

Boston Teacher Residency



LEADING A WHOLE CLASS DISCUSSION



Agenda



1. Boston Teacher Residency: Program context and structure as a necessary scaffold for teaching novices to lead a whole class discussion (Solomon)
2. Instructional Activities as tools or “containers” for bounding and scaffolding novice teacher learning (Lampert)
3. A case of teaching the practice: Leading a Whole Class Discussion (Sloan)

BTR Program Mission



- *To drive significant student learning gains through the recruitment, preparation and development of effective Boston teachers*
- *To address three specific issues:*
 1. Shortage of teachers in high-needs areas (math, science, sped, teachers of color)
 2. Half of all new teachers leaving within three years
 3. New teachers not prepared to carry out BPS' instructional agenda

BTR Program Structure

- 13 month Residency
- 2 summers
- 9 mos. of 4 days a week teaching + 1.5 days of classes
- 65 Residents clustered in 5 “Residency Affiliate Schools” – teaching hospitals

Year 1

License +
MA

- Award is contingent on performance in the classroom
- BTR is licensing body (controls all program elements)
- UMass Boston grants Masters degree

- Job placement of grads in clusters: strategic opportunity for district/system
- 3 years of induction support: individual and team coaching, capacity building in schools

Years 2-4

Program Staffing



- Teams of Collaborating Teachers (CTs) in affiliated schools
 - Full time teachers, ideally BTR grads
 - BTR compensates
 - BTR provides professional development around both teaching and mentoring
- Clinical Teacher Educators (CTEs):
 - Blend theory & practice in work with CTs and Residents
 - Melding of three former positions: teach courses, coach in schools, work with graduates
 - 2 each in Elementary Math, Literacy; Secondary Math, Science, ELA, Social Studies, Special Ed, English Language Learning
- Directors: oversee coherence, implementation in “residency affiliate” schools

So how is “Leading a Whole Class Discussion” taught and learned inside this program?



- Taught and learned in, from, and for practice inside of our affiliate schools by planning for, entering, and analyzing interaction with students
- Instructional Activities as the “container” for the practices, principles, and content knowledge novices need to learn to use in interaction with classes of students.

Step 1: Support affiliate schools as a long term learning context

AFFILIATE SCHOOL

Administration
Curriculum and Instruction
Student Assessments
Collaborating Teachers
BTR Residents Students
BTR Clinical Teacher Educators
BTR Grads
Community Members



Over years



In any setting, “Leading a Whole Class Discussion” involves social and intellectual challenges:



- Get students to publicly contribute in territory where they don't already know everything
- Manage who speaks when
- Manage unpredictable content in student contributions
- Monitor what is learned by listeners
- Simultaneously instruct and facilitate student thinking

Yet in the Gateway Residents are expected to pass 5 months into the program we expect them to be proficient in doing this practice

Teacher Residency Teaching Gateway Rubric 2012-13 (continued)

Instructional Goal #2: Teach lessons with high cognitive demand, maintaining a consistent focus on student reasoning and enabling students to understand big ideas in academic content areas.		Advanced	Proficient	Developing	Performance Needs Work
	A	The resident launches a high cognitive demand task that results in the engagement of all students.	Resident launches a high cognitive demand task.	Resident designs a high cognitive demand task in which students are asked to reason with content, but lowers the demand in the launch.	Resident does not design or launch a high cognitive demand task for the students.
	B	Resident orchestrates a discussion where student interaction with content is the major component of the lesson and optimally facilitates learning and understanding.	Resident orchestrates a discussion where student interaction with content is the major component. Resident's voice is not the exclusive voice heard during the lesson	Resident orchestrates a discussion, but the resident voice predominates and minor student interactions take place.	Resident's voice is the exclusive voice during the lesson. Student interactions are not elicited.
	C	Students make connections among each other's ideas to further content areas	Resident directs students to make connections among each other's ideas to further the content goals	Resident makes connections among students' ideas but these connections do not further the content goals.	Resident does not make connections among students' ideas and the content goals
	D	Resident maintains high level of cognitive demand throughout lesson for all students.	Resident makes multiple attempts to maintain the level of cognitive demand throughout lesson for all of the students.	Resident makes attempts to maintain the high level of cognitive demand throughout lesson for some students.	Resident does not maintain the high level of cognitive demand throughout lesson.
	E	Students explain unclear aspects of their thinking	Resident presses students to explain unclear aspects of their thinking	Resident encourages students to explain unclear aspects of their thinking	Resident does not encourage students to explain unclear aspects of student thinking

Step 2: Design/choose Instructional Activities that can accomplish ambitious learning goals but bound the complexity for novices



