



'How-to' Guide LEARNING WALKS

Snapshots
of learning
at the
school level

WHAT ARE LEARNING WALKS?

- a group of teachers visiting multiple classrooms at their own school
- focused on the walkers' goals/needs aligned with school/team priorities e.g. monitoring the effectiveness of a school-wide literacy strategy, investigating student vs teacher talk time across different year levels
- aims to foster conversation about teaching and learning in order to develop a shared vision of high quality teaching that impacts on student learning

WHAT ACTIONS ARE INVOLVED?

PHASE 1



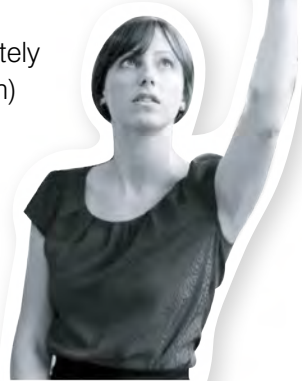
Pre-walk meeting with facilitator and group

- establish and clarify focus of the walk
- revise expectations, protocols and schedule of agreed visits

PHASE 2

Observation of learning

- groups of 2-4 teachers
- facilitated by a group-nominated leader
- visit classrooms and observe evidence related to the agreed focus (approximately 10 minutes per classroom)
- discreet interaction with observed teacher and/or students may occur if appropriate



PHASE 3



Short debrief immediately following observation (often outside the classroom visited)

- group engages in reflective conversation
- group shares observations (detailed, non-judgemental), identifies patterns, poses questions
- reflect on observations in relation to own practice



PHASE 4

Repeat observations and debrief conversations in successive classrooms until scheduled visits completed

PHASE 5

Final debrief and feedback

- review evidence, link to earlier debriefs and questions raised
- share findings formally or informally, as agreed, to the participants and the whole school



WHY LEARNING WALKS?

- increases teachers' awareness of practices occurring within their school
- builds whole-school sense of accountability for quality of teaching and learning
- encourages improvement through openness and sharing of practice
- supports teachers to implement effective practices observed in other classrooms
- may help address differences between classes within a school



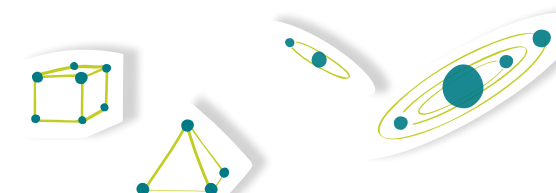
WHAT ARE THE KEY ELEMENTS?

- driven by teachers within the school with support from the leadership group
- deliberately short visits, followed by immediate debrief
- use of group-established agreements and protocols
- emphasis on learning from the observed teacher, with a lesser focus on providing feedback
- observers receptive to learning and gaining insights into their own professional practice through observing others



WHAT DO I NEED TO CONSIDER?

- avenues for formal reporting of outcomes may not be clear
 - > implement shared agreements for outcomes to be reported to staff and/or leadership to ensure learning is shared across the school
- may be perceived as a one-off observation
 - > establish structures for participants to follow-up and implement learning
- Learning Walks could be perceived as threatening and should not be used as summary judgement of individuals
 - > provide opportunities for teachers to 'opt-in' to walks



Where can I find out more?

Using Teacher Learning Walks to Improve Instruction (Fisher & Frey, 2014)
Learning-Walk Continuum (Finch, 2010)

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