

# Inviting Students into a FLEx



Developing student ownership early on energizes and launches a FLEx. Using examples of FLEx from across the network, this series will illustrate various ways to invite students into a FLEx.

A strong invitation:

- Welcomes wonder
- Ignites curiosity
- Sparks passion
- Seeds engagement
- Connects learning and learners to God's Story

## Technique #5: Protocol or Activity That Leads To FLEx Ideas

### Ex. #1: Michael Bolland, Hope Academy, Math, 6th Grade

With the Opening Circle Protocol, the teacher asked students, "What is a time you made a mistake you did not want to go back and change?" Students wrote on sticky notes to share, which brought vulnerability and safety to the classroom as they entered into curious thinking. Next, the teacher led them in thinking about problems that involve the misuse of or lack of space and human needs in the world, in their city, and at their school. Students had time to write their thoughts before they walked around the room to share. As a whole class, they continued the discussion and it led them naturally to the problem of locker space.

### Ex. #2: Jessica Bulthuis, Central Minnesota Christian School, Science, High School

The students were aware of the genetic disease Down Syndrome, but few of them know the genetic cause of the disease and that there are many other diseases out there like it that affect individual people. The teacher began the lesson by giving students an envelope with chromosomes in it and asked them to arrange it into a karyotype to determine the gender and chromosomal mutation that the person is affected by. They then launched into their research of building awareness and partnering with Jack's Basket, an organization that celebrates babies with Down Syndrome.

### **Ex. #3: Kathy Hall, Washington Christian Academy, Public Speaking, 9th-12th Grades**

Through using the protocol Chalk Talk the teacher had each student read a different article about the importance of sharing one's story, listening to others' stories, and challenges in doing both. Students took sticky pads to answer five questions: "What are the benefits of sharing your story with others?", "What are the benefits of listening to others' stories?", "How can we encourage others to share their stories?", "What is needed?", and "What prevents us from sharing our stories or listening to others' stories?" In small groups, the students organized and presented their questions to the class. This led to the start of the students designing a podcast to share with their community.

### **Ex. #4: Katie Barnett, Washington Christian Academy, English/World Literature, 11th Grade**

The teacher invited her students into the FLEx on Advocating Against Cycles of Revenge through a variation of the Post-It, Purge-It Protocol. She gave each student a post-it note and asked that they write on it a troublesome thought, burden, or concern that a high school student might have. She drew a stick figure on the whiteboard to represent a person (Hamlet in particular), and asked the students to place their finished post-it notes over Hamlet's head. The teacher then asked them to concurrently verbalize the words they had written on the notes. This experience led students to research various topics pertaining to mental health, autoimmune diseases and other "invisible" conditions, gossip, and self care for the purpose of creating advocacy posters for an exhibit.

### **Ex. #5: Diane Hannay, Central Christian School, Math Fundamentals, Junior High**

At the beginning of their FLEx, students participated in a gallery walk and then answered questions that helped them relate personally to images of the five countries most Oregon immigrants come from (China, Mexico, India, Vietnam, Philippines). After looking at the data and creating graphs, the students felt compelled to write welcome letters to immigrants in their hometown.

### **Ex. #6: Kim Parlmer, Borculo Christian School, Writing, 1st Grade**

To introduce their how-to writing unit, the teacher activated student background knowledge with the 'Mystery Piece Method' initiating student curiosity and excitement. When they finished, she asked her students, "What problems do you notice at recess?" Students brainstormed their thoughts and the class made a T-Chart listing their different opinions. As a class, they decided they wanted to solve the problem of forts at recess which led them into their FLEx of Redeeming Recess by presenting a solution to this problem to the student body.

