

The Final Word

Daniel Baron & Patricia Averette

Purpose: A way of focusing on a text; the purpose is to explore, stay focused and at the same time build on one another's thinking.

Facilitation: timing, avoiding dialogue

Number: Any multiple of five. Or can be used with four's or even three's.

Time: 45 minutes for groups of five.

The Activity:

1. The group is given time to look over the text, briefly, and note a passage/sentence or two that has particular meaning for them. (5 minutes)
2. Then the group is asked to sit in tight circles of five. Each group should choose a strict timer. Then, the first person begins by reading a quotation and explaining why it was the one chosen. (3 minutes)
3. Proceeding around the circle, the other four people get to respond briefly (1 minute each)
4. Then the first person has the "final word" to respond to what was said. (1 minute)
5. The next person begins by sharing a passage.
6. For each person, allot 8 minutes, total.

Reflection questions:

How did this go in your group? Was it easy or hard to stick to the protocol? Would you use this activity in your school?

What came up in your group that you thought was interesting?

Variation: Do the timing centrally freeing folks to think about what they are doing. This has a lot to do with intention—if you are training facilitators, they need to practice timing. If it is more about the text, then you do the timing.

SAVE THE LAST WORD FOR ME: The first person reads a quote but DOES NOT comment until all others have commented. S/he gets the **last word**.