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ABSTRACT

Guidelines for facilitation of a teacher workshop on participative decision making, with a focus on the development of a school improvement plan based on consensus, are offered in this manual. Session topics include: perceptions, creativity, brainstorming, consensus building, and action planning. The introductory section defines workshop goals. The perceptions section uses activities to introduce the concept of differences between individual's perceptions, and the brainstorming session presents basic tenets of group behavior and initiates the identification of school needs. The cooperative negotiation process is learned in the consensus building session, and writing objectives to meet shared goals is presented in the action plan unit. Each discussion section includes group activities and exercises, with guidelines for the workshop facilitator regarding preparation, purpose of the activity, and recommendations. Appendices present background information on participative decision making and a sample workshop evaluation form. Transparencies are also included. (LMI)

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TEACHERS' ASPIRATIONS FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT:

A Participatory Decision-Making Workshop

Facilitator's Manual

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Rural Education Initiative

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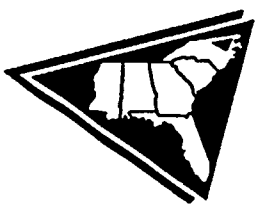
Teachers' Aspirations for School Improvement:

A Participatory Decision-Making Workshop

Facilitator's Manual

Southeastern Educational Improvement Laboratory
Rural Education Initiative
Research Triangle Park, North Carolina
Spring 1990



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The Southeastern Educational Improvement Laboratory

The Southeastern Educational Improvement Laboratory is a not-for-profit organization established in 1985. A majority of the Lab's funds are appropriated by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education.

As one of nine regional educational laboratories, the Southeast Lab works with and through state and intermediate educational agencies and organizations to stimulate and support research-based improvements in elementary and secondary education. The Lab provides information, training, assistance, and support to educators, policymakers, and others in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

The Southeast Lab's programs work to:

- Improve math skills of students.
- Improve writing skills of students.
- Strengthen leadership skills of educators.
- Improve teacher recruitment and retention.
- Identify and encourage the development of effective dropout prevention programs.
- Provide information to policymakers.
- Enhance learning opportunities for students in rural schools.
- Coordinate a multistate instructional software evaluation project, SEED (Software Evaluation Exchange and Dissemination).

Within program areas determined by regional needs sensing, Lab staff select strategies to provide educators and policymakers in the Southeast with the best service possible. To maximize the region's limited resources, the Lab:

- Gathers and disseminates information on emerging educational issues and topics.
- Builds and enhances state and regional networks.
- Sponsors skill-building workshops.
- Develops programs and materials for sharing across the region.

Directing the organization is a 24-member board of directors that includes teachers, parents, business-industry representatives, legislators, school administrators, representatives of intermediate service organizations, private and public school officials, school board members, representatives of institutions of higher education, and the region's six chief state school officers. Further direction for the Lab's operations is provided by regional program advisory committees.

Southeastern Educational Improvement Laboratory

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Welcome

One of today's promising approaches in education is for the teaching staff of a school to discuss frustrations openly and to think creatively about ways that they can deal with problems.

This manual has been developed so that you, the facilitator, can successfully conduct ***Teachers' Aspirations for School Improvement: A Participatory Decision-Making Workshop.*** It contains information and materials for your convenience. In addition, you will find general information about participatory decision making in Appendix A and helpful hints in each section of the manual. As a facilitator, you will be active in helping teachers make their schools better at providing a quality education for rural students.

The material has been organized in the manner we have found to be most successful. Blank pages have been provided in each section for your notes as you read through the manual and prepare to conduct the workshop. Please make this workshop your own, replacing our activities, if you like, with other appropriate examples and exercises that convey similar content.

Included at the end of this manual are transparencies for use in conducting the workshop, as well as materials to be duplicated for participants. You also may copy any other pages from the manual that might enhance your presentation and the participants' understanding. **Make additional transparencies and participants' materials as necessary.**

We have developed a two-part training videotape. The first part of the tape provides an overview. The second part depicts the decision-making process as it occurred at one of our test sites. The videotape shows how one school staff, using the information within the manual, came to consensus about improving their school.

If you have questions or suggestions about the workshop or manual or would like to obtain a copy of the videotape, please contact the Southeastern Educational Improvement Laboratory's Rural Education Initiative. Within North Carolina, phone 919-549-8216: outside North Carolina, use our toll-free number, 800-237-4829.

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Teachers' Aspirations for School Improvement: A Participatory Decision-Making Workshop

Background Information

We hope that this workshop will stimulate you to think creatively about the challenges you face on the job. We want teachers to feel that they have a say in what goes on in the school—that they really can make some changes that result in improvement. To do this, we are encouraging discussion and use of problem-solving skills. The result, we hope, will be the development of a plan for school improvement in which you have ownership.

This workshop was developed to assist in conducting sessions that facilitate teacher participation in the school improvement planning process at rural schools served by the Lab's Rural Education Initiative. It provides a process that allows faculties and administrators to plan school improvements in a positive way. This manual reflects what we have found to be successful. If the workshop is presented as we suggest, consensus should be reached by the group.

Teachers participating in the workshop define their school's needs, brainstorm, and design a plan for implementation. Ideas are generated, developed, and implemented by the participants. The key to the workshop is letting the faculty "own" the plan by identifying their needs and putting their solutions into practice.

Workshop Goals

1. **To promote participatory decision making by teachers and school administrators.**
2. **To generate positive discussion about the school and student learning.**
3. **To inspire teachers to increase their sense of importance and expertise.**
4. **To develop a school improvement plan created and supported by school staff.**

Overview

Typically, this workshop has been conducted in two consecutive full-day sessions. The workshop includes: **Introduction, Perceptions, Creativity, Brainstorming, Consensus Building, Action Plan,** and **Review and Conclusion.**

The **Introduction** section provides an overview of the workshop, defines goals, and gives participants a chance to share their hopes for the school and their classrooms. The **Perceptions** section introduces, through activities, the concept that people perceive things differently. The section on **Creativity** encourages creative problem solving.

The **Brainstorming** section introduces basic group rules and opens the process of identifying school needs. In **Consensus Building,** participants learn the process of reaching agreement as a group. The next section of the workshop focuses on the preparation of an **Action Plan.** Participants write an action plan that includes activities, a time line, the names of the person(s) responsible for the activity, the outcome of the activity, and the possible resources available to the school.

The **Review and Conclusion** recaps the participatory decision-making process and encourages the participants to repeat the process.

Appendix A presents background material on participatory decision making, for general information. A sample evaluation form is in **Appendix B**; use it if you are doing several workshops and want feedback on your presentation.

