



WhyTry Facilitator Guide

Introduction:

Welcome to becoming a WhyTry facilitator! There are three main steps you'll need to follow:

1. Sign up for a WhyTry Training, either online or in-person.
2. Familiarize yourself with the Facilitator Toolkit and read this guide.
3. Choose pre-built lessons that fit your needs and start your first session using those. Remember, you can also create your own lessons using the toolkit.

Facilitator's Guide:

This guide helps you understand how to implement WhyTry, provide effective instruction, and facilitate successful WhyTry groups. We'll cover when and how to facilitate, the Big 3 lesson tools and facilitator competencies, and tips for success.

Guide Sections:

Implementation Information

First, you will learn about the customization capabilities of the WhyTry facilitator toolkit, and how to implement WhyTry lessons into your classroom.

The Big 3 of Content & Competencies

Next, you will learn about the Big 3 of lesson tools: visual metaphors, activities, and media. You will also learn about the Big 3 of facilitator skills and competencies: framing, processing, and surrendering the one-up.

Tips for Success

Lastly, you will learn some additional tips that will aid you in facilitating WhyTry effectively. These tips will teach you about: creating a WhyTry environment, using video, using music, running an activity, flexibility, and self-assessment.

Section One: Implementation Information

Introduction:

The WhyTry facilitator toolkit is used for creating and customizing lessons. The scope and sequence for both elementary and secondary have been created with the average user in mind. However, they can easily be modified to meet your needs. Lesson units (outside of the first and the last) can easily be done in any order. If the time length for lessons requires more time than you have in a single session, feel free to cut lessons in half or thirds. If you have a limited number of sessions available, focus on units that will be most important for your students and go deeper. Don't try to cover it all for the sake of doing so at the expense of diving deeper.

Elementary Information:

The elementary scope and sequence for each grade level band covers 20 weeks. This is intended to be done over the course of a year. Ideally you would be delivering the lessons once/week over six months. Lessons range from 20 minutes in length for primary grades to 40 minutes in length for intermediate.

Secondary Information:

The secondary scope and sequence covers 18 weeks. If this was being implemented once/week it would cover an entire semester. Lessons are approximately 35-40 minutes in length. If you are running secondary groups for an entire year with the same students, we recommend that after you use the pre-built lessons for any unit and then create 1-2 lessons to support that unit before moving on to the next. You can also incorporate the elementary pre-built lessons. There is content that could be an ideal starting place for your secondary students.

Section Two: The Big 3 of Content & Competencies

Introduction:

The WhyTry Approach is based on answering the question how to create relevancy and how to build educator-student relationships that facilitate learning. There are many instructional strategies and skills we can master as educators; but we have identified what we refer to as the Big 3 of both the lesson tools and the Big 3 of the facilitator competencies in order to focus on what is most important.

The Big 3 Lesson Tools:

The three tools that make the foundation of any WhyTry lesson are visual metaphors, videos and other media, and activities. Almost every WhyTry lesson that we create will contain elements of all three. Here is a brief description and some ideas to keep in mind about each.



Tool #1: Visual Metaphors

At the heart of WhyTry is the visual metaphors that have been developed to facilitate understanding about a learning concept and mindset. These visuals are used to teach skills of resilience by connecting the abstract concept with a familiar and simple visual metaphor. Through the use of metaphors we are helping students at different levels of learner readiness and understanding access important ideas that can lead to the development of a resilience and a growth mindset. When learning to use visual metaphors focus on the following:

1. First - Learn to connect the key concept with the metaphor in your own words. Ask yourself, if I were to explain this image and it's deeper meaning to someone, what would I say?
 2. Second - Learn the prepared processing guide of the metaphor walkthrough. Align that with your own understanding of the metaphor. Practice explaining the metaphor in the sequence outlined in the processing guide.
 3. Third - Make the metaphor walkthrough lesson engaging with the addition of media and activities. The pre-built lessons do exactly that.
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Tool #2: Activities

Learning activities will include object lessons, teamwork games, competitive games, whole group scenarios and problem-solving, tricks and even engineering activities. All of these provide learning opportunities while simultaneously developing a group culture of engagement and trust. The benefits of activities are worth the time to prepare. You will ultimately use every activity to make connections to the learning concepts that you are teaching as well as tap into the experiential learning process. Use the processing questions provided in the activity instructions to help guide you in your discussion about the activity.

