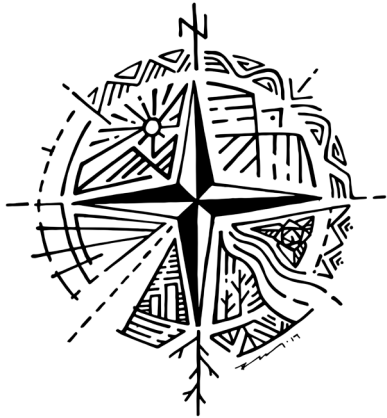




adapted from *Making Thinking Visible*, Ritchhart, Church, & Morrison, 2011, p. 93.

This discursive strategy develops the following democratic skills and dispositions. I can:



- Express my excitements, worries, needs, & stance about an issue;
- Collaborate to categorize and summarize peers'/colleagues' thinking;
- Consider specific ways to move forward with change while respecting people's needs.

**Compass Points** can be very effective at with a class or at staff meetings when it's important for everyone present to have input in the decision-making process about a new initiative.

Considering the idea, question, or proposition before you:

**E = EXCITEMENTS**

What excites you about this idea or proposition? What's the upside?

**W = WORRIES**

What do you find worrisome about this idea or proposition? What's the downside?

**N = NEEDS**

What else do you need to know or find out about this idea or proposition?

**S = STANCE, STEPS, or SUGGESTIONS**

What is your current stance or opinion on the issue or proposition? What should your next step be in your evaluation of this idea or proposition? What suggestions would you have at this point?

**STEPS**

**1. Set Up:** Frame the issue, event, or proposition and present it to the learners. If the proposition is new, allow for questions of clarification to ensure that learners have some sense of the topic. **Place four baskets in the middle of the group, or 4 large sheets of paper**, one for each compass point, on the walls. Label each basket or sheet with letters denoting the compass points. Distribute sticky notes for participants to write ideas on.

**2. Individual Reflection & Writing:** Participants have time to write answers to the compass point questions. They then place these in baskets or on posters.

**3. Small groups** claim one of the four directions baskets or posters. They then sort ideas into themes.

**4. Small groups share** their themed summaries with the large group while the facilitator records ideas in a chart (it works well to display on a digital projector while you type).

**5. Facilitator** invites participants to share additional insights and questions based on the summaries.

Note: Using baskets instead of chart paper provides anonymity which can be helpful if: a. the matter at hand is a source of tension for the group; b. varied positional authority of participants may inhibit or distort expression of ideas.