Additionally, we are providing transparencies to help you conduct the workshop and materials to duplicate for distribution to participants. Do not be limited by our suggestions. Feel free to copy any page from this manual for your workshop. Adapt the workshop to fit your own situation.

On the next page you will find the objectives for each section of the workshop. This is a quick way to show you **why** the parts of the workshop exist. The manual and workshop emphasize consensus building in the production and implementation of school improvement plans.

Read the entire manual carefully, and try the examples before conducting the workshop. In two sections, you have a choice of exercises. Use the ones that appeal to you and best fit your group. Experiment, and take notes as you go. Your experience and expertise will help make the workshop a success. Good luck!

Objectives of the Workshop

Introduction

1. Establish the tone of the workshop.
2. Introduce the process of participatory decision making.
3. Identify goals for the workshop.
4. Introduce participants. Have them share some of their aspirations for the school.

Perceptions

1. Help participants realize that things are not always as they appear.
2. Introduce the concept that people perceive things differently.

Creativity

1. Generate creative solutions to problems.
2. Initiate the dynamics of creative thinking.
3. Explore problem-solving techniques.

Brainstorming

1. Demonstrate that a group of people generates more ideas than an individual.
2. Review the process and guidelines for brainstorming.
3. Generate a list of needed school improvements through the brainstorming process.
4. Promote problem-solving techniques through the brainstorming process.

Consensus Building

1. Review the process and the guidelines for building consensus.
2. Promote group problem-solving techniques through the consensus-building process.
3. Identify **one area** of school improvement for direct action through the use of the consensus-building process.
4. Identify constraints associated with the implementation of the idea.

Action Plan

1. Develop activities needed to implement successfully the action plan for school improvement.
2. Identify resources needed to implement successfully these activities.
3. Establish a time line for implementation.
4. Identify the outcomes of the activities.
5. Write a completed action plan for school improvement.
6. Create a school improvement notebook for documentation and as a resource for other schools.

Review and Conclusion

1. Review the process of participatory decision making.
2. Encourage participants to use the process again for school improvement.

Organization of the Workshop

When you are organizing your workshop, consider the following suggestions that we have found to be successful:

Length: The workshop was developed to be held in two consecutive full-day sessions. A sample agenda is given at the end of this section. Adapt this to your setting and time constraints.

Number of Participants: Successful workshops have included from as few as 10 people to more than 50. Note: It is important to have enough participants to stimulate ideas on a range of topics and perspectives, but the group should remain small enough for everyone to be able to contribute to the planning process.

Participants: This workshop is designed for teachers and school administrators. Because these professionals are the ones working directly with the students daily, they know how to best meet their school's and students' needs. There may be other individuals in the community interested in your school improvement plan. Involve parents, business leaders, or other concerned citizens, if you like.

Format: This workshop uses immediate involvement of the school professionals in the participatory decision-making process. Many of the activities will require regrouping of the participants. In this manual, we use "individual" to mean alone, "small group" to represent six or fewer people, and "whole group" to refer to the entire group of participants.

Components: There are seven major components to this workshop:

- Introduction
- Perceptions
- Creativity
- Brainstorming
- Consensus Building
- Action Plan
- Review and Conclusion

Tone: Participants need to feel comfortable in suggesting school improvement openly. The sections Introduction, Perceptions, and Creativity will help to establish the tone through enjoyable activities.

Commitment: Involvement in this workshop requires the commitment of the entire school. The school staff must be willing to devote the time and energy required if they are going to be successful with their project.

The Role of the Facilitator

The facilitator's role is to draw out the best ideas from the group, to stimulate their creative thinking, and to encourage approaches that have not been tried at the school. The facilitator must guide the participants through the workshop without interjecting his/her ideas and take

a leadership role only when presenting information, giving directions for activities, and keeping participants on task.

The Role of the School Administrator

The school administrator must be open to staff input and confident that the faculty will determine productive ways to improve a common problem area. His/her cooperation and support are vital to the success of this workshop.

Although the school administrator is encouraged strongly to participate in the workshop, he/she must be careful not to dominate the setting. As a participant of the workshop, the school administrator will learn about his/her staff's strengths and their concerns for the school, as well as their suggested solutions. It is important for the teachers to know that they have the support and encouragement of the administration.

The Role of the Participants

The participants' role is to be active in the workshop. Participants will generate, develop, and implement a school improvement plan. Everyone's views and opinions are valuable. The group's decision may center ultimately around a suggestion from any one of the participants.

The Videotape

The two-part videotape serves a number of functions. It presents an overview of the workshop and footage of the workshop being conducted.

The first part (about six and a half minutes) is an overview of the workshop. The overview provides insights into the value of the participatory decision-making process and encourages participants to become involved in the process. It is suggested that one use the overview portion of the videotape with the Introduction section of the workshop.

The facilitator must read the entire manual before viewing the second part of the videotape (approximately 30 minutes), which provides basic information on each section of the workshop and footage of the workshop being conducted. Notice that during the workshop, the facilitator tries to guide the activities and then turn the participatory decision-making process over to the participants. This part of the videotape has START and STOP segments, which allow the facilitator to study corresponding sections of the manual, making notes as necessary.

We would like to thank the staff of Warren County Schools in Warrenton, NC, for allowing us to film in their schools.

Materials and Equipment Needed for the Workshop

The materials for duplication are provided in the back of this manual. Feel free to reproduce and distribute other pages of the manual to the workshop participants.

Workshop transparencies also are provided. The transparencies are copies of some of the participants' materials, as well as additional materials that can be used throughout the workshop. A minimum number of these have been provided. Feel free to copy other pages from the manual for use as transparencies.

The following is a list of materials needed to conduct the workshop:

participant packets
workshop transparencies
clear transparencies
markers for transparencies
name tags
pack of broad-tip markers, multicolored
rulers
crayons for each participant in red, green, blue, and black
pens
pencils
masking tape
chart paper or easel pad
paper, 8½ x 11 inches
certificates

For this workshop, participants will need paper and pencil.

The following is a list of equipment needed to conduct the workshop:

overhead projector
projection screen
OPTIONAL: VCR and monitor—1/2-inch VHS format (for use with the videotape)

* A sign-in sheet is provided on the next page for your record keeping. Some school systems provide similar forms.

At the bottom of pages that may be used as transparencies, in addition to those in the back, you will find the symbol ☆.

