W I C O R

World Café Protocol

**What is it?**

* A powerful method for engaging students in conversations that matter.
* The format is flexible and adapts to many different circumstances limited only by your space.
* The World Cafe is a discovery tool that helps a large group understand a set of issues at their own pace. It’s great for helping people reach a state of common understanding and alignment.

**Objectives**

* To help students have collaborative dialogue and engage actively with each other while they analyze, synthesize, evaluate, and investigate a large issue or question.
* To develop and refine presentation and discussion skills as well as critical thinking and argument skills.

**Before Class**

* Set up a “station” for each discussion question. Tables are ideal but desks can be arranged in small circles if tables are not available. Each station should have butcher paper and a marker. The question or prompt should a table tent or be attached to or printed on the paper.
* Decide on an issue or problem for students to discuss. One text can be used with different questions at each station. Or multiple texts can be selected and each one read and discussed at a station. Questions should be thought provoking and lead to analysis and evaluation of problems.

**Procedures**

1. Seat four (up to 6) at a table
2. Set up progressive (at least three) rounds of conversation, approximately 10-20 minutes each.
3. Upon completing the initial round of conversation, you may ask one person to remain at the table as a “table host” for the next round, while the others serve as travelers or “ambassadors of meaning.” The travelers carry key ideas, themes and questions into their new conversations, while the “table host” welcomes the new set of travelers.
4. Students can record key ideas on the butcher paper, doodle, write summaries, questions or whatever you deem appropriate.
5. Rotate students. One student remains at the table and briefly shares key insights from the prior conversation so other can link and build using ideas from their respective tables. The host must be brief (1-2 minutes). The host can encourage people to draw on the tables—ideas, discoveries, and deeper questions as they emerge.

**Debrief**

1. Process the small group discussions with the class.
2. Debrief the World Café strategy. If time allows, this can be done at the end of the period. If not, students can write their reflection for homework.