

Attributes of a Democratic Learning Community *Protocol*

Dodd - 10/13/17

Initial Question

**What are the most important qualities
of a democratic citizen?**

Purpose

To establish basic attributes of democratic learning communities through real participant experiences. The attributes become goals/guidelines for checking on progress as a democratic learning community develops.

Time 20 minutes

Process

1. Participants write about a personal experience of being a democratic citizen in a learning community that they know was a place of positive learning for them. It could be a club, a church group, a school experience, a course, or a support group; any group that was a positive learning community.
2. Their writing should include the reason for the group's existence, how the group was structured, and what made it a positive, democratic learning place.
3. Participants share their stories with one another.
4. As each story is told, the group picks out the attributes that made that learning community democratic, productive and satisfying.

Note: This process gets at the essential elements of what is going on when people know they are learning at a high and satisfying level.

This is a modified protocol taken from School Reform Initiative: *Attributes of a Learning Community*
This approach was used by the Foxfire Networks to train teachers in the Foxfire Approach. It was probably used by other groups as well, but that is where I learned it. – Marylyn Wentworth