Sign-In Sheet

PLEASE PRINT

Name of School _____

Date of Workshop _____

Name	Grade/Subject(s)	Other Information

Sample Agenda

Day 1

Session One:	Introduction	1 hour, 15 minutes
Session Two:	Perceptions	45 minutes
Break		15 minutes
Session Three:	Creativity	1 hour
Session Four:	Brainstorming Through Activity 5-B	45 minutes
Lunch		1 hour, 15 minutes
Session Four:	Brainstorming (cont.) Activity 5-C	45 minutes
Session Five:	Consensus Building Activities 6-A and 6-B	1 hour

Day 2

Review		30 minutes
Session Five:	Consensus Building (cont.) Activity 6-C and begin 6-D	1 hour, 45 minutes
Break		15 minutes
Session Five:	Consensus Building (cont.) Finish Activity 6-D	45 minutes
Session Six:	Action Plan	1 hour
Lunch		1 hour, 15 minutes
Session Six:	Action Plan (cont.)	1 hour, 15 minutes
Session Seven:	Review and Conclusion Evaluation (optional)	30 minutes

Facilitator's Notes

Summary of main points from General Information:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

This part will set the tone for the workshop. It provides an overview of the workshop, outlining the goals and introducing the concept of participatory decision making. You may choose to play the first six-minute segment of the videotape for the participants. After you have presented the overview, using the "Building a House" example or a similar analogy, have the participants complete the activity for this section (see page 2-4). Then, ask them to introduce themselves and share a few of their aspirations for the school. Sum up some of the basic areas for improvement identified by the group.

Purpose:

To introduce the goals and the concept of participatory decision making.

Objectives:

1. Establish the tone of the workshop.
2. Introduce the process of participatory decision making.
3. Identify goals for the workshop.

   Goals:
   - **To promote participatory decision making by teachers and school administrators.**
   - **To generate positive discussion about the school and student learning.**
   - **To inspire teachers to increase their sense of importance and expertise.**
   - **To develop a school improvement plan created and supported by school staff.**

4. Introduce participants. Have them share some of their aspirations for the school.

Recommendations for Facilitator

To Prepare:

- Reproduce copies of the master pages for the participants.
- Assemble necessary supplies and equipment (see p. 1-6).

To Conduct the Workshop:

- Distribute participants' materials before the workshop begins. Materials include a copy of each participant's printed material (reproduced from masters), name tag, and crayons (red, blue, green, and black).
- Welcome participants to the workshop, and introduce yourself as the facilitator, summarizing your background.

- **OPTIONAL:** Play the workshop overview portion of the videotape (about six minutes at the beginning of the tape).
- Introduce the workshop through an analogy, such as the "Building a House" analogy, which is found on page 2-3.
- Stress the goals and outcome of the workshop.
- Read directions carefully to the group before starting the activity. The time needed for activities throughout the workshop will vary, depending on the group.
- Have participants complete the "Personal Aspirations" activity. Give them 10 to 15 minutes to complete it; use more time if necessary. Then, have them introduce themselves, give the grade and/or subject they teach, and share one or two of their aspirations. If the school administrator(s) are present, have them share their aspirations last.
- Sum up a few of the basic areas identified by the participants.

Activity	Activity Format	Time
2-A Personal Aspirations	individual	45 minutes

This is our sample analogy that may be used to help the participants understand their involvement in the team effort. Every one has special, unique skills, and all have something to contribute.

Building a House

During this workshop, you will be learning the process of participatory decision making. You, as school-level educators who work with students daily, are in a position to make the best decisions about school improvement. You are the experts!

Learning and implementing any new process requires time and commitment. We can compare this process to that of building a house. First, the construction crew must be selected. This crew will include experts in the fields of carpentry, masonry, electrical trades, and others to complete the house.

In building a house, the site must be selected, surveyed, and cleared. The site selected for this workshop is your school. Once the site has been cleared, the construction crew begins to lay the foundation. Everything we do will rest on this solid foundation. The foundation for school improvement in this workshop is to learn the process of participatory decision making.

The foundation itself doesn't look much like a house. The participatory decision-making process alone does not ensure school improvement. However, when the frame is added to the foundation, the house begins to take shape. Once you have completed the process of participatory decision making, you will have the framework for school improvement in the form of an action plan. The framework—the action plan—is only one more step in the completion of the goal.

After completion of the framework, the construction crew, with its expertise in many areas, will complete the house. You will work within your framework by implementing your plans for change in the school.

Once the house is completed, each member of the construction crew is proud of the end result—a house. Everyone in the crew is responsible for the completion of the house, just as each one of you will be responsible for the implementation of the school improvement plan. Once it is completed, you, too, will feel proud knowing that you have helped improve the school. When you have completed this workshop, you should know the basics of the participatory decision-making process, and, as a group, you will have developed a customized school improvement plan.

Here you should mention, briefly, the goals of the workshop.

Activity Sheet
Activity 2-A

Personal Aspirations

Name _____

List your personal aspirations for your classroom and school. Beside each entry, list what is necessary to make it a reality.

Personal Aspirations for My Classroom and School:	Things I Need to Make My Aspirations a Reality:

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Facilitator's Notes

Summary of main points from the Introduction:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

In this section, you will demonstrate how situations may not always be as they appear. People perceive things differently, depending on their backgrounds and expectations. These differences in perception generate different needs and priorities, none of which is necessarily right or wrong.

Purpose:

To introduce the concept that people perceive things differently. As a result, their needs and priorities may differ.

Objectives:

1. Help participants realize that things are not always as they appear.

2. Introduce the concept that people perceive things differently.

Recommendations for Facilitator

To Prepare:

- Choose one or two activities from this section.
- Review the answer sheet at the end of each activity.

To Conduct the Workshop:

- Read directions carefully to the group before completing each activity.
- Share the answers with the whole group after each activity.
- **OPTIONAL:** Prizes can be given to the first participant with the correct answer to "How Many Squares Can You Count?"

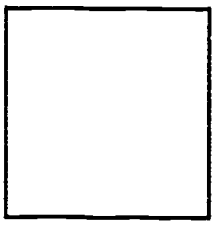
Activities	Activity Format	Time
3-A Is Everything Exactly What It Appears to Be?	individual	15 minutes
3-B How Many Squares Can You Count?	individual	15 minutes
3-C Optical Illusions	whole group	15 minutes

Activity Sheet
Activity 3-A

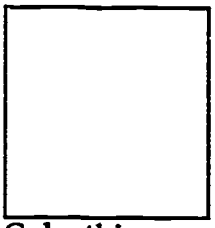
Is Everything Exactly What It Appears To Be?

Directions:

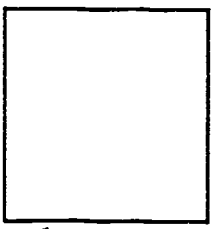
1. Color squares below as indicated
2. Put a black dot in the center of each box.
3. Cover other boxes with scrap paper.
4. Stare at the colored square for 60 seconds.
5. Look at the white section of the paper to the side.
6. Record what color you see
   NOTE: stare at only one colored box at a time!
7. Continue this process with each square.



