

Museum Walk

IN BRIEF: Mimics a visit to a museum, but instead of looking at paintings or sculpture, participants walk around the room to view posted pieces of information on a teaching topic or technique, results from a test or survey, or student work samples. Especially useful for absorbing and interpreting a lot of data or complex information.

HOW TO DO IT

- 1 Post displays of the information you want participants to absorb.** Spread the charts or displays around the room as you would pieces in a museum gallery.
- 2 Briefly introduce the activity.** You may also want to pose a focused question or two for participants to think about on their walk. For example:

“Take 10 minutes to walk around the room and study these charts that show math test results for each grade. As you walk, consider this question: ‘What do these results tell us about the progression of math instruction from grade to grade?’”

- 3 Invite participants to choose their own starting point for their walk.** Encourage them to partner up and talk with each other as they view the charts, and to take notes or put sticky notes on the displays with their comments and questions.
- 4 Give participants a 5-minute warning and a 1-minute warning** so they know to wrap up their observations.
- 5 Bring the group back together for a whole-group discussion** on what participants noticed and questions the information raised for them.

VARIATION

- Do a poster session and Museum Walk combination: Invite individual staff members or teams to create posters of strategies they've used successfully to meet a school goal. Display the posters and have the rest of the staff do a Museum Walk to view the posters and discuss them with the poster presenters.



Learning Structure in Action

Strengthening Writing Instruction

To help everyone develop a better understanding of the writing continuum—how students' writing progresses from one grade to the next—the literacy coach plans a staff meeting. Before the meeting, he asks every teacher to bring one strong student writing sample. He posts these samples around the room, with the grade identified but student and teacher names covered.

During their Museum Walk, staff study the samples and take notes, focusing on the common elements that make these pieces of writing strong. After bringing everyone back together, the literacy coach uses the following question to spark a lively discussion:

- “What do you notice about the progression of students' writings?”

After this discussion, he invites several volunteers to form a working group that will develop a set of grade-specific writing criteria and establish a writing continuum plan.