# Literacy Improvement
**PARTNERSHIP**

**Facilitating Improvement in Teacher Practice**

# Learning Module 7 Workbook

## Engaging in Inquiry Cycles

**Acknowledgments**

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# Module 7 learning targets and agenda

Learning targets:

- Reflect on how inquiry cycles can help your team learn.
- Understand the steps of the inquiry cycle process.
- Consider how to build confidence in changes and adopt new practices.

## Agenda

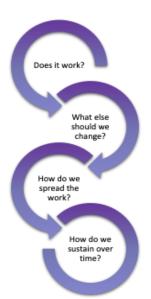| | Key content |
|---|---|
| Opening | <ul><li>Welcome</li><li>Logistics</li></ul> |
| Part 1 | <ul><li>Engaging in inquiry cycles</li><li>Introduction to Plan-Do-Study-Act cycles (PDSAs)</li></ul> |
| Part 2 | <ul><li>Building confidence in changes</li></ul> |
| Closing & Next Steps | <ul><li>Module review</li><li>Action period work</li></ul> |

# Engaging in inquiry cycles

## Self-reflection

How was it helpful for the Lemmon Valley team to document their learning about the conference tracker? What structures do you use to support reflection and document your team's progress?

**Rapid cycles of improvement**

Rapid cycles of improvement are structured as a series of inquiry cycles to test a particular change in order to improve an overall system. Iterative rapid cycles of improvement help us to learn what it will take to create lasting change.

Rapid cycles are intended to be embedded in regular practice and allow educators to learn while doing.

Rapid cycles of improvement help educators take intentional and disciplined action toward resolving systemic problems, reflect on their actions, and take new action based on those reflections.



Does it work?

What else should we change?

How do we spread the work?

How do we sustain over time?

**Rapid cycles of improvement …**
- Keep teams focused over time on key challenges and inequities.
- Generate deeper learning about how to address these challenges.
- Help educators make informed changes in their practice.
- Promote improved collaborative relationships between teachers.

# Understanding Why You Are Improving

## Which "L" are you?

| Strength of your results | Lucky | Leading |
|---|---|---|
| | Lost | Learning |

Understanding why you got your results

## Self-reflection

Can you think of a time when you saw improvement in an outcome but did not know exactly what caused it? Were you able to replicate the success?
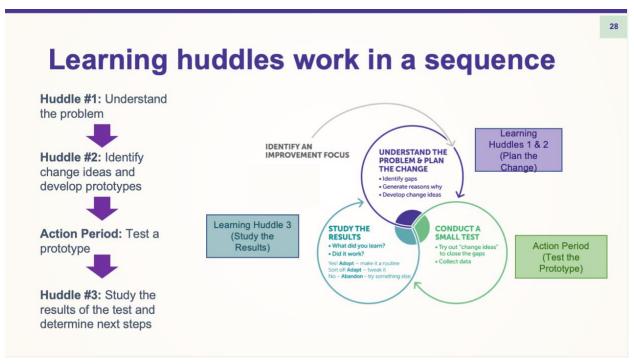
## Introduction to Plan-Do-Study-Act cycles (PDSAs)

A PDSA, or Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle, is an engine for learning. This four-stage problem-solving model is used to test a prototype for change. A PDSA helps you to make your assumptions and hypotheses explicit and surfaces gaps in your understanding.

Ideally, your teams will be constantly engaging in inquiry cycles together to meet the needs of learners in their classrooms and across their team.

**Learning huddles**

Teacher teams complete rapid cycles using a PDSA process. Learning huddle protocols build in processes that help guide a team through the inquiry cycle.



