

Rehearsing Facilitation of Video Investigation

(Some) Aims of collaborative video study

To investigate teaching practice, using video as a springboard
To create an experience for teachers where all voices are heard and valued
To make visible the teaching of traditional texts, at multiple levels: for teachers, with children
To establish collective norms around intentionally bringing multiple perspectives to illumine the study of teaching
To model a type of learning community anchored around “text” that teachers will want to conduct in their classrooms
To convey that teaching is complex, dynamic, challenging work and that collectively and over time, we can make headway in improving practice
To study teaching together in a way that is nonjudgmental and evidence-based

You will need: video, transcript, speakers, markers and poster paper or projector for recording participants’ ideas, paper and pens for journaling, notepad or device for keeping notes. Optional: copies or powerpoint slide of the Instructional Triangle, sound recorder.

1. Invite ~3 to 5 friends/colleagues to try this out with you, so that you can develop your facilitation skills for eventually conducting a video investigation. This will take ~50 minutes.
2. Explain to participants as an introduction: *“I’m interested in finding ways to talk about teaching and learning in our institution that will help us get better at teaching, and I’d like to try out some of what might get us there. Typically people talk about what they like or don’t like when they watch teaching, they judge teaching. If we can hold back from judgments and evaluation, if we can just describe what we see, we can investigate important facets of teaching in order to get better at them.”*
3. Have participants read the brief passage of text that students will be studying in the Susan video clip you show. This can be a very cursory glance at the Torah text—for the purpose of this rehearsal you will not need to examine the curriculum materials or study the text in depth.
4. Show a ~6-minute clip of video (we suggest the Susan video), and ask participants to take notes while they watch, and then share what they notice. Make a public record of what participants share.
5. Practice distinguishing between descriptive, interpretive, and evaluative statements using Kathy’s Practice Sheet, and review the recorded statements to see if the group can convert them to descriptive statements.

6. Show the video clip a second time. Ask participants to jot down what they notice, focusing on what the teacher is doing to help children learn, or what the children are doing to learn. Ask participants to try to *describe*, not interpret or judge.

7. Ask participants to share what they notice.

- Make a public record of what participants notice.
- Ask participants to rephrase what they notice as *observations—descriptions, not interpretations or judgments*.
- Here are some questions that might help participants shift to more descriptive language:
 - Can you say what you saw?
 - What did you see that leads you to think [that interpretation/evaluation]?
 - That sounds like an interpretation/evaluation. Can you reframe it as a description?

8. Allocate 10 minutes at the end of the session for each participant to write about/talk about what this process was like for them and what they learned. Return to the ideas of the introduction: *“Thanks for helping me out here. I’d like to learn more about what you learn from watching a video, and from watching a video in a group. We were experimenting to see if withholding judgment allows us to see more in teaching, and learning to just describe what we see in order to be able to work on it. Can you share your thoughts about that?”*

9. Be prepared to share what you learned from this with your MTEI colleagues. Keep notes from this rehearsal and bring them to our next session. You might want to audiotape the session with participants’ permission.

You will want to write ~2 pages addressing these questions:

Whom did you invite to this rehearsal and why?

Describe what you actually did—did you modify this plan or follow it pretty closely?

Did you use the scripted pieces that we provided? What other prompts did you come up with?

What did you learn from doing this?

Were there parts of this that felt especially unnatural or difficult?

Were there parts of this that felt particularly easy or familiar?

What do you think it will be like to do this with a larger group?

Other thoughts?