



Student Profiles Activity

Developed by Gene Thompson-Grove. Revised by Connie Zimmerman Parrish and Susan Westcott Taylor, 2012.

adapted by Great Schools Partnership, 2016.

Purpose

A reflective exercise during which educators reflect on their own experience as students — and how that experience has influenced their practice. Participants also build community through storytelling, share teaching strategies, and reveal disparities between the current teaching population and the current student population.

Process

1. Read the student profiles and identify the one that most accurately describes who you were as a student in high school. If several fit (this will be true for many of you), choose the one that affected you the most, or the one that now seems most significant as you look back at your high school experience. (5 minutes)
2. Find that student profile around the room and go there. Create groups of 4-5 participants.
3. Introduce yourselves. Choose a facilitator and a scribe. (5 minutes)
4. Talk about your school experiences together. What was it like to be this kind of student? Each person in the group should have an opportunity to talk, uninterrupted, for about 1 minute. (About 5 minutes)
5. Talk as a group about what people need to know about students like you were if they want you to learn at high levels and do meaningful work. (About 5 minutes)
6. Discuss how your student profile influences your teaching practice. Which type of student might be more difficult for you to understand or work with? What do your students need to know about you? (About 10 minutes)
7. Return to your school/district team. What students do you represent here? Who is not represented in our group? What are the implications for our work as educators? for our work this week? (About 15 minutes)
8. Whole group debrief. What was it like to participate in this activity? What worked/was powerful? Was anything challenging or not a fit for you?

How might we use this with colleagues or students or parents/guardians? What might be gained by doing so?
(About 5-7 minutes)