> **Characteristics of learning huddles**
>
> A learning huddle is a meeting, but not every meeting is a learning huddle. When planning learning huddles, make sure that they meet all of these requirements:
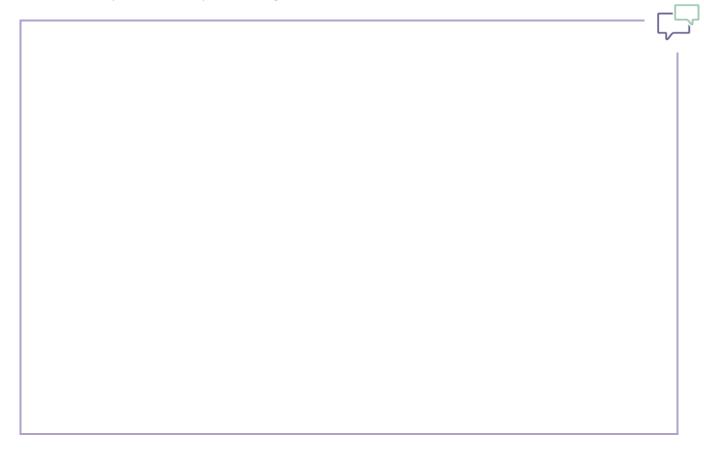>
> - Short (30–45 minutes, fits within a typical meeting time).
> - Focused on a specific topic and aim.
> - Guided by agenda and roles.
> - Equitable (everyone shares).
> - Autonomous (teacher-facilitated).
> - Embedded in an inquiry cycle (not stand-alone).
> - Aligned to research-based practice.
> - Result in clear next steps.

It is important to identify the purpose of each learning huddle. Is the purpose of the huddle to better understand a problem, to identify changes and develop prototypes, or to study the results of something your team has already tried? Huddles for different purposes will require different tools and processes.

| Purpose | Tools and processes |
| --- | --- |
| Understand a problem | • Data discussion questions or protocol |
| Identify changes and prototyping | • Text discussion protocol<br>• Prototyping process. |
| Study results | • Reflection questions<br>• Note-taking tool |

**Small-group discussion**

- How do you engage in inquiry cycles with your team?
- Which parts of the cycle is it harder to find time for?
- How do you document your learning?

# Building confidence in changes

Multiple iterations of testing help you to build confidence in your changes. As you test changes in practice and collect data, it is important to keep track of what is working and what is not. Change ideas that are successful should be clearly documented and shared so they can be tested in a variety of contexts.

As you build confidence in changes, those changes become promising practices that you can spread and scale.

**When tested in multiple contexts, "confidence" means that the change consistently…**

- Had the expected impact when tested.
- Resulted in an improved practice, process, or routine.
- Consistently improved learning experiences and outcomes for students.

**EQUITY**

**II**

**PAUSE**

The team in our improvement story is now successfully meeting with all students throughout the week. They met their goal but continued to look at their practice.

- What assumptions could have been made by the team after they met their initial goal? Why was a deeper look at their practice important for equitable outcomes for their students?
- Can you think of a promising practice that you have built confidence in?

# Next steps

**During this module, our learning targets were to:**

- Reflect on how inquiry cycles can help your team learn.
    - Engaging in inquiry cycles.
- Understand the steps of the inquiry cycle process.
    - Introduction to PDSAs.
- Consider how to build confidence in changes and adopt new practices.
    - Building confidence in changes.

## Action period for Module 7

- ❑ Plan a team meeting using a Learning Huddle Protocol

- ❑ Create a plan to test your prototype.

- ❑ Make predictions about the test.Between now and the next session, begin thinking about a team that you would like to work with during this series.

- Include an equity pause in your huddle to check for assumptions.
- Use meeting success criteria to monitor team dynamics.
- Anticipate places where you may encounter and need to shift unproductive discourse.
- Have team members test the prototype and informally document their learning from the test.

## Closing reflection

What are you thinking about focusing on next to continue this work?

# Notes

# Appendix 1: Huddle protocols

**Learning huddle protocol (Problem identification)**

**Norms**

- Safe space for learning, no judgment.
- All teach, all learn.
- (*additional norm generated by team during institute*)
- (*additional norm generated by team during institute*)
- (*additional school or district norm*)

**Facilitation roles**

- Facilitator: lead agenda
- Timekeeper: keep group on time
- Note-taker: bullet points, questions and aha's, Google doc
- Process observer: note if norms are being met, group is staying focused

**Agenda**

North star: improve student outcomes in …

**Goal:** to develop a community of learners by supporting students to…

1. Review community agreements (*choose one to focus on today*) (1 minute)

2. Review relevant data for your identified goal (10 minutes)

- What is something your students are struggling with?
- Identify a specific problem to solve together.

