

Stop, Look, Listen

A routine for clarifying claims and sources.

The routine follows a simple 3-step structure:

Stop: Be clear about the claim. Define your question from your list of facts and uncertainties.

Look: Find your sources. Where will you look? Consider obvious and non-obvious places.

Listen: Hear what the sources tell you with an open mind. Is it possible for your source to be biased and how does it affect your information?

PURPOSE

What kind of thinking does this routine encourage?

The Stop, Look, Listen routine helps students investigate truth claims and issues related to truth. It allows students to stand back and think about ways to obtain information when trying to find out about the truth of something. Students are encouraged to think critically about sources. This process helps students appreciate the deeper complexity of truth situations by addressing issues of bias and objectivity.

APPLICATION

When and where can I use it?

This routine invites students to think carefully about the process of initiating truth investigations. It can be used in any situation in which students need to find out more about a truth claim. It helps students step back and take a questioning stance in order to clarify a claim. Use the routine when you want students to be open minded and to think broadly about sources of information.

LAUNCH

What are some tips for starting and using this routine?

Begin by helping students to pin down a claim about a topic. Students may have a good idea about a question or claim they would like to investigate. Help them take stock of what they know by creating a list of facts and uncertainties around their claim. Students may need to redefine or restate their claim.

Once a clear claim has been identified, ask students what they can do to investigate it. Brainstorm source by encouraging students to think broadly about different kinds of information available to them. Consider having students make a mind map of sources that can provide information about their claim. Then, document students' ideas by creating a chart of identified sources, the perspectives of the source and potential biases they might represent. Display the chart on the wall and add comments as each source is investigated. Keep this chart accessible so students can return to it during the investigation of future truth claims. Track the instances or types of bias that students identify and use it as a way to further conversations about new situations in the classroom.

FACILITATION

This activity is recommended for the following learner age ranges:

- Elementary School
 - 30-60 minutes
 - Heavily facilitated by peer/teacher/caregiver
- Middle School
 - 30-60 minutes
 - Heavily facilitated by peer/teacher/caregiver
- High School
 - 30-60 minutes
 - Lightly facilitated by peer/teacher/caregiver

This thinking routine was developed as part of the Visible Thinking project at Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Explore the full PZ Thinking Routine Toolbox at pz.harvard.edu/thinking-routines.