- What are Instructional Activities?
- How do they relate to high leverage practices?
- Why do we use them?
- How do we use them? (Julie)



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Instructional Activities are ways of interaction around ambitious content in classrooms that bound complexity of teaching

- **Socially**

- Who is doing what, when is very well specified and consistent
- How student contributions are dealt with is very well specified and consistent

- **Conceptually**

- The intellectual territory into which students might venture is bounded and well prepared for
- The territory can be examined carefully in advance

- **Contextually**

- Action protocols can be the same across grade levels and levels of teacher experience
- Learning communities share common language and tools



Examples of IAs

Analyzing a graph, table, figure, or diagram in high school science

Quick images in elementary mathematics

Interpreting documents in high school history

Story book read aloud in elementary literacy



The relationship between High Leverage Practices and IAs



- High Leverage Practices specify what teachers and students do together to teach/learn content
- IAs are designed to *enact* Practices, Principles, and Knowledge of Content together in the context of lessons with learning goals
- An IA may be made up of more than one High Leverage Practice
- A High Leverage Practice can appear in several different IAs

Using an IA to teach Leading a Discussion



What:

“Compare and Contrast”

When:

Second half of the year; grades 6-12

Why:

To increase the focus on student reasoning in a whole class discussion focused on a specific set of learning goals. The teacher prepares for the discussion by working on subroutines to learn how to: **listen**, **elicit**, normalize, build, and **represent** in the discussion.

Discussion: Compare and Contrast IA

1. Planning: purpose and text selection
2. Launching task
3. Circulation: pair work (listen)
4. Whole-class discussion (elicit & represent)
5. Assess understanding/application

Bristol Sloan Draft

Using Mentor Texts: Compare and Contrast

Purpose: overall, modeled-reading

- helps make invisible "expert" writing moves/strategies public,
- illustrates how one analyzes writing (through a critical lens, for impact of various devices), and
- positions students to analyze the impact of the mentor text/ "expert" writing moves **by constructing a flexible approach** for students to apply to their own writing application.

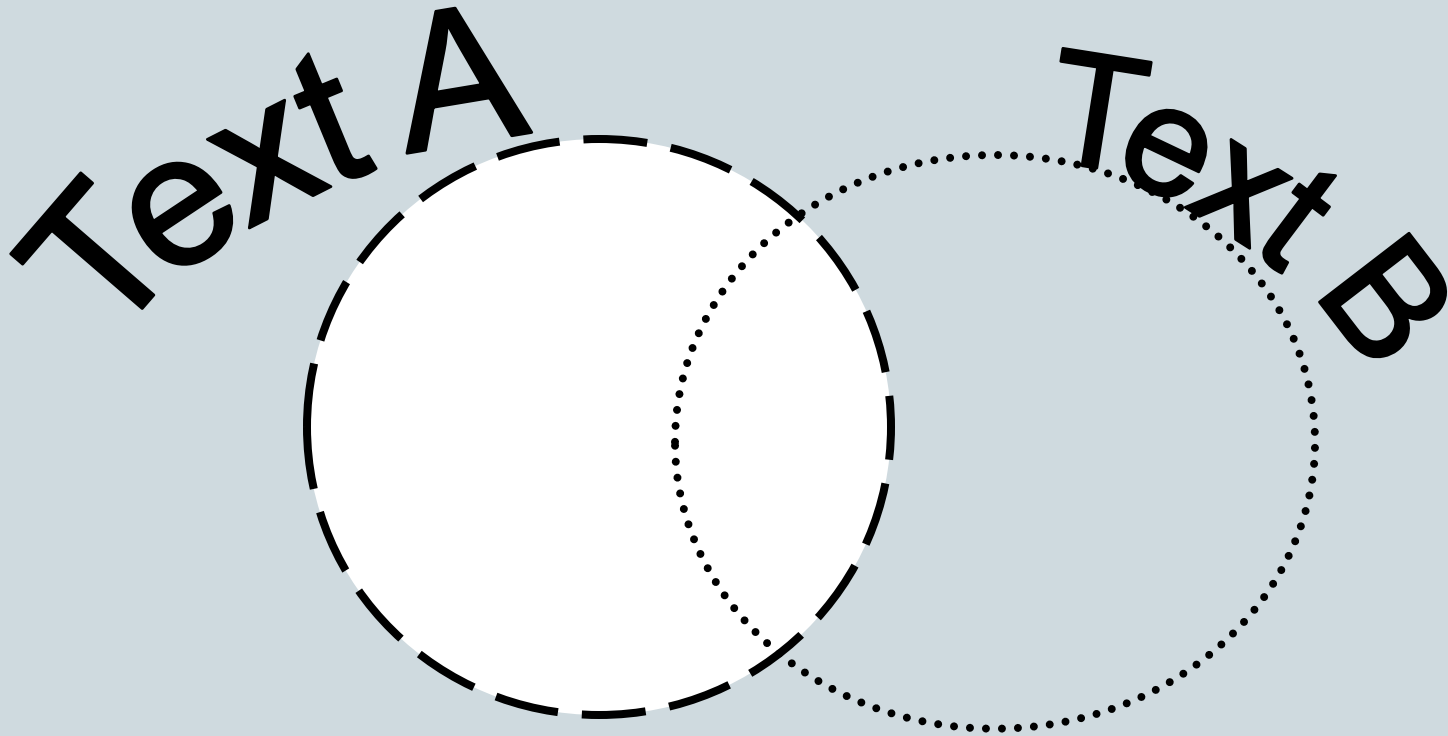
Writing selection: the teacher chooses two pieces of writing centered around the same skill/writing move based on the goal of the teaching session. The writing selection should be at an instructional level for the class, but within the range for the students' perceived skill level. A teacher might also make text-selections because the excerpts are interesting, written by same-aged students, rich in language and meaning, connect to students' lives, and/or provide many opportunities for illustrating the content skill or process strategy. The excerpts should be comprehensible, even if taken out of context.

