

# How Else & Why

*A routine for cultivating a disposition to communicate across difference.*

1. <b>What</b> I want to say is...	Student makes a statement and explains intention
2. <b>How else</b> can I say this? & <b>Why</b> ?	Student considers intention, audience and situation to reframe (language, ton, body language)
3. <b>How else</b> can I say this? & <b>Why</b> ?	Student considers intention, audience and situation to reframe (language, ton, body language)
4. (Repeat question)	

### **Purpose: What kind of thinking does this routine encourage?**

To communicate appropriately in complex cultural, social or linguistic situations we must learn to adjust the ways in which we express ourselves. For example, we must adjust our register (e.g., academic vs. informal) to the degree of formality required by the context, we may adjust our word choice (illegal alien or person with undocumented migrant status) in consideration of another person's perspective or experience, we may adjust the stance we take (emotional proximity) to the ideas we communicate. Participating respectfully and effectively in discourse communities other than our own may sometimes require using local expressions, employing different languages or symbol systems, attending to body language and cultural norms of communication and personal space.

The purpose of this routine is to develop a disposition toward appropriate communication with diverse audiences whereby students understand (a) that they have communicative choices and (b) that intention, context and audience matter in communicating appropriately, especially across cultural, religious, economic or linguistic differences. Specifically, through multiple reflective iterations of a particular claim (a comment, story, question), the routine invites students to: consider content, audience, purpose and situation for communication (what, to whom, why and where), refine the use of symbols (verbal, visual, nonverbal) to find forms of expression appropriate for the context, and reflect about communication and miscommunication.

### **Application: When and where can I use it?**

The routine is broadly applicable to many communicative situations. These may include distinctly intercultural scenarios that are present in the curriculum such as in a story, a historical event, a conflict, a scientific finding. They may also include moments when students re-represent ideas or phenomena, as when producing graph in statistics, a poster design, an interpretation of a work of art. Communicative situations may also include regular classroom discussions or informal interactions in and outside of school. In selecting communicative situations for analysis you may prioritize provocations that present an opportunity to reflect about the complexities of dialog across difference and the broad repertoire of possible communicative choices. Examples of provocations include but are not limited to film excerpts, students' own writings, classroom dialog, works of art.

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# How Else & Why, cont'd

## **Launch: What are some tips for starting and using this routine?**

Priming students' minds for the use of this routine may involve calling their attention to the importance of *appropriate, effective and respectful* cultural interactions and the value of reflecting about how we communicate with one another, especially with people whose lives are different from our own. Students will need an initial understanding of intention, audience and situation as key to thinking about complex communication. They will also need to be aware of the variety of communicative means at their disposal (e.g., body, verbal, visual languages).

The phrase "how else can I/you say this and why?" Can be used with varying degrees of structure. In some cases, students may use the multiple iterations proposed by the routine to explore possible communicative choices in a given scenario and select the one they prefer. Alternatively, the simple question "How else can I/you say this and why?" may also stand alone and become a frequent occurrence in the classroom, one that is used by teachers and students to polish the quality of communication. This informal use of the routine typically does not require multiple iterations. In guiding students through this routine, you may consider pairing students up for feedback. Peers can help students construct a concrete sense of audience.

It is important to encourage students to consider speakers' intention, audience and context when they begin to revise the claims under study. Without doing so, the routine risks inviting students to repeat less effective forms of communication or reinforce communication misconceptions. Regardless of the topics or contexts in which the routine is used, it is important that students offer an explicit rationale for their communicative choices, as students' explanations will reveal their current understanding of communicative demands. As with all global thinking routines, students' responses are best seen as the beginning, rather than the end, of a conversation that will enable teachers and peers to offer perspectives and enrich communicative capacities.

## **What is Global Competence?**

Global competence can be defined as the capacity and disposition to understand and act on issues of global significance (Boix Mansilla & Jackson 2011). Globally competent students prepare for complex societies and a global economy by learning how to investigate the world beyond their immediate environment, framing and making sense of significant issues. How do migrant populations adapt to their new places of work and living? What tools do governments have to promote economic development and eradicate extreme poverty? What is an ecosystem and how do different ecosystems around the world work? Globally competent students also learn to recognize their own and others' perspectives, articulating and explaining such perspectives thoughtfully, empathically and respectfully. Globally competent students can communicate across differences, bridging cultural, linguistic, economic and religious divides – two additional capacities that are especially important to today's fragmented and interconnected societies. Most importantly, in order to be prepared to participate and work in today's world students, must learn to take responsible action. They need to learn to identify opportunities for productive action to develop and carry out informed plans. Prepared students, this framework suggests, view themselves as informed, thoughtful, compassionate and effective citizens and workers in changing times (Boix Mansilla & Jackson 2011).

Global competence is cast as a capacity to understand – meaning, broadly speaking, to use disciplinary concepts, theories, ideas, methods or findings in novel situations, to solve problems, produce explanations, create products or interpret phenomena in novel ways (Boix Mansilla & Gardner 1999). It focuses on issues of global significance and action to improve conditions; learning must be visibly relevant to students and the world. When significance is considered, global competence curricula becomes a call for authenticity, for carefully looking to the contemporary world for topics that matter most to examine (Perkins 2015).

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Finally, “global competence” as a disposition speaks of student ownership and long-lasting transformation. Thinking dispositions, Project Zero researchers have proposed, involve the ability to think with information, the sensitivity to opportunities in the real world to do that, and the inclination to do so over time (Perkins et al 1993, Tishman et al 1993). Dispositions are about the “residuals” of learning beyond formal contexts (Ritchhart 2014); they are about the “kind of person” a student will become (Boix Mansilla & Gardner 2000). Broadly considered, global competence dispositions include:

- A disposition to inquire about the world (for example, engaging with questions of significance, exploring local-global connections, and seeking information beyond familiar environments, describing, explaining and developing a position about the world).
- A disposition to understand multiple perspectives--others' and their own (for example, considering cultural contexts, resisting stereotypes, and valuing our shared human dignity-- especially as students interact with others whose paths differ greatly from their own).
- A disposition toward respectful dialog (communicating across differences listening generously, sharing courageously, openly and appropriately given their audience and context).
- A disposition toward taking responsible action (being inclined to see and frame opportunities to improve conditions, and collaborating with others, and mobilize themselves to act).

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