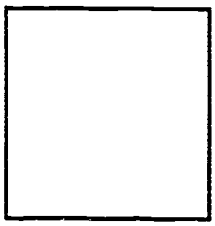
Color this square RED. Color observed _____



Color this square GREEN. Color observed _____



Color this square BLUE. Color observed _____



Color this square BLACK. Color observed _____

This concept is called "afterimaging." If you would like another example of such an exercise see the *World Book Encyclopedia* under the subject "Color."

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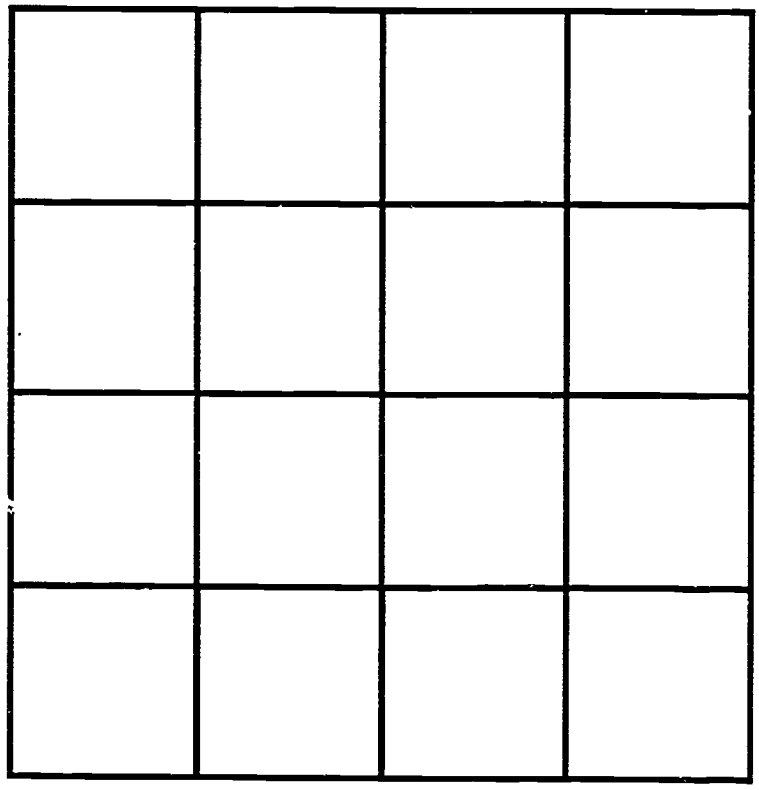
Activity Sheet
Activity 3-B

How Many Squares Can You Count?

The importance of this exercise is not the answer, but how you arrived at the answer.



How many squares did you count?_____ How did you go about it?

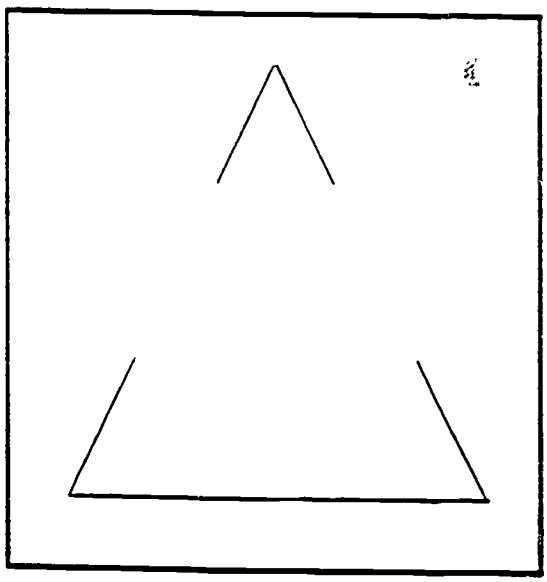
This activity was taken from:
Noller, R.B., Parnes, S.J., & Biondi, A.M. (1976). *Creative actionbook.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, p. 78.
(Reprinted with permission from the Creative Education Foundation)

Activity Sheet
Activity 3-C

Optical Illusions

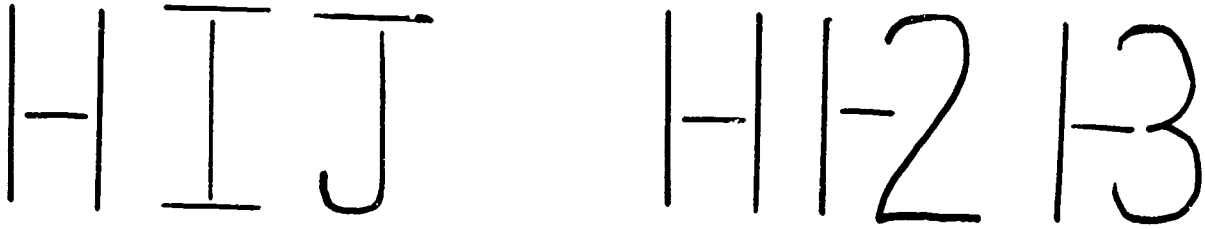
Below are several common optical illusions. See if you can get your eyes to see what your brain says it sees.

1. What do you see inside the box?



This activity was taken from:
Glietman, Henry. (©1981). *Psychology* New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.
(Illustration used with permission of W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.)

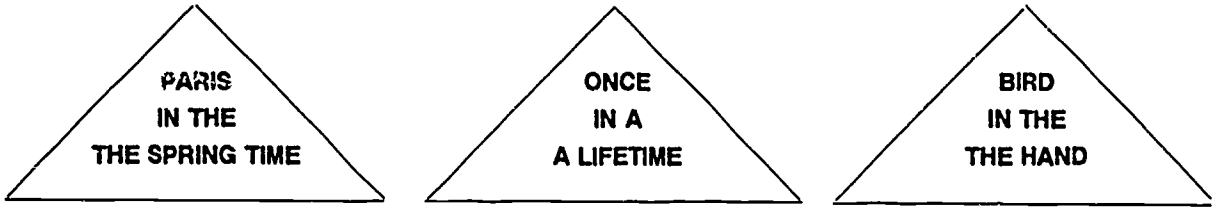
2. What do you see below?



☆

Activity Sheet
Activity 3-C—continued

3. Read aloud the words in the triangles.



This activity was taken from:

Donaldson, Les & Scannell, E.E. (©1986) Human Resource Development. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc., p. 96.
(Reprinted with permission of the publisher.)

4. Count the Fs in the statement in the box.

FINISHED FILES ARE THE RESULT OF YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY COMBINED WITH THE EXPERIENCES OF MANY YEARS.