Teacher	Students
1. The work involved in helping students participate in the modeling activity. Depending on your student's exposure to modeling you will want to review [or introduce] norms for modeling, in addition to practicing the behaviors during a teacher's lesson, they should include not answering the teacher's question and taking descriptive notes. Framing the Use of Mentor Texts: Teacher frames the purpose for comparing and contrasting mentor texts. The teacher might address learning that has happened prior to this instructional activity if relevant. Then to frame the task, the teacher might say: ○ Today we are going to investigate the effect _____ (insert writer's move, i.e. writing an introduction, use of fragments, sentence combining) _____ (text) has on an overall piece of writing. ○ The reason we are comparing and contrasting writing is because in order to be more effective and powerful writers we need to learn from different writers' choices and see what effect they've had on their readers, so we	1. Setting up for using mentor texts: • Have the text in front of them • A venn diagram (made in notebook or in a handout)  In conclusion, I think the more effective piece of writing is _____ because...

Handwritten notes on the page:

- that
- needs process
- needs text
- Similar to text
- A
- I know you have a lot of shifts
- study specific relevant evidence
- write a short and find type of evidence by selves + when but you have to say
- read 1st

Representation for Discussion



In conclusion, I think the more effective piece is because

IA: discussion subroutine #1: the scaffolds that help novices to prepare students to contribute to a discussion

The work involved in orienting students to the task

Students work in pairs

1. Circulating for starting/accessing the task
2. Circulating for assessing understanding

IA: discussion subroutine #1: zooming in



Circulating for starting/accessing the task:

- When students seem off task. *Say: great, so where is _____ in the writing? Pause _____ [name student] how could you get back on track? Pause Great, I'll be back in to check on your progress in seven minutes.*
- When students quickly ask for help. *Say: Why don't you read the procedures/directions aloud? [to other student] So what's the first thing you need to do? Ok, great, do it*
- When students jump to evaluation *Say: so Travis and Julie, I hear that you noticed that text B is "a force" and therefore, not as good as A. Explain what you both mean, how is the writer 'forcing it'...what are those moves?*

Discussion subroutine #2 – scaffolds for novices to lead a discussion

Whole-class Discussion: deconstructing and learning from the task

- 5 steps to leading the discussion
 1. Transition
 2. Framing
 3. Elicit
 4. Represent
 5. Summarize

Discussion subroutine #2 – how novices are scaffolded to lead a discussion

Whole-class Discussion: deconstructing and learning from the task

- 5 steps to leading the discussion (NB: each has its own sub-sub routines!)
- 1. Say: *Ok.* [and other non verbal cues to transition from the pair work to the whole-class]
- 2. Say: *So let's see how we understand these writing moves in context.* [the goal of the discussion]
- 3. Teacher starts by eliciting an idea from a student whose work s/he noticed specifically had an important detail.
- 4. Teacher keeps track of the students' ideas and represents them to the whole class: Venn diagram
- 5. Teacher facilitates a review of each of the texts, comparing and contrasting the writing moves

DURING THE DISCUSSION

- *Some questions to ask:*
 - ✦ *What impact did that make on conveying specific ideas?*
 - ✦ *How did it help? (rephrase when needed using academic terms such as: writing a universal claim introducing author and the characters , creating a thesis statement etc.)*
- *Teacher seeks to clarify and build understanding asking:*
 - ✦ *Did anyone else see this?*
 - ✦ *How would you explain the impact?*
 - ✦ *Is there another way to understand this?*
- *Teacher repeats discussion until a class-constructed chart comparing/contrasting is completed.*
- *This step can be combined with the pair share (reading moves and how it helped) depending on the age group and experience deconstructing impact of specific devices.*

So how do we teach Residents to do this?

