

VIEWING GUIDE



Responsive  Classroom®  
NORTHEAST FOUNDATION FOR CHILDREN  
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Sample  
Morning  
Meetings  
in a  
*Responsive  
Classroom*®

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This viewing guide accompanies the *Sample Morning Meetings in a Responsive Classroom* DVD.

Printed on recycled paper

## Introduction

**W**atching a Morning Meeting in action and reflecting on what you have seen is one of the best ways to learn about this powerful teaching tool. In this DVD, viewers will see Morning Meetings in action in four classrooms—urban, suburban, and rural—at different grade levels and different times of year. Included are a Morning Meeting done in a third grade classroom in September, a Morning Meeting done in a different third grade classroom in November, a Morning Meeting done in a first grade classroom in February, and a Morning Meeting in a kindergarten classroom in April.

This DVD could be used in a variety of ways:

- \* *For individuals:* To learn about Morning Meeting or improve Morning Meeting practice
- \* *For new staff:* To orient them to Morning Meeting practice
- \* *For staff groups:* To introduce Morning Meeting or to stimulate deeper exploration of Morning Meeting for those already implementing it

The information in this viewing guide will help you get the most out of your viewing. You will find general information about Morning Meeting, guidance on using the DVD as a professional development tool, and background information about each Morning Meeting featured in this DVD.

# About Morning Meeting

**D**uring Morning Meeting, the classroom community—adults and children—gathers in a circle at the beginning of each day to greet each other, share information from their daily lives, engage in an activity together, and read a daily message from the teacher. Morning Meeting generally lasts twenty to thirty minutes and offers valuable opportunities for children to practice social-emotional and academic skills that carry over to the rest of the day.

## GOALS OF MORNING MEETING

- \* To build community in the classroom and fulfill children's need to belong, feel significant, and have fun
- \* To build trust and set a positive tone for learning
- \* To merge social and academic learning
- \* To practice or reinforce key academic skills

## STRUCTURE OF MORNING MEETING

Morning Meeting has four components done in the following order:

- 1. Greeting.** Children greet each other by name in brief, structured greeting activities. Greeting welcomes everyone into the circle, establishes a friendly tone for the meeting and the day, and helps create an atmosphere of trust that is important for the second component, sharing.
- 2. Sharing.** Students share ideas and information in a structured format. In around-the-circle sharing, everyone in the circle has an opportunity to respond briefly to a teacher-chosen topic. In partner sharing, students pair up to share about a teacher-chosen topic. In dialogue sharing, one student shares about either a teacher-chosen

or open-choice topic, and the rest of the children listen and respond with questions and comments. Having sharing occur near the beginning of the meeting helps ensure that children will have the focus needed to do this complex and sophisticated task.

- 3. Group activity.** After the thoughtful focus of sharing, children are ready for the energy of whole-group participation in a short, lively activity. These might include active games, math activities, choral and poetry readings, memorization, singing, and chanting.
- 4. Morning message.** Students practice academic skills and build community by reading and discussing a daily message from the teacher. Content of the message connects to both the social and academic life of the classroom. Teachers often embed practice with literacy skills. Morning message helps children settle down after the lively activity and serves as a transition to the rest of the school day.

## PREPARING CHILDREN FOR MORNING MEETING

Successful Morning Meetings don't just happen. Early in the year, teachers spend time establishing rules and teaching routines and behaviors that will help Morning Meeting go smoothly. Then, they consistently revisit those routines and behaviors throughout the year.