3. Why are your students struggling? (10 minutes)

- Use the 5 Whys protocol to identify some possible root causes.

(*Note-taker collects root causes in a Google doc)*

4. Next steps (round robin) (5 minutes)

- How will you learn more about the root causes of your identified problem?

5. Huddle feedback (4 minutes)

- Rate your huddle using the huddle success criteria.

**Learning huddle protocol (Identifying changes and developing prototypes)**

**Norms**

- Safe space for learning, no judgment.
- All teach, all learn.
- (*additional norm generated by team during institute*)
- (*additional norm generated by team during institute*)
- (*additional school or district norm*)

**Facilitation roles**

- Facilitator: lead agenda
- Timekeeper: keep group on time
- Note-taker: bullet points, questions and a-ha's, Google doc
- Process observer: Note if norms are being met, group is staying focused

**Agenda**

**North star:** Improve student outcomes in ...

**Goals:** To develop a community of learners by supporting students to ...

1. Review norms (*choose one to focus on today*) (1 minute)

2. Round-robin (1 minute each)

- For your identified problem, what more did you learn about possible root causes?
    - Which root cause would have the greatest impact versus effort if addressed?

3. Discussion: identify possible change ideas for your selected root cause (10 minutes)

- What ideas do you have coming out of your root cause analysis?
- What success have others with the same problem had?
- What are the evidence-based practices for this problem?

(*Note-taker collects change ideas in a Google doc*)

4. Activity: begin to create a prototype of a change idea to test. (10 min)

- Create a sketch or model of your prototype and share with your team.
- How, when, and with whom will you test your prototype?
- What data will you collect?

5. Next steps

- Finish developing your prototype and complete a very small-scale test before the next meeting.

6. Huddle feedback (4 minutes)

- Rate your huddle using the huddle success criteria.

**Learning huddle protocol (Studying the results of a test)**

**Norms**

- Safe space for learning, no judgment.
- All teach, all learn.
- (*additional norm generated by team during institute*)
- (*additional norm generated by team during institute*)
- (*additional school or district norm*)

**Facilitation roles**

- Facilitator: lead agenda
- Timekeeper: keep group on time
- Note-taker: bullet points, questions and a-ha's, Google doc
- Process observer: note if norms are being met, group is staying focused


**Agenda**

North star: Improve student outcomes in …

Goals: To develop a community of learners by supporting students to …

1. Review norms (*choose one to focus on today*) (1 minute)

2. Round-robin: in one word, how are you feeling about progress toward your goals?

3. Discussion: What did we learn from our tests? (10 minutes)

- Were you able to test your prototype?
- What data did you collect?
- What do you notice about your data?
- Will you adapt, adopt, or abandon your prototype?

(*Note-taker records what each teacher learned*)

4. Work time (10 minutes)

- Make adjustments to your prototype (adapt).
- Begin to prepare for a larger test (adopt).
- Create a sketch or model of a new prototype (abandon).

5. Share out (5 minutes)

- Briefly share what you worked on with your team.

6. Next steps

- Finish adjusting/developing your prototype, and complete a test before the next meeting.

7. Huddle feedback (4 minutes)

- Rate your huddle using the huddle success criteria.

# Appendix 2: Building confidence in changes

**How do we know when to try a new change idea?**

| | |
|---|---|
| We tested the change idea, and it went well, but we are not confident that the results were valid or will be consistent. | Repeat the change idea to learn more. |
| We tested the change idea and realized that it could be improved or that our measures did not answer our questions. | Adapt the change idea or measures. |
| We tested the change idea and were either unable to implement it or saw no consistent positive results. | Abandon the change idea. |
| We tested the change idea multiple times and are seeing consistent positive results (shifts in data). | Adopt the change idea. |

Use this table to document the prototypes your team has tried and identify promising practices by determining the confidence in each prototype.

| Change ideas/prototype | # of tests | Confidence in change idea<br>1 – not confident to 3 - confident |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |