***Selected Harvard Thinking Routines***

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The following routines are based on work found in this text: Ritchhart, R., Church, M., & Morrison, K. (2011). *Making thinking visible: How to promote engagement, understanding, and independence for all learners.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

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| ***1. Compass Points***(Ritchhart, Church, & Morrison, 2011) The purpose of this Harvard Thinking Routine is to help students methodically process, explore, and evaluate an idea or proposition. Begin by presenting students with a proposition/idea and drawing a compass on the board, labeling each point thus:1. E = Excited

What excites you about this idea or proposition? What’s the upside?1. W = Worrisome

What do you find worrisome about this idea or proposition? What’s the downside?1. N = Need to Know

What else do you need to know or find out about this idea or proposition? What additional information would help you to evaluate it?1. S = Stance or Suggestion for Moving Forward

What is your current stance or opinion on the idea or proposition? How might you move forward in your evaluation of this idea or proposition? This order is generally the easiest for students to follow, beginning with the positive points and then moving deeper. Another option would be to ask students to evaluate the proposition prior to going through the compass points, and then ask them how their thinking changed after completing the compass point discussions. ***2. CSI: Color, Symbol, Image Routine***– (Ritchhart, Church, & Morrison, 2011)  This Harvard Thinking Routine challenges students to engage in a different type of thinking by having them communicate the essence of an idea non-verbally. After students read, watch, or listen to something, ask students to choose three things that stood out most to them and have them do the following:1. For one item, choose a color that best represents or captures the essence of the main idea.
2. For another item, choose a symbol that best represents or captures the essence of the main idea.
3. For the last item, choose an image that best represents or captures the essence of the main idea.

After completing this portion of the activity, have students pair up and share their colors, symbols, and images, explaining their reasoning for each choice, and facilitating discussion of the topic at hand. It is good if students have had some experience identifying main ideas in text prior to this activity. This activity can be used as an accompaniment to reading, watching, or listening to foster comprehension or as an avenue for reflecting on previous lessons or events. ***3. Generate, Sort, Connect, Elaborate: Concept Maps*** - (Ritchhart, Church, & Morrison, 2011) This Harvard Thinking Routine helps students engage in a different type of thinking by bringing to the surface prior knowledge to help generate new ideas about a topic and make connections between those ideas. Concept maps are unique in that they allow students to organize their thinking in a non-linear manner. It is helpful to follow these four steps in helping students create concept maps:1. Generate a list of ideas and initial thoughts that come to mind when you think about this particular topic/issue.
2. Sort your ideas according to how central or tangential they are. Place your central ideas near the center and more tangential ideas toward the outside of the page.
3. Connect your ideas by drawing connecting lines between ideas that have something in common. Explain and write in a short sentence how the ideas are connected.
4. Elaborate on any of the ideas/thoughts you have written so far by adding new ideas that expand, extend, or add in any way to your initial ideas.

This activity can be used as a pre-assessment at the beginning of a unit depending on the students’ background knowledge of the topic, or as an ongoing assessment during a unit to see how well students are grasping the information and synthesizing ideas. Concept maps can also be used progressively with students adding to it throughout a unit. It is also beneficial to students to discuss their maps in small groups or with a partner to help solidify and consolidate their ideas and also to gain other perspectives. ***4. Connect/Extend/Challenge***(Ritchhart, Church, & Morrison, 2011)  The aim of this Harvard Thinking Routine is to help students make thoughtful connections between old knowledge and new knowledge and to evaluate their individual levels of comprehension. Have students respond to the following questions in each category:1. Connect: How is the new information connected to what you already knew?
2. Extend: What new ideas did you get that extended or pushed your thinking in new directions?
3. Challenge: What is still challenging or confusing for you to understand? What questions, wonderings, or puzzles do you now have?

This activity can be used with the whole class, in small groups, or individually. If working in a group, have students share their ideas with one another or the whole class. In any case, it may be beneficial to keep a record of students’ ideas in the classroom, continually adding to the list to show progress and make their thinking active. ***5. Tug of War*** *–* (Ritchhart, Church, & Morrison, 2011)  This Harvard Thinking Routine helps students better understand and explore different sides of fairness dilemmas. It is interactive in nature and engages students in new kinds of thinking. The following four steps are a good way to implement this activity.1. First, present students with a fairness dilemma. Draw a rope, or present an actual one, to illustrate the controversy being discussed.
2. Second, identify the controversy, which factors are “pulling” at either side of the dilemma.
3. Third, engage students by asking them to think about *why* each factor is “tugging” at one side or the other of the dilemma, identifying the strongest arguments. Perhaps ask students to decide which side they would most likely choose themselves.
4. Lastly, push students further by asking “what if” questions, encouraging them to explore the topic more completely.

This activity is best suited for the whole class, and is helpful for students in that it makes their thinking visible by providing visuals and fostering interaction. ***6. Claim/Support/Question*** - (Ritchhart, Church, & Morrison, 2011) This Harvard Thinking Routine helps students learn how to reason logically and develop thoughtful interpretations of topics. Reasoning with evidence is especially emphasized, developing logical arguments to support claims. To begin, present students with a particular topic. Then, have students follow these steps to explore the topic thoroughly:1. Make a claim about the topic – an explanation or interpretation of some aspect of the topic.
2. Identify support for your claim – things you see, feel, and know that support your claim.
3. Ask a question related to your claim – What’s left hanging? What isn’t explained? What new reasons does your claim raise?

This activity works well for individual students, small groups, and for whole group discussions. In large group discussions, each student should have the opportunity to share his or her insights to each question. Through this type of dialogue, students learn how to identify truth claims and explore strategies for uncovering truth. ***7. What Makes You Say That?***– (Ritchhart, Church, & Morrison, 2011) This Harvard Thinking Routine teaches students to provide evidential reasoning for their observations. It helps students describe what they observe or know and then encourages them to formulate explanations. Through this exercise, students are also encouraged to recognize and understand alternative explanations and multiple perspectives. After presenting students with a particular concept or object, ask them the following questions:1. What’s going on?
2. What do you see that makes you say that?

Because the questions in this routine are open and flexible, they can be implemented in virtually any subject area, and can also be useful when introducing a new topic or concept to gather student understanding. The hope is that students would internalize this routine of evidential explanation and begin to engage in this type of thinking and analyzing without being prompted. ***8. See/Think/Wonder***– (Ritchhart, Church, & Morrison, 2011)  This Harvard Thinking Routine encourages students to explore works of art and other interesting objects (e.g., images, artifacts, topics, etc.). The routine encourages students to make careful observations and thoughtful interpretations. It helps stimulate curiosity and sets the stage for inquiry. Launch the routine by students to respond to the following three stems together at the same time:1. What do you see?
2. What do you think about that?
3. What does this make you wonder?

The routine works well in group discussion but in some cases you may want to ask students to try the routine individually on paper or in their heads before sharing out as a class. Student responses to the routine can be written down and recorded so that a class chart or observations, interpretations and wonderings are listed for all to see and return to during the course of study.  |  |