This activity was taken from:

In-House Graphics, 4550 Montgomery Ave. Suite 700N, Bethesda, MD 20814 (February, 1990). "Take this proofing test." *Communication Briefs, 9* (4), p.3.
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5. What do you see?

This activity was taken from:

Illustration on page 161, by Garbor Kiss from "The Interpretations of Visual Illusions," by Donald D. Hoffman. *Scientific American.* Copyright © December 1983 by Scientific American, Inc. All rights reserved.

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Activity Sheet
Activity 3-C—continued

6. Describe the lady you see in this drawing. How old is she? How attractive?

This activity was taken from:

Crone, C.D., & St. John Hunter, C. (1980). *From the field: Tested participatory activities for trainers.* Boston, MA: World Education, p. 87. (Originally drawn by W.E. Hill and appearing in *Puck* on November 6, 1905.)
(Reprinted with permission from World Education.)

Answer Sheet for Activities

Activity 3-A *Is Everything Exactly What It Appears to Be?*

1. light green
2. pinkish red
3. yellow
4. grayish white

Activity 3-B *How Many Squares Can You Count?*

Total number of squares = 30
How did you go about it?

4 x 4 square =1 square
3 x 3 squares =4 squares
2 x 2 squares =9 squares
1 square unit =16 squares

Activity 3-C *Optical Illusions*

1. Angles. Our mind tends to close the angles up to make a triangle.

2. 1-1, because context clues make us see an "H" when placed with letters and "1-1" when it is placed with numbers. Actually, both are 1-1.

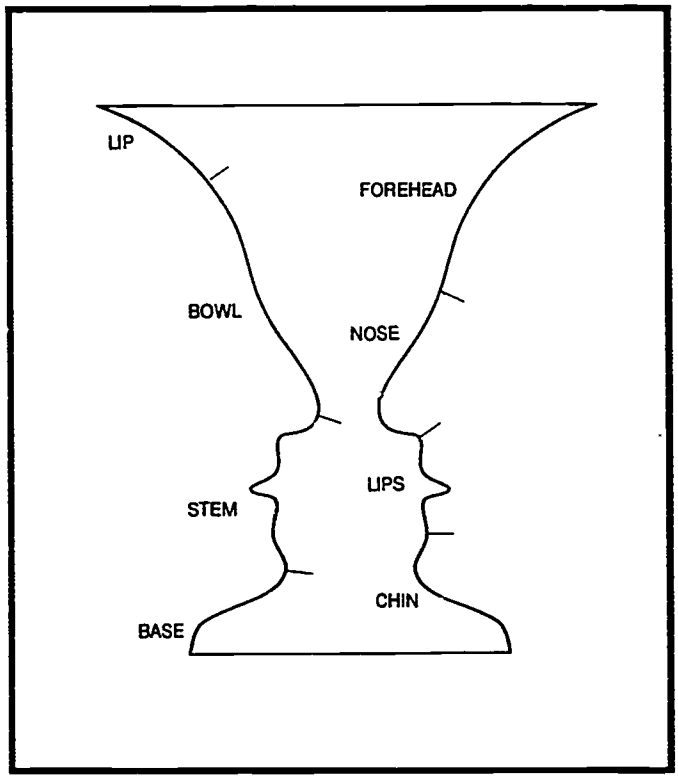
3. Participants usually read:
   a. Paris in the springtime
   b. Once in a lifetime
   c. Bird in the hand

   To be correct, they should read:
   a. Paris in **the the** springtime
   b. Once in **a a** lifetime
   c. Bird in **the the** hand

   We tend to skip over the repeated word.

4. 6 Fs. (This is not a trick question.)
   finished, files, of, of, scientific, of

5.



6. This could be an old woman or a beautiful young lady, depending on your perspective. Do you see a choker necklace or a mouth?

Facilitator's Notes

Summary of main points from Perceptions:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

In this section, the participants will learn to solve problems creatively . This may be the first time some of them have encountered such an approach. These activities are fun and allow the participants to stretch their imaginations.

Purpose:

To encourage the use of creativity in solving problems.

Objectives:

1. Generate creative solutions to problems.
2. Initiate the dynamics of creative thinking.
3. Explore problem-solving techniques.

Recommendations for Facilitator

To Prepare:

- Choose one or two activities from this section.

To Conduct the Workshop:

- Read directions carefully to the group before doing each activity.
- Be sure to go over the answer sheet following each activity.
- Give the participants examples of answers for each activity.
- Set the tone for the next section, Brainstorming, by discussing "Conditions That Stimulate Creative Thinking," page 4-2.
- **OPTIONAL:** Prizes can be awarded to the participants who get the most answers correct on the "Creativity Quiz" and the ones with the correct answers for "Don't Limit Yourself."

Activities	Activity Format	Time
4-A Creativity Quiz	individual	25 minutes
4-B Don't Limit Yourself	individual	20 minutes
4-C Zigzag	individual	20 minutes

