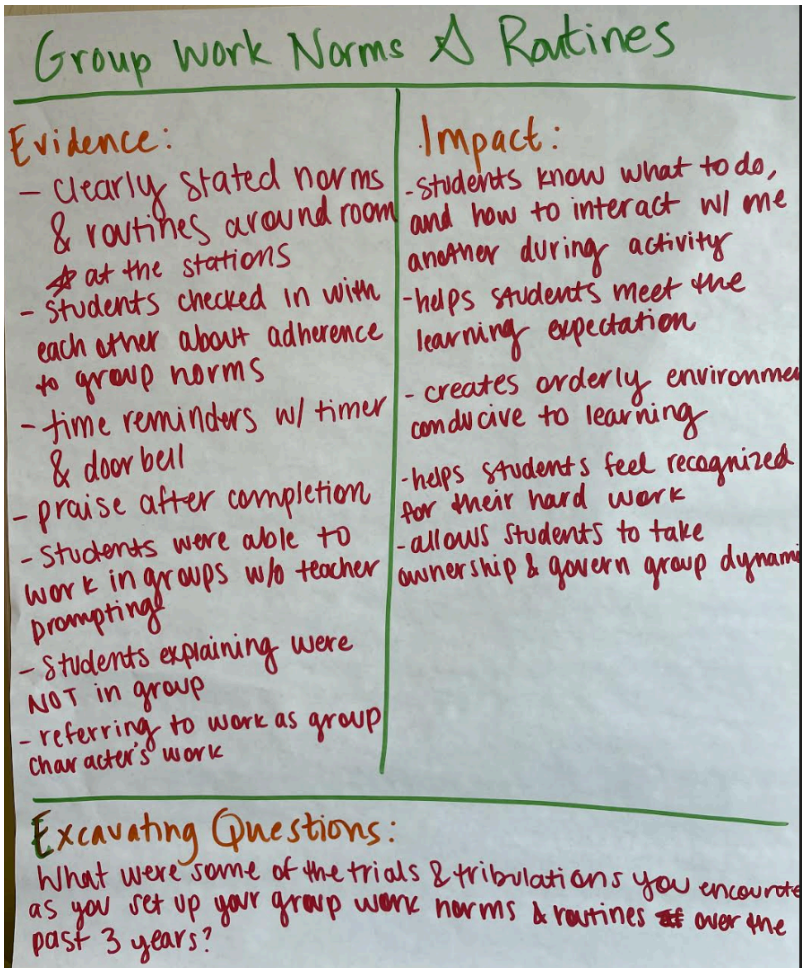
Learning Site Debrief with Jara Richards

Eliot Innovation School / 6th grade classroom / November 14, 2023

GROUP A: Group Norms & Routines



Excavating Questions:

- What were some of the trials and tribulations you encountered when you started this routine three years ago?

- The first year I set it up and maybe like I was the one who kind of came up with the group work expectation with that rubric you saw like my first year I was only made that and then slowly it's like okay now I'm giving the students more different like they created that as group so I think every year has been kind of building a little bit with just the expectations. I think sometimes the tasks work better than others sometimes so those things are always shifting. But I like having those expectations. At least that structure means that at least we're all getting what we could do, you always get started, we have the same basics for every single task.

- Once a week or once every other week (frequency of tasks). I read Building Thinking Classrooms. I was super into it. I was like let me see how this works. I created a lot of tasks on my own and I just kind of did one every once in a while and then as I did it more and now it's two to three times a week. I'm now thinking about how I'm using the curriculum and adapting tasks more often and how I can look at a task - okay this is how it is on Illustrated math, how can it be a whiteboard task. I'm continuing to see how I can use it more. How can I continue to refine things? That math talk was new this year having a student share their work is new this year so there are things that as I'm going through the process I'm trying to find things to continue making better.

- How did the routine look at the beginning of the year?

- Literally day one of the year, the first activity that I've done over the last 2 years has been like a getting to know you activity and it's just getting to know you on the whiteboards so they make a Venn diagram and they have to find things in common with each other so just starting day one and not even worrying about the math content but just how do we just work up at a board?

