Reciprocity 1: Idea Testing with Users

WHAT will we have when this activity is complete?	We will have a testing plan to gather feedback from a variety of users about whether our prototype idea addresses an important need.
WHY is this activity important?	This tool will focus on the first important test - the testing of the IDEA - whether the concept is feasible and actually addresses an issue that users experience.
HOW do I do this activity while keeping the habits in mind?	We will focus on *inclusion* making sure that we gather feedback from users who are currently not well served by the system.
WHEN in the process does this activity come?	We will do this activity after we build out our prototype and before we iterate and revise it.
WHO needs to be involved with this activity?	The whole coalition will be involved with creating the testing plan and each person will take on the responsibility of gathering feedback.

In-Person Directions
Provide a step-by-step walkthrough of the process for this module if teams are facilitating in-person sessions. Provide suggestions for in-person facilitation methods. Templates and scripts may be included in this section.

The following process is meant to be done with your coalition, so that they have a shared understanding of how to go out and gather user feedback on the prototype idea, and what they will do with that feedback.

What are the steps of this module?
Step 1: Confirm Our Hypothesis and Prototype
Step 2: Create Our Testing Plan
Step 3: Identify People to Interview

Step 1: Sharpen Our Hypothesis
When we chose which idea to build into a prototype, we did a "gut check" and named a hypothesis about how the prototype would address our user need and move us closer to the future state.

We used this template: If we (**prototype idea**), then (**user need**) will be addressed and **envisioned future state theme** will be achieved.

Our Gut Check: [insert gut check IF…THEN here]

1. What tangible thing are you going to share with users? A storyboard? A process? A one-pager?

2. Is it something that is clear and compelling that you are excited to share?

3. Name your prototype with a 4-5 word title that is simple and easy to understand.

4. In simple terms, why is this solution important and necessary?

Step 2: Create our testing plan
Now that we have sharpened our hypothesis, we need to consider how we will test whether our prototype's core idea addresses our user needs and problems.

Write your Introduction Script- In order to set context and purpose for the discussion, consider the script below. Edit to align to how you want to set the stage for this work in your community.

Context on the Local Laboratories of Learning
Our community is one of 14 "Local Laboratories of Learning" across the Commonwealth that is partnering with the Kentucky Department of Education to address an issue in education and reimagine student learning. We are supporting how the whole state thinks about assessing student learning and holding each other accountable for providing those learning experiences.

Over the past few months, we brought together a coalition of students, parents, educators, and community members to do this work together. We identified a problem and developed a possible solution.

Purpose of this conversation
I am hoping that we can share this solution with you - and that you can be totally honest about your thoughts. That will help us make the prototype better.

Our WHY
[explain in simple terms why we created this solution]

Introduce the Solution
We designed the following solution…[insert your prototype description and artifacts here.]

Choose Questions to Gather Feedback - Once we introduce the prototype, we want to cultivate their insights about the idea. We want to understand how they see it working, where the pitfalls might be, and whether it would address the problem statement. If you

choose to create any additional questions, we suggest that you avoid binary questions. If you ask a binary question such as "Does this prototype address the problem?" - they are likely to say yes, and their feedback may be limited. If you ask direct value questions such as "Do you think this prototype will be good for students?", you will also likely get a simple answer that will limit the depth of the feedback.

Here are some possible questions we might consider:
- How do you currently meet this need? How would this solution be better than what you currently do? How would it be worse?
- If our prototype was wildly successful, how would your experience be different?
- If our prototype fails, how would that impact you?
- Where is our prototype most likely to run into trouble?
- What things already happening in our community might support this prototype?
- What are possible unintended consequences of our prototype?
- STRONGLY RECOMMENDED: What evidence would help you know that this prototype is being implemented effectively?
- STRONGLY RECOMMENDED: What evidence would help you know that this prototype was having the intended impact and helping us move towards our goals?

Brainstorming our own questions about the prototype?

What questions do we want to ask our users?

How will we capture the notes from these conversations? (e.g. shared google folder, form, email)

How will we synthesize the feedback for interpretation? How will we make sure the insights we gather are reliable?

Step 3: Identify People to Interview
In this step, we'll reflect on whose perspective is particularly needed in this process and who exactly we will interview. We'll lay out a timeline for gathering feedback and make a plan to meet again.

The most useful insights about a prototype often come from users who are furthest from the "conventional" experience or who have been least well served by the current system. Start with these users.

It is always possible to gather additional insights from users who represent the conventional experience of the system, but in service of addressing the inequities of the system, start with those who experience those inequities most acutely.

Identify people for outreach: Start with the users you want to reach. Be specific and expansive about whose perspective you need to bring to this prototype. For example,

consider starting with students who receive special education services, teachers who may serve multiple classrooms, families who may speak other languages at home.

Then consider who can connect with that user and brainstorm what networks, organizations, and connections can facilitate the interview.

NOTE: Taking notes and asking questions is hard. We recommend pairing up to conduct the interviews. Pairing up can also help you catch different things, since we all bring different lenses to this project. One of the hardest things is to keep your ears open to critical feedback and a partner can help support that, too.

User Type (Teacher, student, etc…)	Coalition Member	Networks, organizations and connections

Making a plan:

The below questions can also help you structure your process.

When will we meet again?

When do we need testing to be completed?

Each of these steps can be done within this document in a virtual meeting.

Example Process & Product

The following is an example of a plan for testing your idea that builds on the Gut Check and prototype from Tool F - Choosing an Idea.