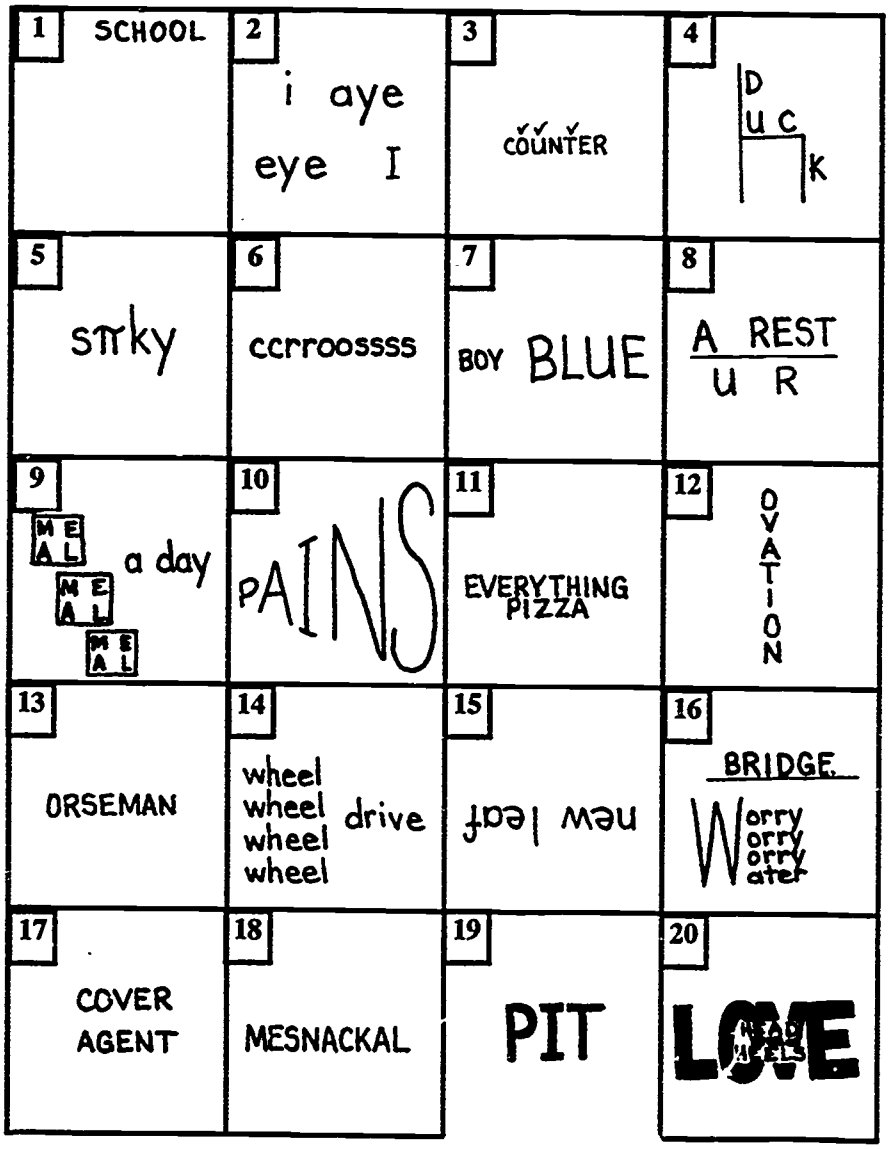
Conditions That Stimulate Creative Thinking

To stimulate creative thinking and problem solving, certain conditions must be present. First, the attitude of the thinker is crucial. The thinker must want to produce creative solutions. The individual must also believe that he/she has the freedom to be creative. The administration of the school must allow for new ideas and creativity. The thinker should not be under a great deal of stress, which hinders the generation of creative ideas. Without a high level of tension or emotional involvement, the individual is able to think more creatively.

Activity Sheet
Activity 4-A

Creativity Quiz

Directions: Look at the diagrams in the boxes below, and write the meaning on the lines on the next page.



This activity was taken from:
Phipps, Harold & Susan. (1986). Games right-brained people play. *North Carolina Education, 17,* (2), p. 21.
(Reprinted with permission from *North Carolina Education.*)

Activity 4-A

Creativity Quiz (Answers)

1. _____ 11. _____

2. _____ 12. _____

3. _____ 13. _____

4. _____ 14. _____

5. _____ 15. _____

6. _____ 16. _____

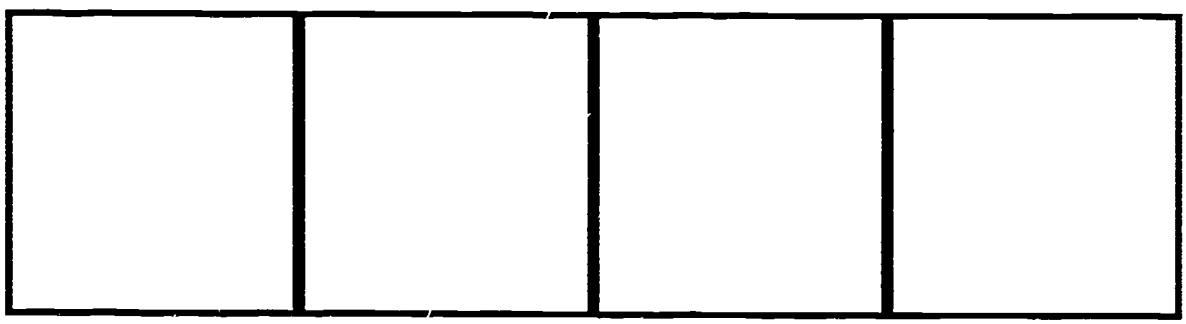
7. _____ 17. _____

8. _____ 18. _____

9. _____ 19. _____

10. _____ 20. _____

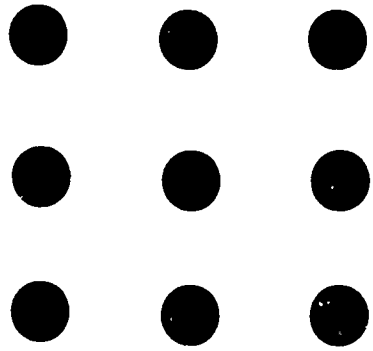
Create four of your own:



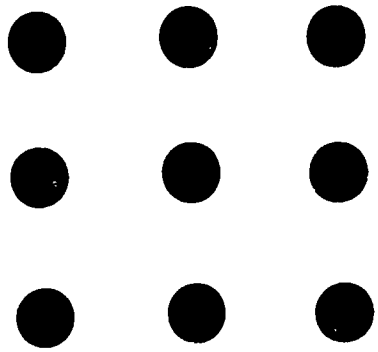
Activity Sheet
Activity 4-B

Don't Limit Yourself

In this exercise, try to draw four straight lines (without lifting your pencil) that will cross through all nine dots.



Now try to draw three straight lines (without lifting your pencil) that will cross through all nine dots.



1. It's easy.
2. Each line will not go through the center of each dot.
3. You can go outside the parameters of the dots.

Remember: Don't Limit Yourself!

Taken from:

Adams, J.L. (©1986). *Conceptual blockbusting.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Inc., pp. 16-17.
(Reprinted with permission from the publisher.)

Directions
Activity 4-C

This zigzag design, which was modeled after Renzulii's creativity work, uses a common pattern that can be seen in literally hundreds of everyday objects. How many can you generate?

1. Have the participants identify the pattern and identify what the design could represent.

2. Identify other examples of the design as an integrated part of everyday objects and things. Some examples are: picket fence, a jack-o'-lantern's mouth, steps, and a crown.

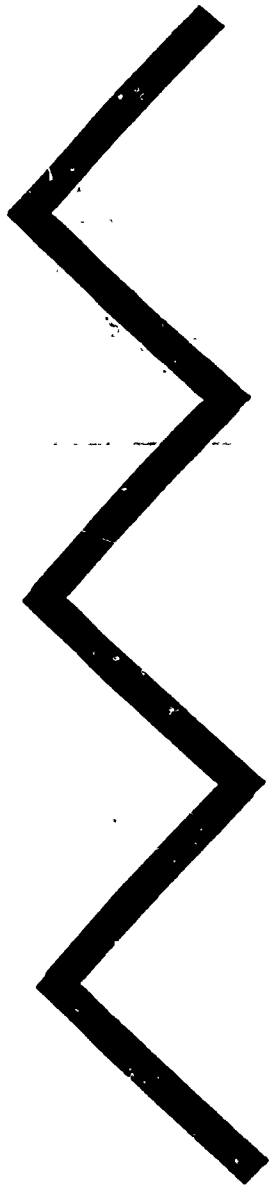
3. Have the participants list as many things that the design can be or be a part of on the back of the work sheet. Remind them not to limit their answers!