- We do a lot of what does this look like? What should it sound like? And then reflecting and what should this look like before we set up the expectations. What should this look like when we do this? What should it sound like and then we reflect on it at the end and then we talk about a lot of all those promptings. Or when we did introduce the rubric, okay find something on the rubric: What's your group's goal for today and then at the end, did your group meet the goal? What was the strength of your group? So there's a lot of training at the beginning. The first 3 days with non-curricular things where they're just problem solving and getting them excited about the whiteboards not about the content. When we're getting to challenging content they think the whiteboards are fun and they are used to working in the group when it's not all about like figuring out how to solve percents. That's a lot of what it looks like watching the sound - what's the expectation. We do a lot of reflecting. Now we're at the point where we don't do that as often but that's where we were the first two months.

GROUP B: Student Voice & Choice

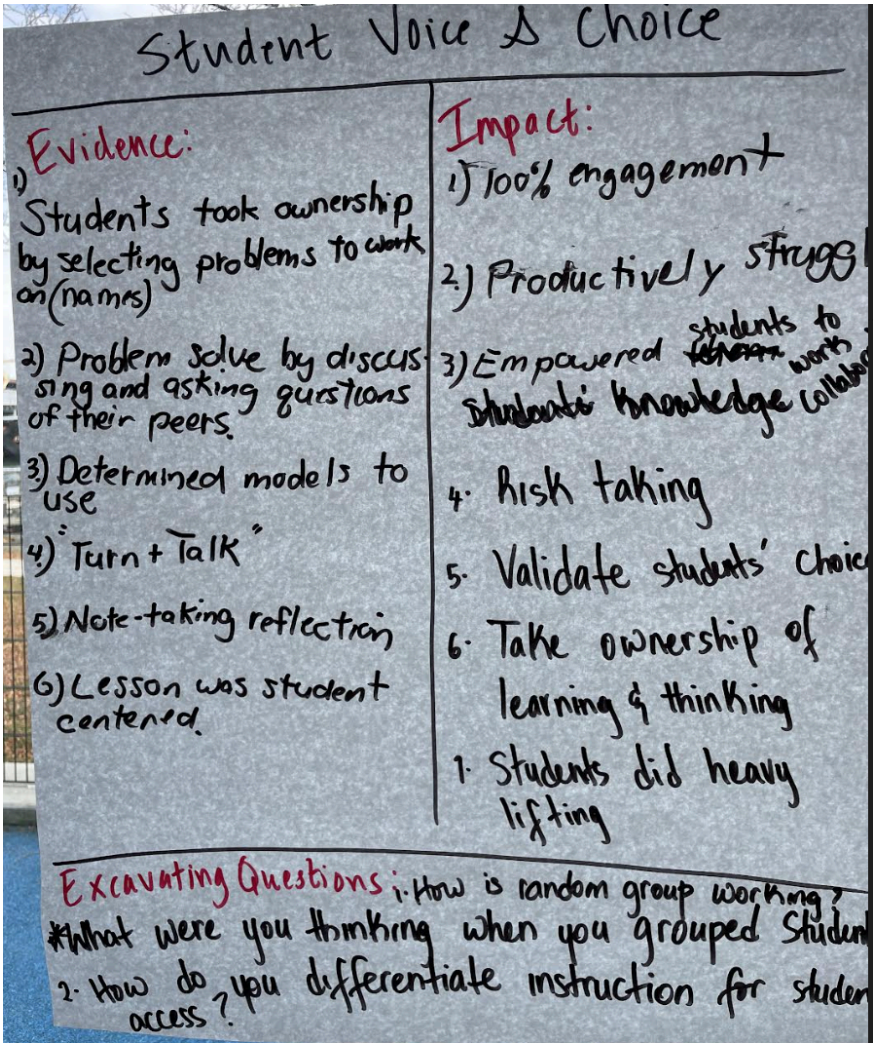
Excavating Questions

- How do you differentiate instruction for student access?

I think about the first part of the task as something that most kids can access. 50% is an easier access point. Everytime I think about the task, I think about having the first part of the task being accessible.

I have some resources that I use, you might have seen a student with a checklist (resources, multiplication chart, some of the models I was talking about). Anchor charts to refer to.

