

The Final Word Text Protocol

The purpose of this discussion format is to give each person in the group an opportunity to have their ideas, understandings, and perspective enhanced by hearing from others. With this format, the group can explore an article, clarify their thinking, and have their assumptions and beliefs questioned in order to gain a deeper understanding of the issues.

Roles: Facilitators, Time Keepers, & participants

1. Form small groups (3-people), and identify a facilitator/time-keeper for each group (who also participates).
2. Each participant to select one “most” significant idea (and excerpt) from the article.
3. First person shares this “most” significant idea and refers to the selected quote/excerpt. Share why the quote was chosen:
 - do you agree/disagree?
 - does it relate to your teaching/research?
 - what questions arise?
 - what issues are raised?
 - what do you now wonder?
4. Continuing around the group, each person responds to that quote and what the presenter said, briefly, in less than a minute. The purpose of the response is:
 - to expand on the presenter’s thinking about the quote and the issues raised for him or her by the quote.
 - to provide a different look at the quote
 - to clarify the presenter’s thinking about the quote, and/or
 - to question the presenter’s assumptions about the quote and issues raised (although at this time there is no response from the presenter)
5. After each person in the group has responded for one minute, the first person who began now has the “final word”. In one minute the presenter responds to what has been said:
 - now what is s/he thinking?
 - implications?
 - what is his or her reaction to what s/he has heard?
6. The cycle continues for each of the other group members, beginning again by sharing a significant idea from the text. Proceed around the group responding to this next presenter’s quote in the same way as the first presenter’s.
7. For each round, allow about 6 minutes (groups of 3 participants: presenter 3 minutes, response 1 minute for 2 people, final word for presenter 1 minute). The role of the facilitator is to keep the process moving, keep it clear and directed to the article, and keep time so everyone gets an opportunity for a round.

Adapted from Judith Gray, Seattle, WA 2005