The Big 3 of Content & Competencies Continued



Tool #3: Videos and other Media

Our most common form of media are online videos that we watch together. These videos do a great job of introducing topics, solidifying understanding and creating relevance for students. Ultimately, you are using these videos to tell a story that relates to key concepts and objectives in our lessons. Other forms of media include music, picture books (sometimes digital versions), and other relevant forms of media you bring in. Tell a story with the media. Check out the **Tips & Tricks** section on **Using Video** and **Using Music** for pointers on how to do it effectively.

The Big 3 Facilitator Competencies:

Facilitator competencies are skills we develop and use in order to facilitate WhyTry lessons. The Big 3 competencies will impact your lessons more than anything else you can do. Think about them and incorporate the strategies we outline for each:



Competency #1: Framing

Framing is everything we do and say to prepare our students to engage with the content of the lesson. Effective framing is a great way to create buy-in of our material from your participants. We also use framing to help build context for understanding.

- Creating an emotional 'hook' for an activity to increase enthusiasm and engagement.
 - Communicate conviction, passion, enthusiasm and a strong belief in the principle being taught. Your own attitude toward what you do with students is infectious.
 - Personalize your lesson. Don't read a processing guide verbatim. Find ways to explain in your words, use your stories and examples. Bring in your personality.
 - Humor, wit, background knowledge, media and phrasing are all examples of framing that can be used for introducing any of the lesson tools.
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Competency #2: Processing

The key to creating relevance lies in our ability to connect the components of our lesson to the learning objectives we're teaching and ultimately connect them to the lives of our students. Effective Processing includes asking questions and discussing the components of our lesson to increase understanding and connect to learning objectives. Many times we provide processing questions for you in our processing guides for metaphor walkthroughs, activities and videos.

- Know the concepts and ideas you are trying to surface and keep them in mind
- Have points in mind you want to surface with your questions and listen for them
- Use answers to make the connections back to the concepts and ideas
- Refrain from explicitly stating what students should've learned.

The Big 3 of Content & Competencies Continued



Competency #3: Surrendering the One Up

Surrendering the One Up is a WhyTry concept that outlines the most important thing we can do to build relationships with students and help them feel value and worth. Ultimately it will help them learn the skills of resilience through your lessons. However you were trained on WhyTry, you went through a segment on what this means. There is also a section in the toolkit we recommend you regularly review. The section on Surrendering the One Up provides examples of what it looks like. However, keep a few things in mind:

- Surrendering the One Up is intentional. We don't simply hope these learning relationships will form. We are proactive in trying to create them through this principle.
- Surrendering the One Up is individual. While you may have established positive learning relationships with some or even most students; this requires an educator to recognize that each student perceives their own relationship with you in a certain way.
- Surrendering the One Up is ongoing. You don't simply try some activities or strategies on the first day of school for team building and getting-to-know-you, but its something you are consistently incorporating into your practice.
- Surrendering the One Up is unique. Every individual will require certain approaches which means there will be certain students that are more resistant. Some students will require very unique approaches. You never give up.

Section Three: Tips to Facilitate WhyTry Effectively

Introduction:

The following section outlines important tips beyond what you've already learned and read to help you be successful in implementing WhyTry with your students. In this section we will introduce six tips to help you with your own WhyTry lessons:

1. Creating a WhyTry environment
2. Using Video
3. Using Music
4. Running an Activity
5. Flexibility
6. Self-Assessment

Tips to Facilitate WhyTry Effectively Continued



Tip #1: Creating a WhyTry Environment

One of your primary objectives to begin is to create a WhyTry environment. This means you are purposefully establishing an environment where a student enters and knows that they are shifting from the rest of their day to WhyTry. You want your students to know that it is 'WhyTry' time. There are some simple things you can do to make it happen:

1. Always begin with something to get started. You can begin with a check-in, questions to answer, an activity, a video, a relationship-building activity, music and more. This routine is important because it helps warm your students up for the rest of your time together.
2. Establish a purpose for your group. Sometimes your students are mandated to do this and they may not want to be there. They may wear labels and feel like this class time is a part of that label or because of that label. You can ease that tension by establishing a reason for you all to be there together. Sometimes you can create that purpose collaboratively and other times you may want to simply state it for them.
3. In WhyTry we push to utilize Life Norms or Life Rules. Every rule you have in your WhyTry group goes beyond simply establishing the rule for the sake of school. Instead we discuss why that rule is important for life outside of school.