I try to leave (the task) pretty open to



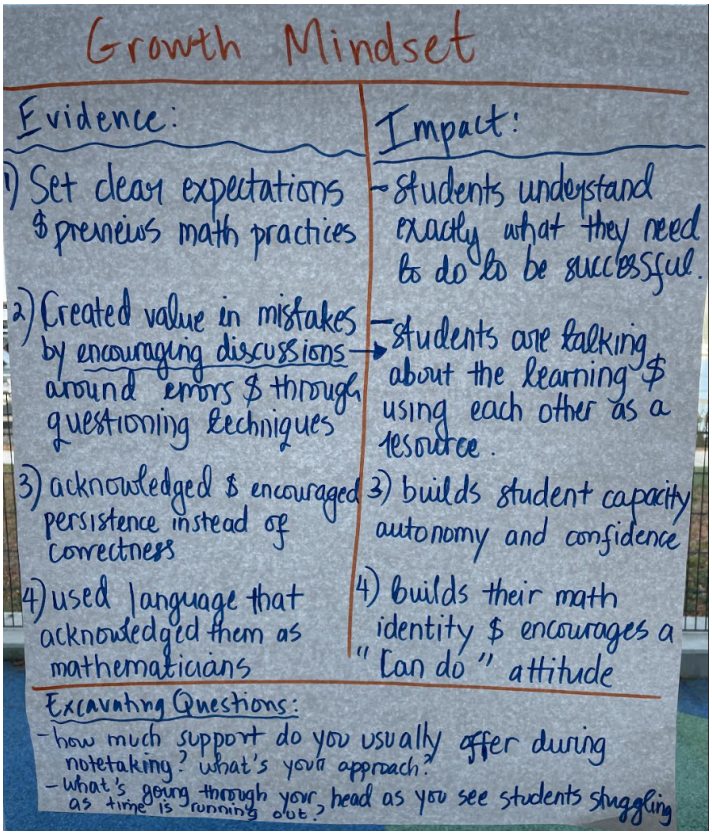
start, a lot of the differentiation comes after the task. What am I teaching after that? If a group didn't get it, how do I support after? That's where the differentiation comes in. This is not the whole learning. Ok, this group, when I looked at the notes was still struggling - I'm going to bring this up - or I'm going to bring this model up to this group after the task. Supports within the task, but differentiate after the task.

- How is random grouping working for you so far?
    - Most times it works well. I try to stick with it. At least if I do need make a change at least it seems random so there are some times where I'm just like I don't know about that and you just kind of shuffle the order you might do things but I try to make it look as random as possible
    - Again expectations at the beginning is like we can work with anyone in the class This might not be your friend we're going to work with everyone we're going to change it up everyone has strengths. Sometimes there's complaining about it but I think they get used to it after doing it don't let them switch. We've done this so many times at this point that they're just used to it so I try to keep it as random as possible.
    - it's nice to see the strengths that come out of some students. Some of the kids who I heard talk the most at whiteboard groups are the students who struggle the most. There are some kids in that class you probably wouldn't know struggle. I think different strengths come out with the Whiteboard groups and so I like to try to keep them as random as possible but there's always times that you might see me fiddling w/ the groups, but that's not cool and I try to sneakily adjust.

GROUP C: Growth Mindset

Excavating Questions

- What's your approach to the solidification of the understanding during the note taking process?
    - I'm trying to give a little bit more to the students doing that so the notes are connected to the task so they can think back, oh it's like when we did the