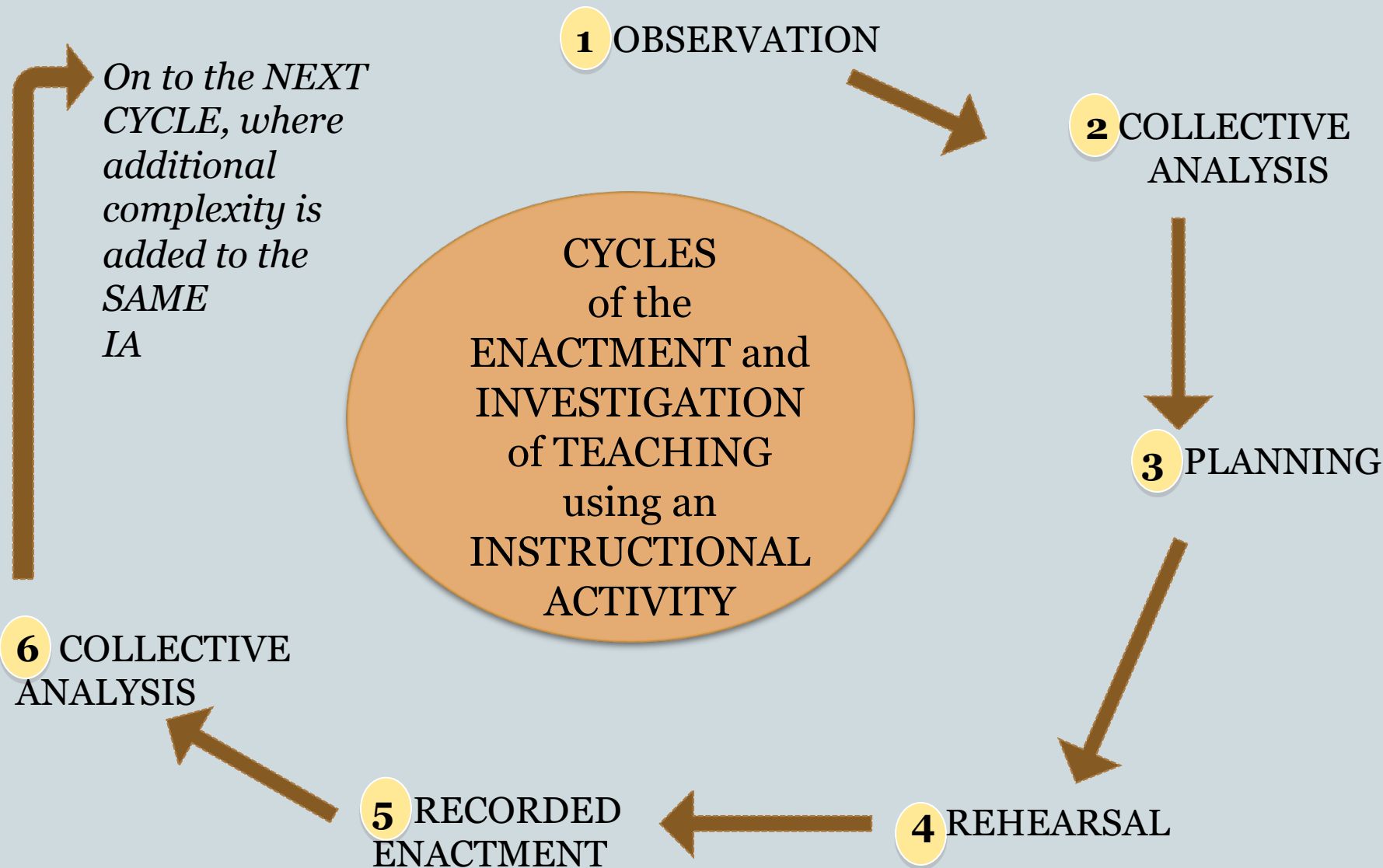
I will illustrate by showing you examples from each step in the Cycle of Investigation and Enactment, which we adapted from the Learning Teaching Practice project.



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CTE and Teacher Learning within the IA



Who:

- Sonya Crocker; 2nd year teacher at the Jeremiah Burke High School

Learning goals:

- Increase student participation in discussion
- Focus the discussion on a set of specific ideas

How: CTE models for Residents



How: Novice enacts discussion-IA in class



Learning goal #1: lessons from circulation



Learning goal #2: eliciting student ideas



Students' reflection