Tip #2: Using Video

Student engagement improves as we make our lesson plans dynamic and deliver them with generational relevance. Using video and other multimedia material is a great way to incorporate generational and culturally relevant examples of multimedia to connect it with the lesson. Follow these tips and tricks to utilize video effectively.

Preparing to use video:

- Watch each video before class
- Know what to say for each video (framing), refer to framing competency

Setting up a video (framing):

- Explain what to look for while watching
- Invite students to practice empathy (when applicable) by putting themselves in the shoes of the person in the clip.
- When necessary, use freeze frame to explain context, who people are, what led up to this, etc.
- Engage students with questions; e.g. "What would you guess happens here?"
- Use strategic pauses during video to ask additional questions

Debriefing a video (processing):

- Allow students to explain what happened in the video, don't do it for them.
- Ask questions that focus on key behaviors from the video
- Practice empathy by reflecting on how the people from the video may have felt.
- Reinforce principles and concepts of lesson
- Funnel questions from general to specific
- Allow students to make points, then add information as necessary to complete discussions.

Tips to Facilitate WhyTry Effectively Continued



Tip #3: Using Music

Creating optimal environments for our kids to learn the key concepts that we are teaching them can make a huge difference in student engagement. Using music for classroom effect and incorporating relevant examples of music to connect with the lesson concepts we are trying to teach is one of the best ways to do this. Consult the section in the toolkit on how to establish rules for using music. The following are different ways we use music:

Using music for effect:

- Play music as students come into your classroom or office. This can set the tone for the class. Upbeat music adds energy, soft music creates calm.
- Play thematic music as students come into your classroom or office. The song and its lyrics can be an informal introduction into your lesson. You can ask students if they can guess what you'll be discussing today based on the song or ask them what they think about the lyrics.
- Play music during activities. This generates enthusiasm and energy.
- Play music while you ask students to answer questions and discuss. This creates safety and increased engagement.
- Play music as students leave your room. It creates a memory that can surface later on in the week as they go about their life.
- Have songs queued up and ready to play at key moments to achieve desired effect (energize, introduce concept/theme, engage with humor, etc.)
- Have playlists organized for your class

Using music for learning:

- Create a class playlist of songs submitted by your students (preferably that coincides with learning themes or concepts).
- Choose a song and its lyrics as a response to journal prompts.
- Create a life sketch or tell your story with songs.
- In one on one settings, communicate using songs to express how someone is feeling about life or a situation.
- Ask: What would be the theme song for your life story.
- Analyze lyrics from mainstream songs and videos. What do they mean? What is this artist trying to communicate?
- Analyze lyrics from WhyTry songs and videos. What do they mean? What is this person trying to say?
- Create lyrics to music to express a message.

Tips to Facilitate WhyTry Effectively Continued



Tip #4: Running an Activity

Effective use of activities lies at the heart of what makes WhyTry work. Effective use includes learning how to successfully implement an activity and make it engaging for the students. Here are some tips:

- Be prepared with props, effective instructions, and processing questions
- Create appropriate space and room setup for any given activity (i.e. object lesson vs. movement activity)
- Select appropriate activities based on needs of the group and individuals within it.
- Be aware of and address safety concerns
- Be prepared to coach students as needed
- Effectively frame the activity (see framing) with clever setups and stories combined with enthusiasm
- Provide demonstrations when activity set-up/instructions are complicated
- Establish different roles in cases where students don't wish to participate
- Listen and observe during the activity – move around and make note of comments and behaviors of students to be used during processing
- Process the activity to directly relate it back to the principles of the lesson (see processing)



Tip #5: Flexibility

Our most skilled WhyTry users end up becoming experts in flexibility. Being flexible means you understand how to adapt the message and the approach to appeal to all students. When you are familiar enough with the material, you can make adjustments on the fly to best support student learning needs and build your own lessons using the Flexible Lesson Plan.



Tip #6: Self-Assessment

You will very quickly ask yourself the question, “Am I doing this right?” The answer is probably yes. The WhyTry Approach is about using lesson tools that appeal to a wide range of learning styles combined with skills to develop educator-student relationships for learning. If you are spending time in your WhyTry lessons doing those things--then you are doing WhyTry. Give yourself a break. It will take some time. However, as you do this, you will have experiences with your students that show you are making progress. They will say things and start to act differently, even if it's only during the WhyTry time to begin with. Then it will start to manifest in other areas of the students' lives. It is a fun journey and one we hope you enjoy.