The Deeper Learning Adjustment Protocol

## What is this protocol for?

The Deeper Learning Adjustment Protocol is a protocol designed to guide teams of educators in **strengthening existing curricular materials at the unit level.**

In this protocol, educators focus attention on components of the unit that can be adapted to enhance the student learning experience and increase opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery, identity, and creativity.

In making these adjustments, educators can cultivate Deeper Learning by engaging students with grade-level work that is relevant, real-world, and interactive.

## When should educators use this protocol?

This protocol can be completed prior to or after facilitating a unit. When used prior to facilitation, more time may be dedicated to unpacking the unit materials prior to brainstorming or making adjustments. When used following facilitation, educators can incorporate their reflections on the impact of the unit materials to inform adjustments. It can be used with any curriculum; those educators using curriculum that has been rated as “Meets Expectations” by [CURATE](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/curate/default.html) or [EdReports](https://www.edreports.org/) may find that their adjustments require fewer adjustments related to grade-level standards alignment. This protocol is best used as a team.

## What is in this protocol?

There are three stages in the Deeper Learning Adjustment Protocol in addition to recommended prework. The below times are suggested and may vary based on individual context, length of unit, and other factors.



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| [*Prework*](#_bookmark0) | *60m* | Facilitators establish areas of focus for the team. Educators individually review the unit materials, reflect on them using [an equity lens,](#_bookmark4) and consider to what extent the unit promotes [grade-level work that is relevant, real-world, and](#_bookmark5) [interactive.](#_bookmark5) |
| [*Stage One*](#_bookmark1)  *Key Observations and Trends* | *50m* | Facilitators guide their team through a reflection of their prework, identifying key observations from each individual and trends across the team. |
| [*Stage Two*](#_bookmark2) *Generating Adjustments* | *40m* | Educators brainstorm and share ideas for ways to bring the unit closer to Deeper Learning. Facilitators guide the team to identify the adjustments that would have the greatest impact on key areas of growth for the unit. |
| [*Stage Three*](#_bookmark3)  *Post-Adjustment Debrief* | *30m* | After the unit has been adjusted, educators review the unit and identify any next. Facilitators guide the team in reflecting on their experience with the protocol. |

**Protocol Prework**

For the Deeper Learning Adjustment Protocol, it is encouraged that all team members complete the prework individually and asynchronously prior to Stage One. To focus educators’ efforts in the protocol, a few steps of prework specific to the protocol facilitator have been included below.

We create Deeper Learning experiences for our students by ensuring that their work is grounded in Purpose, engages them with a diverse array of perspectives, *and* results in meaningful Products.

As you consider which Indicators are most important for your team to discuss, you might select them based on:

* Presence of grade-level standards in the existing unit materials
* Highest leverage areas of growth for the unit within the overall scope and sequence of the curriculum
* Alignment to your school’s Instructional Focus
* Ongoing areas of growth based on observation data
* Trends identified in your school’s assessment data

*Tell us how you are using the tool --* [*Share which Indicators your team is using!*](https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7373461/Indicator-Tracker-Adjustment-Protocol)

## Facilitator Steps:

1. Select 2-4 key Indicators from the Deeper Learning Guidance Tool for your team to focus on during the protocol.
2. If necessary, work with the educator(s) facilitating the unit to map out the lesson-level materials in the unit to determine a coherent and developmental sequence of learning experiences and assessments.
3. Determine when and how your team will complete each stage of the protocol; some of the stages can be completed asynchronously.

## Team Prework Instructions:

1. Read through the unit materials; if your team is completing this protocol after facilitating the unit, you may also find it helpful to review any notes, data, or student work from the unit as well.
2. Complete the individual prework by:
   1. responding to the Pause for Equity questions and
   2. providing a rating for each of the 2-4 Deeper Learning Indicators, selected by your facilitator for this protocol, by examining the unit materials for evidence of each Indicator’s look-fors.