Following are some of the routines and behaviors that students need to learn and practice:

- \* How to come to Morning Meeting in a quiet and orderly way
- \* How to find a place to sit (many teachers encourage children to sit next to someone other than their best friends)
- \* How to sit during the meeting
- \* How to respond to a signal for quiet attention (for example, a raised hand or ring of a chime)

- \* How to make the transition from a lively greeting or activity to a quieter sharing or morning message discussion
- \* How to read the message chart before meeting and do any independent work asked for on the chart
- \* How to greet each other in a safe and friendly way
- \* How to share and how to decide what is appropriate to share
- \* How to ask respectful questions and make empathic comments during sharing
- \* How to move safely around the circle during activity
- \* How to take turns when discussing the message chart, responding to a peer's sharing, or engaging in an activity

## Using the DVD for Professional Development

**A**lthough it can be useful to simply watch a Morning Meeting to get the flavor of a full Morning Meeting, viewers will have an even richer experience if they watch with a focus in mind and then reflect on what they've seen.

In the following section you will find guidance for structuring group viewing of sample Morning Meetings.

### **FACILITATED DVD VIEWING**

Following are steps for setting up and running a facilitated DVD viewing group. (Individual viewers can choose a focus question from the list on page 8 to guide their viewing and then use journal writing as a way to reflect.) In this model, you will divide the large group into smaller groups, each of which will have a focus for viewing. By working in small groups and viewing with a specific focus in mind, participants will be able to dig more deeply into what they see—and then learn from each other during the large group discussion.

1. *Think about how much time you have available and choose a segment accordingly.* You will want to allow time for viewing the clip at least once (possibly twice) and then small group discussion of what was seen followed by large group discussion. A viewing session might happen in a staff meeting, where there would be time to view one or two components of a Morning Meeting and discuss observations, or as part of a professional development day or half-day, where there would be time to watch an entire Morning Meeting and discuss.

**2. Decide on a central theme.** For example, for a group that is new to Morning Meeting, you might want to explore the goals of Morning Meeting; for a group that has been doing Morning Meeting, you might want to explore management strategies or the integration of academics into Morning Meeting. To help you choose a theme, you'll find focus questions, beginning on page 8, which are divided into categories such as goals, management, and skills practiced.

**3. Decide on the different topics or points for viewing within the central theme and assign to small groups.** For example, if you wish to highlight the goals of Morning Meeting, divide the large group into four smaller groups—each group will have a goal to focus on. The group task is to find specific examples of the goal in action. If you wish to highlight management of group activity, you could divide the large group into three small groups—group one thinks about how the teacher introduces the activity, group two looks at routines and behaviors children need to know, and group three looks at how the teacher manages behavior during the activity.

**4. Divide the group and post the focus questions.** If you wish, you can create viewing discussion guides to distribute to the small groups (see pages 18–20 for samples). Encourage participants to make notes about things they see that relate to their topic.

**5. Show the DVD segment.** If there's time, you could show the segment two times, which will allow participants to look more carefully.

**6. Within small groups, the participants compare notes on what they noticed and decide on what they will report out to the larger group.** Allow five to ten minutes for this discussion, depending on the complexity of the clip.

**7. Small groups report their observations to the larger group.** The facilitator can jot down the reported observations on a flip chart or board.

**8. Facilitate a large group discussion of the clip.** In the Sample Morning Meetings section (page 12), you'll find questions that are specific to each Morning Meeting. You could use these questions to stimulate further conversation and extend participants' thinking.

**9. Close with one or two reflection questions that will help tie things together.** Following is a list of reflection questions that could be used either after viewing an entire Morning Meeting or just one component:

\* Overall, what would you tell parents or colleagues about the benefits of \_\_\_\_\_?

\* What is a significant idea you learned about \_\_\_\_\_?

\* What do you want to think further about regarding \_\_\_\_\_?

\* What action would you like to take after viewing and discussing this clip?

\* How might you adapt what you've seen to your own classroom?

\* What did you see today that squares with your thinking?

\* What did you see today that shook up your thinking?

\* How has your thinking about \_\_\_\_\_ changed?

\* What's one new insight you gained today?

\* What's one new strategy you learned about today?

\* What's one question you'd like to investigate further?

## FOCUS QUESTIONS

The following questions are applicable to any of the Morning Meetings on the DVD.