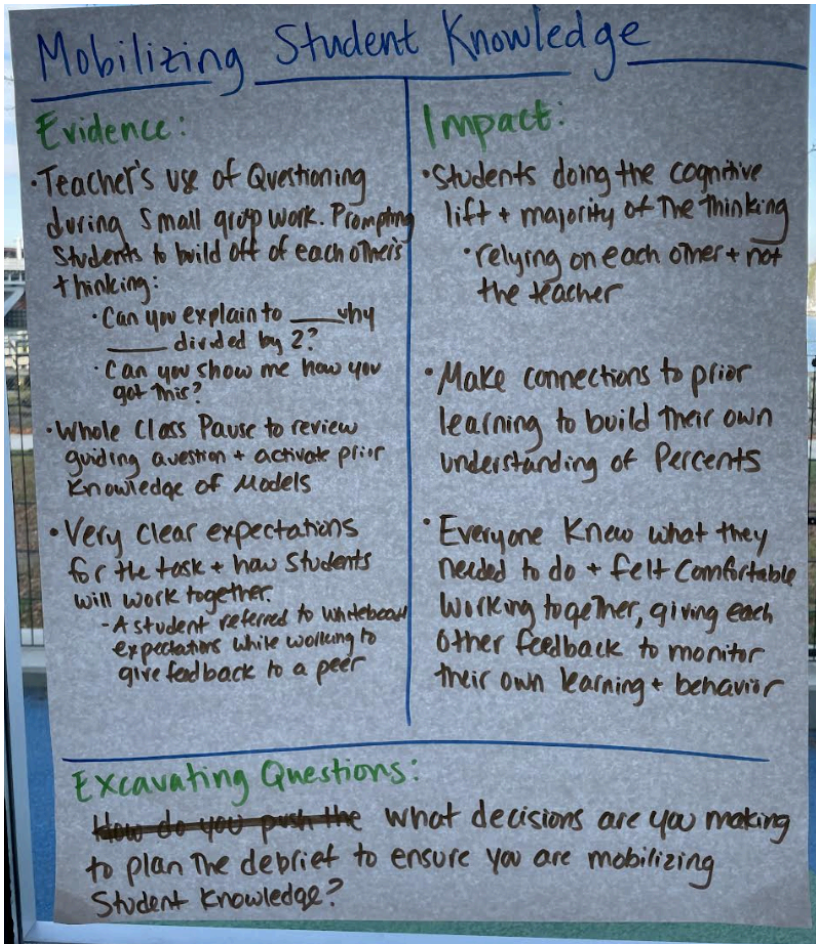


basketball task. I want that connection like oh it's like the rice task it's like the pencil testing. When I see a problem similar, Ilike making connections between problems so it's the same, it's exactly what you just did now it's like taking it and put it on paper.

- I'm trying to get to the groups to stay in their groups, now we're taking notes, talk about what you did. In a lot of groups you'll notice they didn't know what model to use and they all end up using not all most of them the ratio tables which is really interesting and then we're able to explain how they were setting up and why they were doing it. So I'm trying to give them a chance to take it from.
- I'll go around again and check in so once students are doing the independent work I'm then checking the notes and making notes of these notes can I follow notes can they follow the notes.
- I can check in with students that I'm concerned about and saying “can you explain what you did?” You're just checking that they understand their notes as well so that's after the fact that’s at the.
- I try to pinpoint at that time if it's working. So far, honestly, I see more engagement doing it that way then when I'm up front saying do this do this to this so I'm liking it so far
- I think too many times if they're just copying they're not getting much out of it and then great I can get someone to copy it but like are they going to take even the kid that like is just copy it to copy yes they're doing work but they're not going to understand. Is it better for like them to get one problem down where they're actually understanding what they did first or getting a whole page down and not understanding so that's the balance. I'm trying, it's hard because I think we're so used to like having a full page done. I'm trying to shift my mindset of like what are they taking away from it? It’s a little bit so it's tough but so far I'm liking it we'll see.

- What’s going through your head as you see students struggling and you’re running out of time?
    - Before I would have to get through everything. I was more concerned with what we did get through. Build out some flex days - tomorrow, playlist day, pull some small groups that’s a mindset thing I’m getting used to. The discussion is important and starting the notes is important and we’ll eventually get to the rest.
    - Better to have a conversation and get A and B done then rush through the rest.

GROUP D:
Mobilizing Student Knowledge



Excavating Questions:

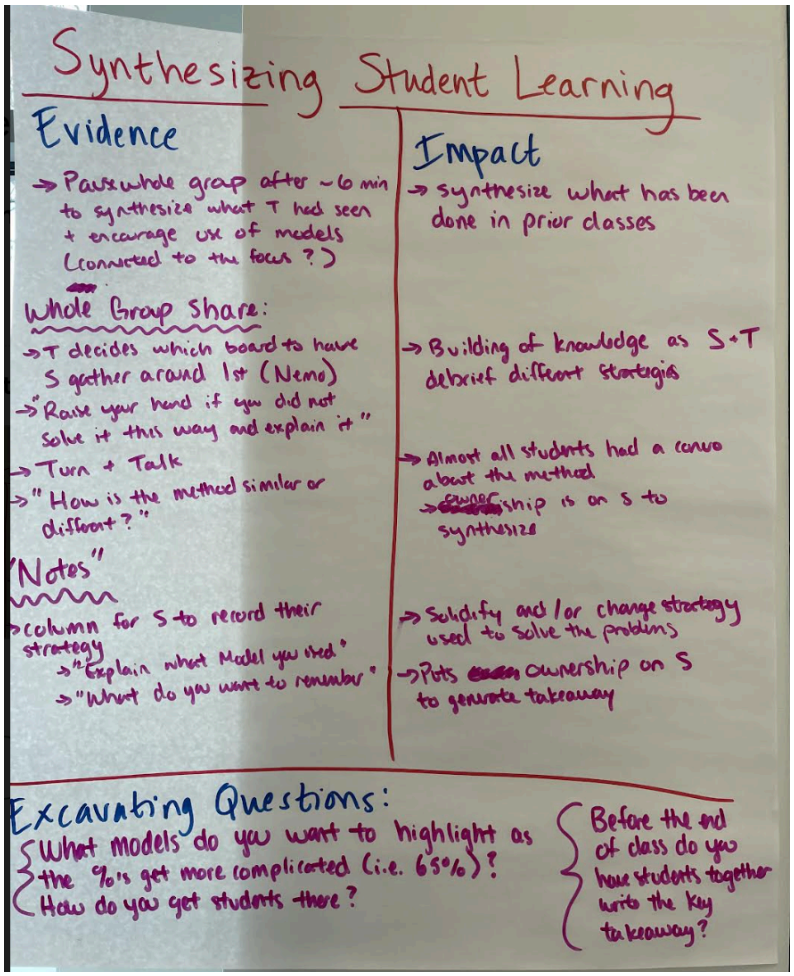
What decisions are you making to plan the debrief to ensure you are mobilizing student knowledge?