4. Have the participants draw a line under their last idea, after about five minutes. Have them push themselves to write three more ideas. Give them about two minutes to complete this.

5. Ask participants to look over their lists and circle one idea that they don't think anyone else has. Using the pattern on the work sheet and crayons, have them illustrate the circled idea.

6. Let participants share their drawings with the entire group.

Activity Sheet
Activity 4-C



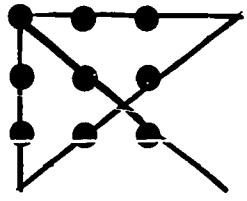
Answers

Activity 4-A *Creativity Quiz*

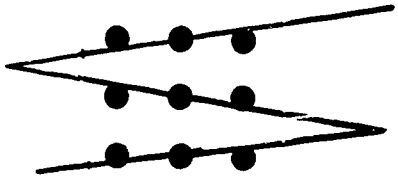
1. high school
2. four eyes
3. check-out counter
4. sitting duck
5. pie in the sky
6. double-cross
7. little boy blue
8. you are under arrest
9. three square meals a day
10. growing pains
11. pizza with everything on it
12. standing ovation
13. headless horseman
14. four-wheel drive
15. turn over a new leaf
16. bridge over troubled waters
17. undercover agent
18. between-meal snack
19. bottomless pit
20. head over heels in love

Activity 4-B *Don't Limit Yourself*

four lines



three lines



Activity 4-C *Zigzag Lines*

no right or wrong answers

Facilitator's Notes

Summary of main points from Creativity:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

This is the section in which the participants will start applying what they have learned about perceptions and creativity to the process of problem solving. The activities will show them that they can generate more ideas as a group than as individuals. By the end of this section, the group will have produced an impressive list of potential school improvements.

Purpose:

To introduce the brainstorming process.

Objectives:

1. Demonstrate that a group of people generates more ideas than an individual.
2. Review the process and guidelines for brainstorming.
3. Generate a list of needed school improvements through the brainstorming process.
4. Promote problem-solving techniques through the brainstorming process.

Recommendations for Facilitator

To Prepare:

- Be ready to complete all activities in this section.

To Conduct the Workshop:

- Read directions carefully to the group before each activity.
- Reinforce the idea that working together generates more ideas than working alone! In the activity "Working Alone vs. Working Together," time is a crucial factor.
- Give examples for each activity before allowing the participants to proceed.
- Emphasize, during the activities, the rule: **NO IDEAS CAN BE DISCUSSED, JUDGED, OR REJECTED.**
- **OPTIONAL:** Prizes can be awarded to the group that has the most answers on "Working Alone vs. Working Together" and "Brainstorming Practice Session."

Activities	Activity Format	Time
5-A Working Alone vs. Working Together	individual/small group	15 minutes
5-B Brainstorming Practice Session	small group	20 minutes
5-C Brainstorming Ideas for Your School	small group	25 minutes

Directions
Activity 5-A

In the activity "Working Alone vs. Working Together," you will need to identify two categories of products; following are some examples:

1. cereals, cookies
2. toothpaste, shampoos
3. sodas, juices
4. spices, candy bars

After completing each activity, ask the participants to share their answers with the group.

Working Alone vs. Working Together

In the following exercise, you will be asked to generate as many items as possible. We will discuss all the answers AFTER we have completed the activity. In the first brainstorming activity, you will work alone. In the second activity, you will work in small groups. In both cases, you will be given 45 seconds.

Activity ONE:

On a sheet of paper, list as many types of _____ as you can in the allotted time. Remember: you are to work alone in this activity.

Activity TWO:

On a sheet of paper, list as many types of _____ as you can in the allotted time. All members of the group should help generate ideas; one member records the responses.

Compare the number of ideas you generated alone with the number your group generated. Which was greater?

Alone_____

Group_____

Directions—continued

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a group problem-solving technique that involves the spontaneous contribution of ideas from all members of the group. One person's idea may generate a different idea from another group member. To keep the ideas flowing, it is important that the process not be stopped to evaluate ideas. Simply have the group recorder list all ideas. Each idea has good and bad points, which will be addressed in our next session. There are a few guidelines to remember when brainstorming.

GUIDELINES

- Arrange groups of six or fewer people.
- Set a time limit.
- Elect one group member to record everything that is said.
- Record each idea as it was stated. Try not to paraphrase.
- In the group, solicit one idea from each participant before proceeding.
- Keep the tone light and humorous. Have fun!
- Encourage wild and creative ideas.
- Move rapidly from one idea to another.
- Build on the ideas of other group members.
- Remember: quantity of ideas is very important during the brainstorming session.

RULE: NO IDEA CAN BE DISCUSSED, JUDGED, OR REJECTED.

The above was compiled from:

Adams, James L. (©1986). *Conceptual blockbusting*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Inc , pp. 115-116.
(Reprinted with permission of the publishers.)

Jongeward, R.E., & Druin, J.M. (1978). *The field program associate in the partnership for rural improvement*. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL), pp. 2-4.

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Directions
Activity 5-B

Brainstorming Practice Session

- "Brainstorming Practice Session" is a small-group activity.
- Encourage the participants to suggest traditional and nontraditional uses for a warehouse full of marshmallows.
- Cite some examples for them. Suggested examples are: to make a necklace, to make snowmen, to use as a bulletin board border, to use as rewards, or to use as pillows.
- Have each group recorder share his/her list with the entire group when the activity is completed.

Activity 5-B

Choose one group member to be the recorder. The group should generate as many creative ideas as possible of uses for a warehouse full of marshmallows. You will have five minutes for this exercise.

Directions
Activity 5-C

Brainstorming Ideas for Your School

Choose another person in the group to be the recorder. Generate, in your group, as many creative ideas as possible to respond to this question:

If I had one year to improve my class and my school, what would I address?

You will have 10 minutes to complete this exercise.

Facilitator's Notes

Summary of main points from Brainstorming:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

In this section, the group will reach consensus about which problems can be consolidated, which are beyond their ability to correct, and which are most urgent. This is the heart of the workshop and may prove to be the most difficult part to accomplish.

Purpose:

To enhance participants' understanding of the consensus-building process and how this process can be used effectively to focus on needed school improvements.

