Creating Classroom Culture Brainstorm Activity
Facilitator’s Guide

Time: 75 minutes

Purpose: This activity is designed for teams of educators to use during a professional learning workshop. The goal is to provide participants with an opportunity to share their best practices and generate new ideas on how to create strong learning mindset culture in their classrooms/schools.

Materials Needed
- Large chart paper Post-its®, one sheet per question with the question written on top
- Enough 3" x 3" or 3" x 5” Post-its® for each per person to have ½ a pad each
- Felt-tip markers for each person (and a few extra just in case). NOTE: Fine to medium tip felt markers are easier to read than pens during gallery walk
- Enough copies of the prompts printed on colored paper

Group size – This activity can be done with any number of participants but ideally there should be at least six in each group.

Preparation
- Print the prompts (see below for suggestions) on cardstock, ideally with each prompt on a separate colored sheet.
- Lay out packets of Post-its® and felt-tip markers for participants at each table.
- Place a packet of printed prompts face down at each table (enough prompts for each participant to have one)
- Pre-write each prompt on a large chart paper Post-its®.
- Print enough copies of the New Practice Implementation Worksheet for each participant to have one copy.

Steps
1. Setup – (2 min) Review the steps in advance.
2. Instruct – (2 min) Explain that the goal of the activity is to share ideas about how to create positive learning mindsets in their classrooms. Provide the following instructions:
   - Take a packet of 3x3” Post-its® and a pen.
   - Pick one of the larger colored card from the center of the table. There is a prompt written on the face-down side, but please don’t turn it over until after I’ve finished explaining the activity.
   - Each colored sheet has a different discussion prompt. So all the [RED] cards have the same prompt, all the [YELLOW] have the same prompt etcetera.
   - In a moment, you will find someone with a different colored sheet and have a short discussion responding to each of your prompts. Your goal during this discussion activity is to respond to as many different prompts as possible. Here’s how you will do that.
o You will have ~4 minutes per dyad which means you get about ~1 minute each to respond to one prompt. Together you will share your responses to both of the prompts.

o When you are done, swap cards, say goodbye, and raise your card in the air to find a new partner, preferably someone with a color/prompt you have not responded to yet.

o Again, the goal is to speak with as many different people as possible so I will ring the bell every 4 minutes to help you stay on track.

o As you go, jot down reminder notes when you hear about an idea that intrigues you. I’ll give you more time later to fill in your notes.

3. Dyad discussions – (15 mins or longer if you have time) Have them stand and begin. Ring the bell approximately every 4-5 minutes and remind people to keep moving.

4. Reflect – (5 min) Give them time to write out ideas–one per post-it–that they found most interesting.

5. Gallery walk – (10 min) Have people post their ideas on the relevant large chart papers with headings for each growth condition and to walk around and look at what others posted.

6. Large group discussion – (10 min)
   o What interesting ideas came out of the protocol for you?
   o Did you find anything surprising or significant?

7. Refine practice to try – (10 min) Hand out the New Practice Implementation Worksheet and let participants know how much time they’ll have to complete the worksheet. Let them know that during this time they can follow up to ask clarifying questions of the colleagues who shared the practice ideas with them.

8. Discuss – (10 min)
   o What did you think of the activity? What worked well? What was difficult? What would you change?
   o How might you use this protocol with your students? What prompts might you use?

Suggested prompts

1. What do you do, or could you do, to create the growth conditions discussed today in your classes?

2. What do you do, or could you do, to get to know your students?

3. What do you do, or could you do, to help your students feel like they belong in your class and/or to the college community?

4. How do you, or might you, help students connect what they are learning to their own lives?

5. What activities do you do, or might you do, to facilitate your students supporting each other’s learning?

For more free resources, and to share your practices with other educators, visit the Mindset Kit at www.mindsetkit.org