



## Data Driven Dialogue

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*Developed by the Teacher Development Group, 2002.*

“Dialogue comes from the Greek word dialogos. Logos means ‘the word,’ or in our case we would think of the ‘meaning of the word.’ And dia means ‘through’ – it doesn’t mean two. A dialogue can be among any number of people, not just two. Even one person can have a sense of dialogue within himself, if the spirit of dialog is present. The picture or image that this derivation suggests is of a stream of meaning flowing among and through us and between us. This will make possible a flow of meaning in the whole group, out of which will emerge some new understanding. It’s something new, which may not have been in the starting point at all. It’s something creative. And this *shared meaning* is the ‘glue’ or ‘cement’ that holds people and societies together.” (Bohm, D., 1990)



## Data Driven Dialogue Overview

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*Based on work presented by Nancy Love, author of "Using Data/Getting Results", 2002.*

This protocol builds awareness and understanding of the participant's viewpoints, beliefs, and assumptions about data while suspending judgments. All participants have equal voice. The three phases of data-driven dialogue assist groups in making shared meaning of data. We encourage you to use this tool with your entire school staff and/or with your school leadership team at a special meeting on data. The dialogue tool helps to replace hunches and feelings with data-based facts, examine patterns and trends of performance indicators, and generate "root-cause" discussions that move from identifying symptoms to possible causes of student performance. In order to effectively use this tool, participants will need to have grade level, school, or district data reports.

- **Phase I Predictions**  
Surfacing perspectives, beliefs, assumptions, predictions, possibilities, questions, and expectations.
- **Phase II Go Visual**  
Re-create the data visually.
- **Phase III Observations**  
Analyzing the data for patterns, trends, surprises, and new questions that "jump" out.
- **Phase IV Inferences**  
Generating hypotheses, inferring, explaining, and drawing conclusions. Defining new actions and interactions and the data needed to guide their implementation. Building ownership for decisions.

For protocol and facilitation, see *Data Driven Dialogue Protocol Facilitation Plan*.



## Data Driven Dialogue Predictions

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Phase I Predictions dialogue takes place before you see the data. During this time, you activate prior knowledge, surface assumptions, and make predictions, thus creating readiness to examine and discuss the data. You hear and honor all assumptions and ideas as “building blocks for new learning.”

### **Private Think Time**

Before beginning your Phase I Predictions dialogue, please reflect privately and record several of your preliminary thoughts about the data. One or more of the following thought-starters may be helpful.

- I assume...
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- I predict...
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- I wonder...
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- My questions/expectations are influenced by...
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Some possibilities for learning that this data may present...



## Data Driven Dialogue Go Visual

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During Phase II Go Visual you re-create the data visually, on large sheets of paper, on a data wall, etc. Participants mark up the data so they better understand it (i.e., highlight trend lines in different colors, do math calculations and chart those, color code parts of the data that relate to each other). Participants might create visuals individually or in pairs or triads. Depending upon the amount of data, it might be helpful to divide it into subsets and identify who in the group will work with different subsets.



## Data Driven Dialogue Observations

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During Phase III Observations dialogue, you engage with the actual data and note only the facts that you can observe in the data. Conjectures, explanations, conclusions, and inferences are off-limits. You make statements about quantities (e.g., Over half the students...), the presence of certain specific information and/or numerical relationships between ideas (e.g., Over 90% of the students achieved below standard in Problem Solving; Compared to last year's data, the percentage of students performing at the advanced and on-standard levels in Skills increased by 8%...).

### Private Think Time

Before beginning Phase III Observations dialogue, please study the data privately and record several of your observations.

### Remember:

**Just the facts!** If you catch yourself using..., then stop.



- I observe that...
- Some patterns/trends that I notice...
- I can count...
- I'm surprised that I see...



## Data Driven Dialogue Inferences

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During Phase IV Inferences dialogue, you (a) generate multiple explanations for your Phase III Observations; (b) identify additional data that may be needed to confirm/contradict your explanations; (c) propose solutions/responses; and (d) identify data needed to monitor implementation of your solutions/responses.

### **Private Think Time**

Before beginning Phase IV Inferences dialogue with your colleagues, please reflect privately, using one or more of the following thought starters to prompt your thinking:

- I believe the data suggests... because...
  
- Additional data that would help me verify/confirm my explanations is...
  
- I think the following are appropriate solutions/responses that address the needs implied in the data...
  
- Additional data that would help guide implementation of the solutions/responses and determine if they are working...



## Data Driven Dialogue Protocol Facilitation Plan

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*Developed by David Leo-Nyquist, revised 2013.*

**Time** (60-90 minutes)

1. **Review protocol** (3 minutes)
2. **Presentation** (5 minutes)  
"Owner" of the data provides overview of the context and focus
3. **Clarifying Questions** (4 minutes)
4. **Predictions**
  - a. Group fills out predictions sheet (3 minutes)
  - b. Round-robin report-out of predictions (one item each person, one round only — 3 minutes)  
May be charted by the facilitator or other member of the group
5. **Distribution and examination of data** (7 minutes)
6. **Additional Clarifying Questions**, if necessary (3 minutes)
7. **Go Visual** (10-30 minutes)  
Participants mark up and re-organize the data to better understand it.
  - May be done individually, in pairs, or in small groups depending on group size and amount of data. Highlighters, chart paper, and calculators are helpful to have on hand.
8. **Observations**
  - a. Group fills out observations sheet (5 minutes)
  - b. Round-robin report-out of observations may (one item each person, continue rounds until new ideas are spent — 5 minutes)
9. **Check in with presenter.** (2 minutes)  
Do we need to refocus our attention?
10. **Inferences**
  - a. Group fills out inferences sheet (5 minutes)
  - b. Round-robin report-out of inferences. May be charted. (one item each person, continue rounds until new ideas are spent — 5 minutes)
11. **Response from the presenter** — What new thoughts are you having about the data now? What are your next steps? (5 minutes)
12. **Implications** for teaching and learning (10 minutes)
13. **Debrief** the protocol (3 minutes)

Note: This protocol can be done in two sessions if desired, stopping after Step 8 between sessions. Participants can fill out the Inferences sheet between meetings to allow for a fuller discussion of the results in the next session.