**Stage One – Key Observations and Trends**

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| **Protocol Steps** | **Instructions** | **Tips and Recommendations** |
| *Warm Welcome (0 – 10)*   * Norm on expectations for process and outcomes * Establish shared foundation of knowledge | 1. Begin with a warm welcome and by reminding your team of any pre-existing norms or goals (e.g., the school’s instructional focus). 2. Share a brief summary of the unit and any additional helpful context, such as the learning arc, student demographics, etc. 3. Have everyone take a few moments to review their prework, both the [Pause for Equity](#_bookmark4) and their [Indicator ratings.](#_bookmark5) | * Identify a notetaker and timekeeper for the conversation. |
| *Pause for Equity (10 – 35)*   * Identify bright spots, blind spots, and biases * Center work in the student experience | 1. Have each member of the team share a response to: “What about your responses to the Pause for Equity surprised you or stood out to you? Why?” 2. Guide your team through a discussion of the Pause for Equity. You might choose to discuss the questions from the prework itself, or you may find it useful to explore what changes you might have to make to ensure that…    * Grade-level standards and WIDA ELD standards are central to this unit    * The unit recognizes, centers, and affirms diverse perspectives and experiences    * The unit increases students’ capacity as independent learners | * Focus the conversation on the section of the Pause for Equity where you feel the conversation might be the most rich, whether that’s what people were most surprised by or where you feel your team could dig more deeply. |

## Protocol Note:

In planning for deeper learning, it is important that units are **aligned to grade-level standards** that promotes the key concepts, ideas, skills, and thinking for that discipline(s). Materials at the unit and/or lesson level may list out standards. However, it is imperative to critically review the instructional materials in full to assess the extent to which the task and activities within the unit meaningfully engage all students at the rigor of the grade-level standards and in a manner **that does not reinforce inequities.** Based on the unit’s alignment to grade-level standards, the team should determine if the chosen unit is the right choice to move forward prior to beginning Stage Two. For example, if the unit is not grade-level appropriate or standards aligned, low rigor, and/or incoherent with the learning of the course, it might not be the right unit to adjust or the right unit for students to experience. If that is the case, consider beginning with a different unit that is more aligned to the standards. If no other unit yet exists, it is still possible to complete the protocol, though the adjustments will take more time to address the areas of standards alignment.

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| *Indicator Calibrations*  (35 – 50)   * Identify areas of alignment and difference across the team | 1. Have each member of the team share [their initial](#_bookmark5) [ratings](#_bookmark5) for the 2-4 Indicators your team is focusing on for this protocol. 2. Have your team notice areas of alignment and areas of difference in your ratings of the Indicators.    * If your team’s ratings are not, spend time discussing the Indicator(s) where your ratings are the least aligned. Encourage educators to connect their reasoning directly to evidence in the unit materials and to language from [the](https://www.doe.mass.edu/kaleidoscope/dl-guidance-tool.docx) [Deeper Learning Guidance Tool.](https://www.doe.mass.edu/kaleidoscope/dl-guidance-tool.docx) | * Many educators begin to brainstorm ideas for improving the presence/quality of the Indicators at this time. Capture these ideas in a parking lot for later discussion and encourage your team to focus on calibration for this stage. |

**Stage Two – Generating Adjustments**

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| **Protocol Steps** | **Instructions** | **Tips and Recommendations** |
| *Brainstorm Adjustments (50 –75 or async.)*   * Shift team from a reflective mindset to a creative mindset | 1. Individually or in pairs, have educators [brainstorm](#_bookmark6) [possible adjustments](#_bookmark6) to the unit that would improve the presence and/or quality of the 2-4 Indicators selected for this protocol. Adjustment ideas might be sourced from the Pause for Equity reflections, Indicator Calibrations, the educators’ experiences with the unit, etc. Share a brief summary of the unit and any additional helpful context, such as the learning arc, student demographics, etc. 2. Have your team share possible ideas for adjustment with one another and ask one another clarifying questions about their proposals. | * Brainstorming can be completed synchronously or asynchronously. * If educators have brainstormed multiple adjustment ideas, have them identify one to share with the team that they believe is highest-leverage. |
| *Prioritize Adjustments (75 – 90)*   * Identify highest- leverage adjustments | 1. Guide the team towards consensus on the 2-3 highest leverage adjustments, considering both the impact and effort associated with each adjustment idea as criteria in your team’s decision-making process. 2. Identify a team member(s) who will complete the adjustments and share the revised unit with the team prior to the next stage of the protocol. | * Educators are often drawn to the ideas that are most exciting. Remind your team that often the smallest changes to our daily routines can have the biggest impact. |

