides can be emotional, controversial and divisive.
- Consider the length and complexity of content within the Conversation Guide – you may need to break the Conversation Guide into more than one professional conversation, depending on time available and the complexity of the topic. The Conversation Guides are intended to create awareness and general understanding. Additional professional learning support will provide support for deeper understanding of the topics covered.
- If possible, arrange for an Elder to come in and open the session.

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Creating the Conditions for Learning

People's lives are busy. They come together with other pieces of their lives still on their minds as they settle into their seats. Before the professional conversation begins, creating a space that is inviting and has a sense of calm energy can go a long way in engaging your participants in deep discussion.

The following ideas also assist in creating a space for learning:

- Create table configurations that hold 3 to 6 people (rather than theater style). Try to ensure there is enough room for people to push their chairs away from the table and get up and move around. You may also consider creating a space for people to form a circle of chairs.
- Ensure equity and ease of access to all reading materials or other resources. Consider whether or not to print materials – many of your participants will prefer “touching” the resources – highlighting, underlining key ideas. Alternatively, ensure all participants can easily access the reading material or other resources online.
- Give participants time to get comfortable. They will need some time to “feel” the room. They may also need time to either reconnect or connect for the first time with one another.

Engaging in Professional Conversations

Meaningful professional conversations take place in a social/emotional environment in which inquiry, risk-taking, sharing and collaboration are encouraged in order to optimize student learning. In the event that you are facilitating a newly formed group, it is especially important to consider a manageable group size (up to four people per group). Finally, you are encouraged to review preexisting norms for professional conversation or create basic norms if none have been created.

Facilitating the “Content” of the Conversation Guides

It is important that participants clearly understand the purpose of the session. Each participant can be provided with time to read the content on their own. Alternatively, participants may be engaged with the content through protocols. Several protocols are listed below. Select the protocol that fits best with the content of the reading. It is important to provide clear and explicit directions related to the protocol.

Save the Last Word For Me

- Form groups of four. Each person reads the content silently to identify what s/he considers to be the most significant idea addressed and explain why s/he believes it to be significant.
- A volunteer begins the protocol by identifying the point that s/he found to be most significant, reads it out loud and shares why s/he selected that particular point.
- The other two participants respond, in turn, to that idea. Encourage participants to avoid cross-talk.
- The fourth person responds to the comments – s/he has the *last word*.
- The same pattern is followed until all members of the group have a chance to have “the last word.”

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Say Something

- Scan the content and decide together how far both of you will both read silently before stopping to say something.
- Begin reading the text.
- Once each partner has reached the chosen stopping point, both partners exchange comments or share something related to what was read.
- Partners continue the process until the selection is completed.
- After a designated amount of time, engage the whole group in a discussion of the text.

I Summarize, You Summarize

This conversation format may be used when dividing up a text. Use the A/B structure:

- Ask participants to prepare their summaries alone.
- Designate who will begin (remind listeners to listen).
- Provide a time frame and monitor the time.
- When each partner has spoken, give the first person 30 seconds to note a new connection made from their partner's summary and then do the same for the second person.

Reciprocal Teach

This strategy may be used to process sections of text. It is important to tell the participants upfront what they will be doing between the sections – this will focus their reading. Once the chunk is delivered, provide time for participants to organize their notes for teaching their partner. Then designate who begins – A or B – and allow 2 to 3 minutes for each to teach.

Alone/Together

Use after covering a section of information.

- Participants organize their thinking *alone*.
- Participants share their thinking *together*. Listen for new connections and insights
- Participants *alone* consider the question, “How did my partner's thinking impact my thinking?”
- Participants share their thinking *together*.
- Facilitator records the thinking (report out).
- Facilitator networks the thinking to show connections.

Walk to Talk

This strategy serves several purposes: to shift the energy in the room, to allow movement, to mix people up and to provide the opportunity to hear new ideas.