### Entire Morning Meeting

*To focus on the goals of Morning Meeting:*

- \* How does the Morning Meeting help build community?
- \* How does the Morning Meeting merge social and academic learning?
- \* How does the Morning Meeting build trust and set a positive tone for learning?
- \* How does the Morning Meeting reinforce academic skills?

*To focus on skills:*

- \* What social skills are children practicing?
- \* What academic skills are children practicing?

*To focus on management of Morning Meeting:*

- \* What routines/rules needed to be in place ahead of time in order for this Morning Meeting to be successful (for example, routines for coming to the circle, routine for whom to sit next to, rules clearly posted)?
- \* What does the teacher do during the Morning Meeting to reinforce rules/routines (for example, uses teacher language to reinforce positive behavior, refers to meeting rules)?

### Greeting

*To focus on benefits of greeting:*

- \* How does the greeting set a positive tone and provide a sense of recognition?
- \* How does the greeting help children learn names and practice hospitality?
- \* What social skills are children learning and/or practicing during greeting?

*To focus on management of greeting:*

- \* What do children need to know before doing this greeting in order to be successful?
- \* How does the teacher introduce the greeting?
- \* How does the teacher manage behavior during the greeting?

### Sharing

*To focus on benefits of sharing:*

- \* What are the community-building elements of this sharing?
- \* How does this sharing help set a positive tone for learning?
- \* How does this sharing support the academic curriculum?

*To focus on skills practiced during sharing:*

- \* What social skills are sharers practicing?
- \* What social skills are listeners practicing?

- \* What academic skills are sharers practicing?
- \* What academic skills are listeners/responders practicing?

*To focus on management of sharing:*

- \* What routines and behaviors do children need to learn and practice in order to be successful with around-the-circle sharing?
- \* What routines and behaviors do children need to learn and practice in order to be successful sharers during dialogue sharing?
- \* What routines and behaviors do children need to learn and practice in order to be successful audience members during dialogue sharing?

**Group activity**

*To focus on benefits of group activity:*

- \* What are the community-building elements of this activity?
- \* What social skills are children practicing?
- \* What academic skills are children practicing?

*To focus on management of group activity:*

- \* How does the teacher introduce the activity?
- \* What routines and behaviors did children need to learn in order to be successful with this activity?
- \* What does the teacher do during the activity to manage behavior?

**Morning message**

*To focus on benefits of morning message:*

- \* What are the community-building elements of this message and the work with the message?
- \* In what ways does the content of the message support the academic curriculum and engage the learners?
- \* What academic skills are children practicing as they read and work with the message before the meeting? During the meeting?
- \* What social skills are children practicing as they read and work with the message before the meeting? During the meeting?

*To focus on management of morning message:*

- \* What routines and behaviors do children need to learn in order to be successful with morning message?
- \* What does the teacher do to manage behavior during the work with the message?

# Sample Morning Meetings

In this section you will find background information that provides a context for each Morning Meeting. In addition, you will find questions specific to each Morning Meeting. You could use these specific questions to extend viewers' thinking and stimulate in-depth exploration of each Morning Meeting.

## MORNING MEETING #1: THIRD GRADE, SEPTEMBER

*Greeting:* Simple “Good Morning” Greeting (see page 21 for directions)

*Sharing:* Dialogue sharing, teacher-chosen topic (“Something I like to do after school”)

*Activity:* Coseeki (see page 23 for directions)

*Morning message:* Focus on seeds planted for science class

*Teacher:* Caltha Crowe

*About the school:* Suburban, public school, K–5

*About the class:* Special needs inclusion class

### Background:

- \* Most students are familiar with Morning Meeting, having participated in Morning Meetings in second grade.
- \* The Morning Meeting you are seeing happens in the third week of school. The students have learned and practiced many of the routines of Morning Meeting in the first two weeks of school. For example, students have spent several days learning and practicing how to do the simple “good morning” greeting and have been building up to dialogue sharing by sharing “life boxes.”

