

## CRITERIA A: AWARENESS



**Explanation:** Pre-supposition -- Inequity by design under-develops information processing skills (competence) and then undermines learners' natural confidence; therefore, we understand that our goal is to help learners increase their competence.

**elements:** Facilitators need to understand learners are capable of carrying the cognitive load, but need more enabling skills and need to adjust their internal self-talk.

### **Facilitator Practice:**

Examine our own sociocultural awareness and acknowledge that the experiences, concepts, and language that learners bring can be built upon and expanded to help them learn even more (constructivist approach).

Learners work to avoid practices that mainly advantage dominant groups by affirming and welcoming different cultural expressions as ways of learning.

### **Learner Practice:**

Learners examine their own sociocultural awareness and acknowledge that the experiences, concepts, and languages they bring can be built upon and expanded, to deepen and drive their learning (constructivist approach).

Learners believe and communicate that their personal, academic, and cultural backgrounds help them to construct new learning. Learners internalize the facilitator's high expectations and affirming beliefs, and see their skills and abilities through an asset based lens.

### **Element: A1 Socio-Cultural/Self- Awareness**

**Stage on the Continuum** (section A is not broken into stages)

### **Strategy Name: [Introducing Identity: "My Fullest Name"](#)**

**Description:** Everyone has a personal and social identity. Personal identities include an individual's name, unique characteristics, history, personality and other traits that make one different from others. Social identity includes affinities one has with other people, values and norms that one accepts, and the ways one has learned to behave in social settings.

### **Resources:**

[Introducing Identity: "My Fullest Name"](#)

### Materials

Markers and 8-by-10-inch sheets of paper folded horizontally.

### Instructions

Write out your fullest name and tell your story. On the back of the piece of paper write the top three identities you feel closest to. The facilitator encourages participants to go around the circle to share any meanings, significance, culture, significant ancestors and the top three identities they hold dearest. Everyone will have a chance to share and be heard by the group.

Suggested questions if participants need help getting started:

- Who gave you your name? Why that name?
- Do you know the ethnic origin of your name?
- Do you have any nicknames? If so, how did you get them?

- What is your preferred name?

Facilitators should encourage students to be creative. Make it clear that it is acceptable to write poetry, list adjectives that describe them, include humor, etc.

If your group is large, break into diverse small groups of five or six to make sure everyone has an opportunity to share her or his story. Ask for volunteers to get the group started and tell participants they can share their stories from memory, or read them.

### Discussion

When everyone has shared, ask participants how it felt to share their stories. Why is this activity important? What did you learn?

### **Facilitator Notes:**

- Teachers should be thoughtful about how this activity will work best at their grade level (i.e how much time to write, and create)
- Teachers should also consider using norms that will create a safe space for students to share such as:
  - “One mic” / one voice at a time
  - Listening only (no responses/commentary)
  - Tracking the speaker
  - Phones on silent; no phones out
- Some individuals will include personal information in their stories and may be reticent to read them. Often it is most effective for facilitators to share their stories first — making yourself vulnerable will make others more comfortable doing the same.
- Allow time for every participant to share (whether it be with the whole group or with their small group).

### **Considerations for Special Populations:**

- Allow students to write in their native language
- Use pictures and/or drawings as representation instead of words

### **Resources to follow up and maintain “Awareness” in your classroom**

#### **Student Survey**

**(This survey is a way to learn about your students and about their beliefs about themselves as people and as learners to better inform your practice. Please make a copy and do not share or edit the original. Thank you.)**

#### **My Name by Sandra Cisneros**

## **CRITERIA A: AWARENESS ELEMENT A.1**

**Group A:** Cheryl, Melinda, Andy, Sandy

### **Facilitator Practice:**

Facilitators demonstrate critical consciousness by using awareness to critique sources, systems, and practices.

Facilitators believe and communicate that learners bring knowledge from their personal, academic, and cultural backgrounds and use these as a basis upon which to construct new learning AND that he/she believes that ALL learners can and will be successful.

### **Learner Practice:**

Learners demonstrate critical consciousness by using awareness to critique sources, systems, and practices.

### **Element: A.1 Socio-cultural/Self Awareness**

**Stage on the Continuum:** (section A is not broken into stages)

**Strategy Name: Cross the Line If... / Step to the Line If... Activity**

**Description:** Activity that involves physical movement that creates opportunity for building understanding and empathy, giving voice to identities and experiences, and finding common ground.