**Stage Three – Post-Adjustment Debrief**

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| **Protocol Steps** | **Instructions** | **Tips and Recommendations** |
| *Adjustment Review (90 – 110 or async.)*   * Assess adjusted materials to see whether or not the intended impact is present * Identify any unintended consequences as a result of the adjustments | 1. Have the team [review the adjustments](#_bookmark7) made to the unit and consider whether or not they have had the intended impact on the materials. 2. Guide your team through a discussion of the following prompts, encouraging educators to connect their reasoning directly to evidence in the unit materials and to language from [the Deeper](https://www.doe.mass.edu/kaleidoscope/dl-guidance-tool.docx) [Learning Guidance Tool](https://www.doe.mass.edu/kaleidoscope/dl-guidance-tool.docx).:    * “What are some glows in these adjustments?”    * “What questions do you have about these adjustments?”    * “Do these adjustments improve the presence/quality of the selected Indicators and the Deeper Learning Student Outcomes? If so, how? If not, what other adjustments are necessary?”    * “Do we want to raise any flags about possible unintended outcomes from these adjustments?” | * Reviewing can be completed synchronously or asynchronously. * Following discussion, your team might determine that additional adjustments need to be made to the. If that is the case, be sure to assign an owner and deadline for each deliverable. |
| *Closing and Reflection*  (110 – 120) | 1. Guide your team through a discussion of the following prompts:    * “How well did this process work? If relevant, how have we improved since the last time we used this protocol?”    * “What about this process helped you notice and learn interesting things?”    * “How could this process be improved?” | * Share your reflections on the protocol experience through [our](https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7348948/Deeper-Learning-Protocols-Feedback-Ongoing) [feedback survey.](https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7348948/Deeper-Learning-Protocols-Feedback-Ongoing) |

**Appendix: Protocol Resources**

The following resources are available to accompany the Deeper Learning Adjustment Protocol.

1. [Pause for Equity](#_bookmark4)
2. [Deeper Learning Indicator Ratings](#_bookmark5)
3. [Adjustment Brainstorming Note Catcher](#_bookmark6)
4. [Adjustment Review Note Catcher](#_bookmark7)

# Pause for Equity (Adjustment Protocol)

#### (Recommended Prework)

**Equity** includes creating the conditions so that students can master the grade-level standards and practices (**mastery**) in a way that builds their sense of who they can be in the world (**identity**) as they become independent learners (**creativity**).

*Instructions: Read through the resources for the unit and respond to each of the following prompts.*