- \* One of Caltha’s goals is for students to reach across friendship lines to get to know everyone in the class, not just best friends, and she knows this is challenging for some of these students. For this meeting, she has asked them to sit next to someone they don’t know very well.

### Questions specific to this meeting:

- \* Why do you think Caltha uses the word “courage” to reinforce children’s sitting next to someone they don’t know well?
- \* Notice that children do not shake hands during the greeting. Why might it be important to limit touch as part of greeting early in the year? What skills would children need to learn and practice before incorporating a handshake or a high five?
- \* Prior to this, students shared about “life boxes” that contained a few objects that represented something about their interests. How does the format used in this meeting build on that structure?
- \* Before the sharing begins, Caltha reviews expected behaviors. She does this by asking children what they remember rather than by telling them what to do. What is the benefit of this approach?
- \* How does Caltha respond to each sharing? How does her response help children build their skills?

## MORNING MEETING #2: THIRD GRADE, NOVEMBER

*Greeting:* Cheer Greeting (see page 21 for directions)

*Sharing:* Around-the-circle, focused topic

*Activity:* Awake, Alert, Alive, Enthusiastic (see page 23 for directions)

*Morning message:* Academic focus on field trip to Plimoth Plantation

*Teacher:* Kerry Tuttlebee

*About the school:* Urban, public charter school, K–5, all teachers are called by their first names

*About the class:* Bilingual Spanish/English, including one child who speaks almost no English

### **Background:**

- \* Shortly before this Morning Meeting occurred, students went on a field trip to Plimoth Plantation, and Kerry integrates this content into sharing and morning message.
- \* The students have learned and practiced a number of routines, such as how to sit and how to transition from active to quiet activities.

### **Questions specific to this meeting:**

- \* How does Kerry reinforce desirable behavior throughout the meeting?
- \* What are some specific ways in which Kerry reminds students of expectations or redirects them when they begin to go off track?
- \* How does Kerry structure the greeting to support second language learners?
- \* How does Kerry support second language learners during sharing?
- \* How does Kerry manage the transition to and from the activity?

### **MORNING MEETING #3: FIRST GRADE, FEBRUARY**

*Greeting:* Skip Die Greeting (see page 22 for directions)

*Sharing:* Dialogue sharing, open topic

*Activity:* Pop! (see page 24 for directions)

*Morning message:* Academic focus on writing work they will do later, skill work with contractions

*Teacher:* Marianne Harcourt

*About the school:* Small city in rural area, public school, K–4

*About the class:* Grades 1–2 looping; special needs inclusion class, including one child on the autism spectrum

### **Background:**

- \* Marianne calls the children to Morning Meeting with an African song that talks about coming to the meeting with an open mind and heart—you will notice the kindergarten teacher in Morning Meeting #4 uses the same song.
- \* An observer sits outside the circle. She is a substitute aide working one-on-one with a child, and she is not familiar with the routines of Morning Meeting. Typically, all adults in the room, including the one-on-one aide, would take part in the meeting.
- \* Children are familiar with the routines of Morning Meeting and know how to do the greeting and the activity.
- \* Marianne has been gradually introducing how to share and respond during dialogue sharing. In preceding weeks, students spent time learning how to share the right amount of information, how to listen carefully and ask good questions, and how to respond to questions with a complete sentence.

### Questions specific to this meeting:

- \* Before the meeting, Marianne takes time to rearrange the configuration of the circle. Why might this be important?
- \* What about the greeting might be challenging for first graders? How does Marianne support all children in doing this greeting?
- \* What skills have children learned and practiced in order to get to this point with sharing? What are the academic benefits of this sharing?
- \* What about the activity might be challenging for first graders? How does Marianne support all children in doing this activity?
- \* How does Marianne embed literacy skill work in the morning message segment?