- Long line of masking tape on the floor (clear and visible from at least 4 feet away)
- This activity is done in SILENCE
- Participants should stand in a line facing the line (if small space, people can stand on either side of the line, facing the line (two lines facing each other w/ masking tape line in the middle)
- Facilitator reads out one question at a time
- Participants step to the line IF the question applies to them
- When they reach the line, they turn around and face the participants who have not moved
- Participants then return to their original places in the line so they are unified again
- Facilitator reads the next question (repeat process above)
- Conduct Debrief (see below)

**Debrief:** this is part of the activity; **not optional** (should be done whole group but can be small group if more appropriate for setting)

- When all questions have been asked, facilitator leads debrief with questions such as
  - What did you notice during this activity?
  - What did you learn about yourself during this activity?
  - What feelings or thoughts did you have while doing this activity?
  - What do you want to remember about this activity?

**Materials:**

- Masking tape
- List of questions

**Facilitator Notes:**

- Facilitator should review questions IN ADVANCE (modify if necessary for time or content)
- If possible, facilitator should participate with his/her students (either have another adult read the questions or put questions on a slide and facilitator can click through them)

**Resources (each of the links below is a version of the Cross the Line activity; they are for different context and can easily be modified for your setting):**

- [Slightly different one with different questions](#)

**Considerations for Special Populations:**

**CRITERIA A**

**Facilitator Practice:** tracks students' movement toward independent learning (based on students' use of enabling skills, thinking routines, thinking dispositions, academic talk)

**Learner Practice:** from all subgroups are self-aware about the extent to which each is carrying the cognitive load and are able to articulate areas of growth as learners.

**Element: A.2** Carrying a Cognitive Load

**Stage on the Continuum** (Criteria A is not broken into stages)

**Strategy Name:** Encouraging a Growth Mindset

**Description:**

What we think of as intelligence is actually a learnable skill. In other words, people with growth mindsets believe that they can increase their intelligence or abilities through hard work. On the other hand, those with fixed mindsets feel that intelligence is innate and cannot be changed, regardless of effort. Within the classroom, it is important for a teacher to inspire growth mindsets in students, as students with growth mindsets are more likely to develop new skills and remain

optimistic about challenging tasks, while students with fixed mindsets tend to choose activities that play to their existing strengths and more likely to give up when faced with challenging problems.

*Teacher Actions:*

- Distinguishing growth mindsets and fixed mindsets to students. [Four Boosting Mindset Messages Videos](#)
- Asking students to identify areas in which they have growth mindsets and areas in which they have fixed mindsets. [Brains grow and change](#)-video and to consider areas where they have developed skills or knowledge but without realizing their growth mindset
- Providing examples of people who have worked hard to develop their abilities

*Desired Students:*

- Identifying areas in which they have growth mindsets and areas in which they have fixed mindsets. [Believe in Yourself video](#)
- Making changes to the language they use related to areas in which they have fixed mindsets. [Benefits of Mistakes on the brain.](#)

*Extra Support:*

- Posting visual reminders such as posters and charts, around the classroom that ask students to consider growth and fixed mindsets.

*Tips:*

1. Define growth mindset and fixed mindset.
2. Provide examples of a growth mindset and examples of each mindset.
3. Explain how an individual may have a growth mindset in one area of their life but a fixed mindset in a different area.
4. Ask students to reflect on areas in which they have a growth mindsets and areas in which they have fixed mindsets.
5. Ask students to experiment with changing their mindsets from fixed to growth-oriented.
6. Explain to students that growth mindset can change.

**Resources:**

[Growth Mindset Inspirational Week For Math 9-12](#)

[Growth Mindset Inspirational Week For Math Grades 6-8](#)

[Growth Mindset Inspirational Week For Math Grades 3-5](#)

[Growth Mindset Inspirational Week For Math Grades 1-2](#)

[Growth Mindset Inspirational Week For Math Grade K](#)

[Brain evidence that all students can learn math to high levels.](#)

[Anyone can learn at high levels.](#)

[Mistakes that will grow your brain.](#)

[Mistakes are Powerful video](#)

[Growth Mindset](#)

**Considerations for Special Populations:** This process supports multiple entry points from floor to ceiling.