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| **Pause for Equity Questions** | |
| Mastery | * What are the core, [grade-level (MA) standards](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html) to which this unit (or project) is aligned? What about the [WIDA ELD standards](https://wida.wisc.edu/teach/standards/eld)? |
| * What are the key concepts, ideas, skills, language features, and thinking named in these standards? |
| * To what extent does the unit require students to develop and apply these key concepts, ideas, skills and thinking? |
| Identity | * As the adjuster for this unit, how might my identity influence my perception of the instructional materials? |
| * How does the unit (or project) create windows (I see into the lives of others), mirrors (seeing myself reflected), and/or doors (ability to enter into new spaces) for my students?   *Note: When answering this prompt, it may be helpful to explore resources on complex identities and stereotype threat.* |
| * In the content and instructional materials, whose story or experience is centered/being told? Whose voice is telling of the story or shaping the narrative within the unit (or project)? What implicit and explicit messages are being communicated as a result? |
| Creativity | * What opportunities are there for students to drive their own learning and ask their own questions? What opportunities are there for students to read, write, speak, and listen? |
| * Where in the unit (or project) are students tasked with analyzing the content of the instructional materials? |
| * To what degree are students responsible for monitoring the quality of their own work as well as iterating and/or revising their work? |
| **A note about voice and narrative:**  There are some content areas where it may not feel immediately apparent whose voice is shaping the story or what narrative is being told. However, this does not mean that this question is inapplicable for those content areas. Consider the following examples:   * Math: Consider who collected the data when reviewing graphs and data and whether bias may have influenced what data was collected, how it was collected, etc. * Science: Consider how different groups (i.e. women and people of color) are represented in the presentation of concepts, theories, and discoveries, and whether their contributions are elevated. * Music: Consider which types of artists are featured and the ways we talk about the stories behind their music. * Physical Education or Health: Consider the stories of athletes and experts that are being highlighted – how are the different individuals presented? When engaging in team sports, how are students assigned positions? | |

**Deeper Learning Indicator Ratings**

#### (Recommended Prework)

*Instructions: Take time to* [*review the description*](https://www.doe.mass.edu/kaleidoscope/dl-guidance-tool.docx) *and look-fors for each of the 2-4 Indicators selected by your facilitator for the protocol. Then, provide a rating for each Indicator as it appears in the unit materials. Use the following ratings:*

* + ***High:*** *All of the criteria for the look-fors is present and is high-quality.*
  + ***Moderate:*** *All of the criteria for the look-fors is present but is of variable quality.*
  + ***Low:*** *Some of the criteria for the look-fors is present and is of variable quality.*
  + ***Absent****: None of the criteria for the look-fors is present.*

*As you work, be sure to capture your thinking in a way that makes it easy for you to remember your reasoning and questions during your team’s discussion.*

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|  | | **Indicator** | **Rating**  **(Absent, Low, Moderate, High)** |  | | **Indicator** | **Rating**  **(Absent, Low, Moderate, High)** |
| **Purpose** | **Instructional Materials** | Authentic Context |  | **Perspectives** | **Pedagogy** | Critical Analysis |  |
| Disciplinary Thinking |  | Discourse |  |
| Student Ownership |  | **Products** | **Instructional Materials** | Meaningful Work |  |
| **Pedagogy** | Relevant Framing |  | Assessments |  |
| Student Driven |  | Access for All |  |
| **Perspectives** | **Instructional Materials** | Critical and Diverse Resources |  | **Pedagogy** | Rapid Feedback |  |
| Iteration and Revision |  | Just-in-Time Scaffolding |  |

**Adjustment Brainstorming Note Catcher**

(Protocol Resource – Stage 2)

*Instructions: Brainstorm possible adjustments to make to this unit, synthesizing your ideas from the prework and your team’s discussion in Stage 1.*

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| We might make the following adjustments to the resources for the unit: | | |
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| This adjustment addresses the Indicator(s) of… | |  |
| This adjustment improves the presence and quality of this Indicator’s look-fors by… |  | |
| This adjustment improves all students’ opportunities to develop Mastery, Identity, and/or Creativity by… |  | |
| We might make the following adjustments to the resources for the unit: | | |
|  | | |
| This adjustment addresses the Indicator(s) of… | |  |
| This adjustment improves the presence and quality of this Indicator’s look-fors by… |  | |
| This adjustment improves all students’ opportunities to develop Mastery, Identity, and/or Creativity by… |  | |

**Adjustment Review Note Catcher**

(Protocol Resource – Stage 3)

*Instructions: Review the adjusted materials and respond to each of the following prompts.*

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| What are some glows in these adjustments? |  |
| What questions do I have about these adjustments? |  |
| Do these adjustments have their intended impact?   * Do they improve access to Mastery, Identity, and Creativity for all learners? * Do they improve the presence and quality of our 2-4 Indicators? |  |
| Do these adjustments have any unintended impacts that we might want to address prior to facilitation? |  |