### MORNING MEETING #4: KINDERGARTEN, APRIL

*Greeting:* Ball Roll Greeting (see page 22 for directions)

*Sharing:* Dialogue sharing, focused topic

*Activity:* Toe-to-Toe Game (see page 24 for directions)

*Morning message:* Academic focus on recently planted seed beds, skill work on double letters

*Teacher:* Suzi Sluyter

*About the school:* Urban, public magnet school, preK–8, all teachers are called by their first names

*About the class:* Full-day kindergarten class; there is a teaching assistant

### Background:

- \* At this point in the year, students have learned and practiced many of the procedures and routines of Morning Meeting and know how to do the greeting and activity.
- \* Students have been learning how to make comments after sharing.

### Questions specific to this meeting:

- \* Why does Suzi stop Alice and ask her to do the greeting over again?
- \* Students have just learned how to make comments. What's a possible next step as they learn how to do the give-and-take of sharing?
- \* How do the expectations for sharing at the kindergarten level compare to the expectations at first grade (Morning Meeting #3) or third grade (Morning Meeting #1)?
- \* How has Suzi tailored the morning message to the needs of five year olds?

# Sample Viewing Discussion Guides

## VIEWING AN ENTIRE MORNING MEETING

As you watch the Morning Meeting, look for specific examples that will answer the question posed to your group. In the space provided, make notes about what you see.

### Group 1: How does this Morning Meeting help build community?

*Greeting:*

*Sharing:*

*Group activity:*

*Morning message:*

### Group 2: How does this Morning Meeting merge social and academic learning?

*Greeting:*

*Sharing:*

*Group activity:*

*Morning message:*

### Group 3: How does this Morning Meeting set a positive tone for learning?

*Greeting:*

*Sharing:*

*Group activity:*

*Morning message:*

### Group 4: How does this Morning Meeting provide practice and reinforcement of key social/academic skills?

*Greeting:*

*Sharing:*

*Group activity:*

*Morning message:*

## VIEWING A GROUP ACTIVITY

As you watch the group activity, look for specific examples that will answer the question posed to your group. In the space provided, make notes about what you see.

**Group 1: How does the teacher introduce the activity?**

**Group 2: What routines and behaviors did children need to learn in order to be successful with this activity?**

**Group 3: What does the teacher do during the activity to manage behavior?**

## Directions for Greetings and Activities Seen on the DVD

### GREETINGS

#### Simple “Good Morning” Greeting

Two students face each other, make eye contact, smile, and say “Good morning, \_\_\_\_\_,” using each other’s first name. Neighbor greets neighbor around the circle. Note that there is no touch involved.

#### Cheer Greeting

Going around the circle, students do a call-and-response:

*S(student)—My name is (first name).*

*G(group)—YEAH!*

*S—And I like to (activity).*

*G—Ub-hub.*

*S—And I’ll be a (person who does this activity).*

*G—YEAH!*

*S—Every day of my life.*

*G—Every day of (his/her) life.*

For example:

*My name is Carla.*

*YEAH!*

*And I like to swim.*

*Ub-hub.*

*And I’ll be a swimmer.*

*YEAH!*

*Every day of my life.*

*Every day of her life.*

### **Skip Die Greeting**

Greeting begins with everyone standing in a circle. A student rolls a die, walks past the number of students indicated by the number on the die, and then greets the next student. The greeter changes places with the person who was greeted and sits down. The student who was greeted then rolls the die and the greeting continues around the circle until everyone has been greeted.

For example, Zack rolls a 4. He will walk past the first four people in the circle and greet the fifth person, Sarah. He takes Sarah's place in the circle and sits down. Sarah rolls the die, walks past the number indicated, and greets the next person.

### **Ball Roll Greeting**

The person who begins the greeting chooses a child to greet, says a simple "Good morning, \_\_\_\_\_," then gently rolls a ball to that child, who returns the greeting. The child who was greeted then chooses a new child to greet and roll the ball to. The greeting continues until each child has been greeted. At the end, the ball and greeting return to the person who started. In the greeting seen on the DVD, there's an added element of children greeting in a language other than English. Older children could stand and gently toss a ball or Koosh to each other.

