



3-2-1 BRIDGE

"We need to enter the conversation willing to be wrong, willing to admit the limits of our own knowledge, willing to reconsider our evidence, sources, and premises."

—Patricia Roberts-Miller

OVERVIEW

Students will reflect on their initial responses to a topic, the knowledge they gained after some instruction, and draw connections between the two.

PLANNING FOR IT

WHEN YOU MIGHT USE THIS PRACTICE

- When students are developing understanding of a new concept over time
- To encourage the practice of intellectual humility while learning

TIME REQUIRED

- ≤ 10 minutes over 2 times

LEVEL

- PreK/Lower Elementary
- Upper Elementary
- Middle School
- High School
- College

MATERIALS

- Paper
- Pencil

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Students will:

- Reflect on and openly share how their understanding changed over time
- Listen to one another

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS

- [Making Practices Culturally Responsive](#)
- [Adapting Practices for Students with Special Needs](#)
- [Making Classrooms and Schools Trauma-Informed and Healing-Centered](#)

SEL COMPETENCIES

- Self Awareness

HOW TO DO IT

REFLECTION BEFORE THE PRACTICE

Take a moment to reflect on a topic you recently learned more about. What thoughts did you have prior to obtaining more information? What questions did you have? In what ways did the knowledge you gained change your thoughts? What new questions do you have?

INSTRUCTIONS

Intellectual humility requires that students acknowledge the limits of their own understanding. The following exercise helps students practice recognizing and acknowledging such limits.

- Announce the topic that students will learn about in the current lesson or over the course of several lessons.
- Ask students to write down 3 thoughts/ideas that come to mind, along with 2 questions they have, and 1 metaphor/simile about the topic.
 - For instance, if the topic is “democracy,” then students should write down 3 thoughts, 2 questions, and 1 metaphor.
 - Let students know that it is okay if they do not know much about the topic. They should simply focus on what comes to mind, and not worry about whether it is right or wrong.
- Have students complete the same 3 - 2 - 1 writing exercise after completing the lesson or series of lessons on the topic.
 - For example, students might read an article, watch a video, or engage in an activity having to do with democracy. Note that provocative experiences that push students’ thinking in new directions are best.
 - After the experience, students complete another 3, 2, 1.
- In pairs, have students take turns sharing their initial thoughts as well as their new thoughts. Have students bridge their first responses with second by discussing how and why their thinking shifted.

- Remind students that their initial thinking is not right or wrong, it is just a starting point. New experiences take our thinking in new directions.

REFLECTION AFTER THE PRACTICE

- Did you notice any changes in how students engage with new material?
- How did students respond to acknowledging their initial thoughts?
- How might continuing this practice help shape the learning environment?

THE RESEARCH BEHIND THE PRACTICE

EVIDENCE THAT IT WORKS

[Research](#) suggests that humble children spend more time noticing and reflecting on errors made, which can help them understand the areas in which they need to grow.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

[Intellectually humble](#) individuals are not afraid to acknowledge when they do not know something, and instead they ask questions when they do not understand. Furthermore, [intellectual humility](#) is related to a greater willingness to hear others perspectives on a topic.

Intellectual humility allows students to engage more deeply with material and with each other. Instead of trying to pretend they know everything or refusing to listen to each others' perspectives, intellectual humility helps create a safe space for students to learn and to challenge each other's perspectives in a respectful manner.

SOURCE

The Compass Points thinking routine was developed by [Project Zero](#), a research center at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.