- Before the task, before I give the task I'm already planning for the debrief andwhat I'm thinking about task. I'll do the math and I'll think about what I might see what I want to see. Then I'm also planning my questioning at the same time. I wanted to show similarities between the two models. I want to show differences. There's more than I wanted to do at least an equation. What did you get for half of 40. I'm getting to that so I think what I'm trying to do what I'm planned to be was to show at least two different ways to solve it, having the students name what happened, and I'm making connections of the two different strategies or what they saw between the two. Then give students also the chance to reflect on their work of what did we do similarly and what did we do differently. Can we learn from this? I wanted a ratio and I wanted to take a diagram to try to talk about the two different models. When I'm looking around, I'm trying to make notes of what groups are doing with the task so I know which groups I want. Who's doing what, who's got a nice ratio table set up? who's got a tape diagram and then knowing okay I'm going to go to nemo first because they've got this.

JP follow-up question: Why did you push the models?

- The kids who are doing the equations know the equation and I'm not sure that everyone else fully understood why even some of them did (that work). I think especially becuase we start off pretty light with a half like they knew a half was 50%. I wanted to push the models a little bit because I think when I looked at this last task and I because I've never taught it this way and I think it makes so much sense that this builds on what we've been doing with ratios for so long. I want them to see the connection and then I want them to see ok, we're dividing by two in the table, that's the same as multiplying by a half and that's why a half of this is this. I wanted to take a step back. I wanted them to see this first and then be able to say oh okay now I know why that's like that because when we are going into percentage there's so many different rules. I find kids multiply and divide without knowing why and so I wanted to slow down a little bit because I see every year percents is a one thing that we always have the toughest time with.

GROUP E: Synthesizing Student Knowledge



Excavating Questions:

- What models do you specifically want to highlight as the percents get harder (ex. 65%). What is in your ideal world, what are students doing with 65%?
    - That was my takeaway about the next step. I want them to understand that they can use benchmarks percents as first. This is good place for students who struggle to start. We'll get to changing to a decimal and then multiplying, but I want to start with this. Then I want us to look at patterns, and then get it into

equations, how we can use multiplication to solve more in an equation way. Hopping to get to that later this week.

- Before the end of class, do you have students write the same things down?
    - If I notice there's a concern, I will. No one used a double number line so that's what I highlighted at the end of class. What could I have done? How could I have used this? I have them do a reflection, and hope the reflection can lead them to filling out the column on the side. I looked at the back of the notes and mentioned that - how we could use a ratio table to solve this kind of problem. Depending on where we're at, I might go over one together, we might talk it through together, I might leave it for tomorrow.

- There's a lot of different parts. White board tasks, notes, pulling small groups. How is the whiteboard tasks different from what you've done in the past?
    - I made the shifts for the engagement. The kids like it. I do reflections every unit. What did you like, etc. Overall, I keep seeing white board tasks as something students like to do. A lot of positive feedback, they enjoy it. I'll take what's on this worksheet - and it's as a white board task. Seems more engaging. I'm going with it.
    - The number one thing with shifting, as I've gotten more familiar, I can use it to give students more ownership. How could I shift this to give students more of a chance to talk to each other? Led me to see how I can deepen my practice with this routine.
    - How do I continue to give students the same opportunities when it's not a white board task?

