

Text Rendering Discussion Guide¹

The term render has many meanings. For this exercise, it may be most useful to think of the culinary uses of the word, specifically the melting down of a substance to derive its essence. Similarly, the structure of this discussion protocol is to render the text, pulling out its more salient elements and jointly constructing our understanding of it.

Total time

30 minutes (NB: Time may be adjusted depending on group size)

Purpose

To construct meaning collaboratively, clarify, and expand our thinking about a shared text

Roles

Facilitator to guide the process

A scribe to record phrases and words shared

Set Up (8 minutes)

The discussion participants read through the text, making note of passages, sentences, phrases, or words that they feel are important. These may inspire new thinking on a topic, provoke disagreement, offer alternatives to traditional ideas, and so on. During the process, participants will choose one or two sentences, one phrase, and one word that they found most important.

Process (7 minutes)

The facilitator reviews the process and norms for discussion. Group members finalize decisions about which sentence(s), phrase, and word they would like to share.

- *Round One:* Going in a circle, each participant shares the sentence(s) s/he found most important. During this and the subsequent rounds, group members do not elaborate on or explain selections.
- *Round Two:* Each participant shares the phrase s/he found most important.
- *Round Three:* Each participant shares the word s/he found most important.

Discussion and Implications (15 minutes)

The facilitator asks, “What are the implications for our practice?” The group enters the discussion phase, noting where similarities or differences occurred during the process. They share their reactions to the text, interpretations, changes in thinking, and implications.

¹ Adapted from National School Reform Faculty’s “Text Rendering Experience” protocol. Retrieved from National School Reform Faculty’s website on November 5, 2009: http://nsrfharmony.org/protocol/doc/text_rendering.pdf