Step 1: Confirm Our Hypothesis and Prototype
When we chose which idea to build into a prototype, we did a "gut check" and named a hypothesis about how the prototype would address our user need and move us closer to the future state.

We used this template: If we (**prototype idea**), then (**user need**) will be addressed and **envisioned future state theme** will be achieved.

Our Gut Check: If we **enable students to attain an industry-recognized certification and complete a capstone to demonstrate competencies**, then **they will understand how the competencies prepare them for life and a career, and** **we will create a system that goes beyond a narrow range of subjects and create pathways that facilitate Individual fulfillment AND collective prosperity.**

Is our gut check hypothesis logical? Does it address our problem statement? Revise as necessary:

We think that the prototype idea definitely connects to the theme of creating a system that goes beyond a narrow range of subjects. We think that there will need to be work to ensure that attaining the certification leads to a deeper understanding of the competencies in our portrait of a graduate.

Check yourself:
1. What tangible thing are you going to share with users? A storyboard? A process? A one-pager?

We will share the storyboard we developed, and narrate each of the steps.

2. Is it something that is clear and compelling that you are excited to share?

We think this is a clear idea that is pretty concrete and could be a gamechanger for our young people and community!

3. Name your prototype with a 4-5 word title that is simple and easy to understand.

Employable Credentials for Every Student

4. In simple terms, why is this solution important or necessary?

Our students don't know why school is important, and that's because it's not always relevant to how they see the world around them. We know that students and families want to be able to understand the value of school and the competencies we hope to

develop in our students.

Step 2: Create our testing plan
Now that we have sharpened our hypothesis, we need to consider how we will test whether our prototype's core idea addresses our user needs and problems.

Write your Introduction Script- In order to set context and purpose for the discussion, consider the script below. Edit to align to how you want to set the stage for this work in your community.

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Over the past few months, we brought together a coalition of students, parents, educators, and community members to do this work together. We identified a problem and developed a possible solution.

Purpose of this conversation
I am hoping that we can share this solution with you - and that you can be totally honest about your thoughts. That will help us make the idea better.

Our WHY
Our students don't know why school is important, and that's because it's not always relevant to how they see the world around them. We know that students and families want to be able to understand the value of school and the competencies we hope to develop in our students.

Introduce the Solution
We designed the following solution - *storyboard*

Choose Questions to Gather Feedback - Once we introduce the prototype, we want to cultivate their insights about the idea. We want to understand how they see it working, where the pitfalls might be, and whether it would address the problem statement. If you choose to create any additional questions, we suggest that you avoid binary questions. If you ask a binary question such as "Does this prototype address the problem?" - they are likely to say yes, and their feedback may be limited. If you ask direct value questions such as "Do you think this prototype will be good for students?", you will also likely get a simple answer that will limit the depth of the feedback.

Here are some possible questions we might consider:

- How do you currently meet this need? How would this solution be better than what you currently do? How would it be worse?
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- STRONGLY RECOMMENDED: What evidence would help you know that this prototype is being implemented effectively?
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Brainstorming our own questions about the prototype?

<u>What questions do we want to ask our users?</u>

- ***STRONGLY RECOMMENDED: What evidence would help you know that this prototype is being implemented effectively?***
- ***STRONGLY RECOMMENDED: What evidence would help you know that this prototype was having the intended impact and helping us move towards our goals?***
- ***If our prototype was wildly successful, how would your experience be different?***
- ***If our prototype fails, how would that impact you?***
- ***Where is our prototype most likely to run into trouble?***

<u>How will we capture the notes from these conversations? (e.g. shared google folder, form, email)</u>

We will use this notetaking document to capture our notes: LINK, and anyone testing should create a copy and email it to [lead].

How will we synthesize the feedback for interpretation? How will we make sure the insights we gather are reliable?

We will meet on [date] to share our interview notes and we will help everyone make sure they have a partner who can note-take and also talk about where their hearing or interpretation was different.

<u>Step 3: Identify People to Interview</u>
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with these users.

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Then consider who can connect with that user and brainstorm what networks, organizations, and connections can facilitate the interview.

NOTE: Taking notes and asking questions is hard. We recommend pairing up to conduct the interviews. Pairing up can also help you catch different things, since we all bring different lenses to this project. One of the hardest things is to keep your ears open to critical feedback and a partner can help support that, too.

User Type (Teacher, student, etc…)	Coalition Member	Networks, organizations and connections to consider
ABA Specialist	Doannie and Rita	Connect to teacher union lead
Student who is currently chronically absent	Paul and Karen	Connect with registrar at the high school
Family with a student learning English	Gretchen and Audrey	Parent group at Sociedad Latina

Making a plan:

The below questions can also help you structure your process.

How will we collect our data/notes from the testing conversations?

We will use this [template] and gather the notes in this [folder]

When will we meet again?

We will meet again on March 3.

When do we need testing to be completed?

Prior to March 3 meeting.

Gut Check & Reflection
Prompt teams to evaluate their product based on the module objectives, the habits, and their work from previous modules

Gut check: Look at the list of people we are planning to test with. Are there groups you really need to talk to that are not on that list?

Resources & Links
Provide links to supporting tools, strategy resources, templates, etc to support the module

Confirmation Bias - a simple description of the Confirmation Bias phenomenon

Qualitative Coding - if you want to go deeper into coding the feedback by theme

Next Steps
Provide a direct link to the next module

The next module in the design sequence is Iteration and Implementation planning. Your team will use testing plan and feedback data to make changes to your prototype to better align to user needs.