REST OF DEBRIEF PROTOCOL

- How are you noticing differences in content knowledge?
    - When I hear students make a connection to the task.
    - Student quiz where they could use their notes - are you going back to the notes? Seeing kids go back and use. Seeing the perseverance ramp up in a lot of kids. Used to the procedures of what we're doing w/ the tasks.

- When you're adapting a task - what are you looking for in a task?
    - Different tasks are different depending on where they fall in the unit. When it's an introduction - more access points for kids - where is there an access point for moth students? How am I building? 50% to 65% of it's building. This was 1 or 2 steps in illustrative, I added the layers. I try to think about that on all tasks. I wanted to use models so that it was more open. Some are more applications, some are multistep, can we apply it. Comparing rates, we've done a lot with rates, can we apply what we've done - sometimes the purpose is a little different. Sometimes our purpose is taking a bunch of things and putting them together. I'm

always thinking about the entry point and building from there. I do the math and see if it feels like a good progression or do I need to make adjustments. Doing the math is really essential.

- What are the key ingredients that make this work for your students?
    - Being a teacher who's really into it. I have a lot of fun with it. I fyou'r einto it, you'll put the effort in to make it work. It's fun. That's the big part to start. The biggest thing is the expectations - once they're set, it's much easier. It might not happen right away, we've put weeks into doin this. Set expectations early on, start w/ something fun and engaging (not content heavy) so you can get buy in. Make it fun to get the buy in early. Some of that set up at the beginning is really helpful. Make a challenge. Know that it's not always going to be perfect, and there's teaching that happens outside of it. Not the only way, but a good way to get student engagement. Where are the students with it? It's a good way to assess where students are and think about where do you need to from there as a teacher?

OTHER QUESTIONS

- Pacing- you were really aware of the time. You set the timer, they got busy, you said to reset it. The original set
    - I like to start at 8. I don't want to set it to 15, we want a little urgency. Good starting point, doesn't seem like too much for the kids. 8 mins is somewhat for me and a good starting time frame for students. It depends on the task. My goal was 15, we definitely went over.
- How do you help students get caught up if they miss part of class? Or are absent?
    - Def a challenge. Today I just had them join a group. If you're at the beginning of notes, a group can catch you up. Absent - catch up on a flex day (once a week). How do you do all the things in one day? That's tough. Can I adjust as we go or do I have to go back with anyone who missed? Depends on the task, prioritizing what students needs. Bigger question of in general, what do you do?

- How do you build independence after collaborative time?
    - One thing is that I try to model the questioning. I don't give answers right away. I'm asking questions - students ask questions of each other. What do you know? What do you do? Students are picking up on that. Sometimes it translate and sometimes it doesn't to independent work. Sometimes we do table tasks or work in partners? How can you train yourself to take on a problem independently. Has translated outside white board tasks but not to the point where students can do it all on their own. Working on my questioning - so students ask each other.

Closing the Loop:

- I am thinking about how to determine w/in the curriculum what is essential vs. what is supplemental. Better to do that one question, vs. the whole sheet and focusing on student understanding. How can I present that idea to teachers - what is the big idea and the big takeaway?
- Key ingredients are adaptability, consistency, and predictability. I totally enjoyed the experience. Like a movie when they got their card. They knew what to do.
- A key ingredient, you had a plan when you were questioning or supporting students and you stuck to it. It's easy to give in when students don't have an answer. You just kept asking the same questions over and over again. Training yourself not to give in.
- How much the practices you showed today aligned to district priorities - productive struggle, discourse, mobilizing student knowledge. How do we incorporate these practices along with district HQIM w/out overwhelming educators. HOw do you prioritize certain parts? Elevate these practices.
- Praise aspect - it's easy to give one or two students praise- giving the whole class praise that feels authentic to them. Bolster math identities - we work hard in here and you can do it. How can I do this in my own context?
- I noticed that the key ingredient was the task was focused - chunked to go deeper. Prioritized the entire process- you weren't rushing through, students had more time to think and synthesize. My thinking has changed as I watch the students taking their own notes and making sense and explaining the process they decided to use. You were not the giver of information, that was beautiful.
- I came in being doubtful, my students have this and that challenge, but I can see that how you started off simple in the beginning and fun activities and built on it and it has changed and evolved in last few years. The process is my big takeaway.
- I'm thinking about more ways to get bought into the process.