- Participants organize their thinking *alone*. Participants may keep notes.
- Participants move away from the tables and find someone across the room. Once they have found a partner, they decide who speaks first. Alternatively, the facilitator may identify who speaks first.
- Participants report back to table about the thinking “out there.”
- Facilitator records the thinking at each table and shares some of the ideas collected orally (report out).
- Facilitators invite participants to examine the report out and make generalizations regarding the thinking in the room.

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Paired Verbal Fluency

This is a fast-paced strategy. It can be stressful for some participants, so ensure it is framed positively. This strategy gets people verbally active prior to discussing a new topic. The act of constructing language and listening to the ideas of others stimulates thinking and helps people to surface knowledge about the topic at hand.

- Participants organize into A/B partner groups and are not allowed to use their notes (ask them to turn them over, put pens down).
- Participants are not allowed to repeat what their partner says.
- Facilitator starts the activity on “go,” asking them to share their thoughts on a topic.
 - Round 1: 45 seconds for each person
 - Round 2: 30 seconds for each person
 - Round 3: 15 seconds for each person

Facilitating “Questions for Reflection and Discussion”

Throughout this portion of the session, the facilitator’s role is critical. Participants should be engaged in meaningful and targeted professional conversations. As facilitator, it is important to:

- Remain neutral
- Surface assumptions, illuminate possibilities, and develop shared understandings
- Ensure equal time and voice of all participants
- Listen actively
- Create a safe space for discussion
- Ask probing questions
- Paraphrase for clarity
- Check for common understanding
- Synthesize ideas

Plan to give participants enough time to fully explore ideas without being told they are right or wrong, as this can stop their thinking very quickly. More often than not, decisions related to what is right and wrong will emerge during the group’s professional conversation. Allow validation for responses to the questions to come from the participants in the group as much as possible.

Reflecting on Professional Conversations

Awareness and understanding of the content related to the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Conversation Guides is consolidated through personal and/or group reflection. The process of thinking about one’s learning and thought process are keys to deeper learning. Select from the ideas below to engage your participants in reflection on the professional conversations held throughout a session.

5-minute Reflection Poem

- Write one thing you **learned** today.
- Write one thing that **helped** you learn today.
- Write one thing the you **contributed** to the learning today.
- Write one thing you feel you can **try**.
- Write how you **feel**.

What were ...

- My thoughts, feelings
- My awareness, judgments
- My insights, questions

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5-3-1

This activity provides small groups the opportunity to compare, sort and synthesize key learning and experiences.

- Participants work alone and jot down 5 words (about content and/or feelings) that come to mind when thinking about the topic.
- Participants share their words with their table.
- As a table, choose 3 words.
- As a table, choose 1 word.
- Have table groups share the word with other groups and explain why they selected it.

3-2-1

This activity summarizes the learning and leads into an action plan. There are two variations.

Variation 1:

- 3 things or important ideas that you want to remember
- 2 things you would like to know more about
- 1 idea that you will write about tonight

Variation 2:

- 3 interesting facts you learned
- 2 big ideas you will think about
- 1 question you need to think about

Here's What, So What, Now What?

This activity allows participants to begin to plan how they will use their learning in their classrooms, schools or communities.

- Participants are encouraged to work in pairs, but can work individually or in other group structures.
- Model the activity first, using an example based on the workshop topic. Prepare an example in advance.

Here's What for recording learning during the workshop – new ideas, specific insights	So What for recording the participant's interpretation of their learning	Now What? for developing an action plan based on the two previous columns
"The need to belong is clearly linked to successful learning."	"Belonging is not about intimate relationships rather, it is about being respected and accepted for who the person is."	"One thing I am going to do in my classroom is greet each student each day as they come into my classroom and then say goodbye to them at the end of the day/period".

Using "For More Information"

Each Conversation Guide includes "For More Information." This feature provides additional resources related to the content of the guide. Provide time at the end of the session to highlight these resources for those who wish to deepen and extend their understanding of the topics.

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