## **ACTIVITIES**

### **Coseeki**

One player leaves the group and stands where he or she cannot see the group. The group chooses a leader who does a movement, such as tapping his/her toe, which the others follow. The leader changes the movement regularly and the others follow the leader's movement. The hidden player returns, stands in the middle of the circle, watches the movements, and tries to guess who the leader is.

### **Awake, Alert, Alive, Enthusiastic**

(Sung to the tune of *If You're Happy and You Know It Clap Your Hands*)

This is a song accompanied by movements.

*I'm awake, alert, alive, enthusiastic*

*Awake, alert, alive, enthusiastic*

*Awake, alert, alive*

*Alive, alert, awake*

*Awake, alert, alive, enthusiastic*

#### **Motions:**

Awake—hands to head beside eyes

Alert—hands to top of head as if pointing to the brain

Alive—hands crossed over heart

Enthusiastic—slap knees once, clap hands once, snap fingers twice

## Pop!

The activity begins with children seated. They count around the circle, popping up when they get to multiples of a teacher-designated number (on the DVD, they pop up for multiples of 5). The activity continues around the circle, skipping the children who have popped, until all children are standing. A simpler variation is to count up to the number chosen and then begin again at 1.

## Toe-to-Toe Game

Activity begins with students standing in a circle. When the leader calls out a direction, children find a partner and follow the direction for how to stand (for example, “toe-to-toe,” “elbow-to-elbow,” “back-to-back”). The leader calls out a new direction and children find a new partner. In the example on the DVD, children remember their various partners and return to them when directed to do so.

## About the *Responsive Classroom*® Approach

The *Responsive Classroom* approach consists of highly practical strategies for integrating social and academic learning throughout the school day.

More information and guidance on the *Responsive Classroom* approach are available through:

### PUBLICATIONS AND RESOURCES

- \* Books and videos for elementary school educators
- \* Website with articles and other information: [www.responsiveclassroom.org](http://www.responsiveclassroom.org)
- \* Free quarterly newsletter for elementary educators

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- \* Workshops for teachers
- \* Classroom consultations and other services in schools and school districts
- \* Multifaceted professional development for administrators and all staff at schools wishing to implement the *Responsive Classroom* approach schoolwide

For details, contact:

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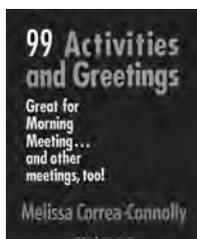
800-360-6332 Fax: 877-206-3952 \* [www.responsiveclassroom.org](http://www.responsiveclassroom.org)

# Morning Meeting Resources



## THE MORNING MEETING BOOK

Roxann Kriete with contributions by Lynn Bechtel  
Grades K–8, 228 pages, paper, NEFC, 2002



## 99 ACTIVITIES AND GREETINGS

Great for Morning Meeting and other meetings, too!

Melissa Correa-Connolly, illustrated by children ages 7–13  
Grades K–8, 148 pages, paper, NEFC, 2004



## MORNING MEETING MESSAGES, K–6

180 Sample Charts from Three Classrooms

Rosalea S. Fisher, Eric Henry, and Deborah Porter  
with an introduction by Marlynn K. Clayton  
Grades K–6, 240 pages, paper, NEFC, 2006

## MORNING MEETING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT KIT

Kit includes “Getting Started” booklet, eight session booklets, two DVDs, CD-ROM, reference copies of *The Morning Meeting Book*, *99 Activities and Greetings*, *Morning Meeting Messages*  
Grades K–6, NEFC, 2008



## MORNING MEETING GREETINGS IN A RESPONSIVE CLASSROOM

Watch teachers in various settings teach basic greeting skills and lead greetings appropriate for early and later in the year.

Grades K–6, 35 minutes, DVD, NEFC, 2008



## MORNING MEETING ACTIVITIES IN A RESPONSIVE CLASSROOM

Nurture classroom community while having fun and practicing key academic and social skills.

Grades K–6, 35 minutes, DVD, NEFC, 2008