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Choosing a Question Protocol

Developed by Project Zero, Harvard University (Evidence Project, 2000).

This protocol helps clarify the process for choosing a question to focus on in Evidence Process work. As teachers identify questions about their practice that feel important to them, they are asked to consider the three questions below. In an Evidence Group meeting, one teacher — and then the group — is asked to address the three questions.

1. Why is this question personally important to you?
2. How is it relevant to teaching and learning in other classrooms?
3. What direct connections to student learning can we identify?

Note: The “presenting teacher” is the only one who can address the first question. For questions 2 and 3, the presenting teacher answers first, then the group. A possible 4th question concerns the “size” of the question: Does the question feel too specific or too broad?

If the group feels there are satisfactory answers to all three questions, the question is considered appropriate for study through the Evidence Process. If a question doesn’t meet these criteria, the group helps the participant modify the question or identify another question for study.