Objectives:

1. Review the process and the guidelines for building consensus.
2. Promote group problem-solving techniques through the consensus-building process.
3. Identify *one area* of school improvement for direct action through the use of the consensus-building process.
4. Identify constraints associated with the implementation of the idea.

Recommendations for Facilitator

To Prepare:

- Be ready to complete all activities in this section.

To Conduct the Workshop:

- Read all directions to the group carefully before each activity.
- Give examples for each activity prior to participants completing the activity.
- Play a facilitating role. This particular session is a difficult one for all involved.

Activities	Activity Format	Time
6-A Group Consensus Exercise	small group	30 minutes
6-B Consensus of Needs	small group or whole group	30 minutes
6-C Setting Priorities for Three Major Needs	small group	45 minutes
6-D School Improvement Activity	whole group	40 minutes

Directions

Consensus Building

Consensus building is a method by which ideas are synthesized into a unanimously accepted goal. When alternatives are discussed, the group hears all members' opinions and discusses the issues until everyone reaches agreement. A vote is not taken, but the facilitator allows any member to object. If there is no objection, the group implements the decision.

If there is an objection, the group has not reached consensus and will need to consider more alternatives. The group can take no action until all agree to support the decision.

Consensus-Building Guidelines

- Describe the problem, situation, or issue that needs a decision.
- Have each person state his/her position on the issue at hand.
- Brainstorm creative solutions. (Remember the Brainstorming Rule!)
- Review, change, consolidate, and rewrite the statement or solution.
- Order priorities for statements.
- Make a consensus decision.
- Write the single decision for everyone to see, after consensus is reached.
- Implement the decision. Determine who will do what, when, and how.

The above was compiled from:

Florida Cooperative Extension Service. *Family-community leadership training institute manual.* From the Family-Community Leadership Training Institute, May 15-19, 1989, University of Florida, Gainesville, Chapter 5.

Directions

The following is a list of advantages and disadvantages to the consensus-building process that can be discussed with the participants.

Advantages

- Identifies problems or issues clearly.
- Is a cooperative effort.
- Provides the opportunity for each member to state his/her position or solution as the group works toward a decision.
- Provides for a "win-win" solution. Members are given the opportunity to propose changes, allowing the group to reach the decision.
- Facilitates open communication.
- Requires members to listen and understand all sides.
- Sets the stage for an action plan—who, what, where, when.

Disadvantages

- Takes more time in a group; the larger the group, the more time needed. (However, the outcome is usually worth it.)
- Varies with the trust level of the group—some members may not want to speak out.
- Is designed to have the facilitator accept ideas generated by the group without interjecting his/her own ideas.

The above was compiled from:

Florida Cooperative Extension Service. *Family-community leadership training institute manual.* From the Family-Community Leadership Training Institute, May 15-19, 1989, University of Florida, Gainesville, Chapter 5.

Directions
Activity 6-A

Group Consensus Activity

Process:

1. Form small groups, and appoint a recorder for each group.
2. Give each group one statement from the next page to discuss.
3. Have each member state his/her position on the given statement.
4. Discuss the positions taken by the group members. Members are encouraged to attempt to influence the group to change its opinion.
5. Use the right to reject a statement if you disagree with the statement.
6. Change the wording of the statement, if necessary, to promote consensus.
7. Report the decision or word changes to the recorder.
8. Have each group member record the final consensus statement. (This is clarification that everyone agrees to the final statement.)
9. Discuss the process of group consensus by answering the following questions:
   - Was it difficult to reach a group consensus?
   - Why is consensus decision making important?
   - Did any group members have difficulty in expressing themselves?
   - How did your group help everyone to have input?
10. Have each group share their original and final consensus statement and how they arrived at it.

This process was taken from:
Florida Cooperative Extension Service. *Family-community leadership training institute manual.* From the Family-Community Leadership Training Institute, May 15-19, 1989, University of Florida, Gainesville, Chapter 5.

Activity Sheet
Activity 6-A

Group Consensus Activity

A. Schools are more capable of determining student needs than are business or government.

B. With sufficient funding, every school can produce outstanding students.

C. Public education should prepare students for college.

D. Report cards should not be given.

E. The curriculum should be determined by textbook companies.

F. Teachers cannot teach without textbooks.

G. School libraries should be used by the communities.

H. Students should be placed in a vocational or college-bound track right after elementary school.

I. Businesses should be involved in school restructuring.

Directions
Activity 6-B

Consensus of Needs

1. Post all of the lists from 5-C, "Brainstorming Ideas for Your School," generated by the participants.

2. Have the participants, in small groups, consolidate these concepts into a list of needs by grouping common ideas.

3. Use the "Brainstorming" list to make examples for the participants.

   Example: Form a parent-teacher organization.
   Start a parent volunteer program.
   Develop a parent resource file.

   These can be listed as the need, "Parental Involvement."

4. Give the participants a minimum of 10 to 15 minutes to complete this exercise.

5. Have each group share their "needs" with the rest of the group. The facilitator should write these on the transparency, chart paper, or easel pad for all to see.

6. Have the participants consolidate any needs from this list. Consensus must be made during consolidation.

Activity Sheet
Activity 6-B

Consensus of Needs

Using the experiences from the last activity and the work sheet for 5-C, "Brainstorming Ideas for Your School," make a list of needs by grouping common ideas. Put similar ideas together under a broader heading.

Directions
Activity 6-C

Setting Priorities for Three Major Needs

Take the broad groupings from 6-B, "Consensus of Needs," to work with in this exercise. You will be setting priorities for the top three needs of your school.

As the group sets priorities for the three needs, it is important to discuss, realistically, constraints associated with implementation. Consider the following constraints:

- How long will this issue take to resolve?
- How much will this activity cost?
- How long will it take to see measurable results?
- Will the issue require legislative change (local/state/federal)?

Remember to:

- Discard grandiose ideas.
- Discard unrealistic needs due to funding, time, or other limitations.
- Consolidate when possible.

Directions

1. Record and discuss all needs as a group.
2. Determine, through consensus, the three most important needs.
3. Rank the top three needs in order, through consensus.
4. Write a goal statement for the number one need.

   Example: To increase parental involvement in the school.
   To raise test scores in reading and math.

Activity Sheet
Activity 6-C

Setting Priorities for Three Major Needs

Rating Scale:
1 = First Priority
2 = Second Priority
3 = Third Priority

Needs	Rating
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Needs	Rating
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Goal for Top-Rated Need

To create _____

To improve _____

To develop _____

To promote _____

To establish _____

To motivate _____

ERIC

Directions
Activity 6-D

1. Explain that the next procedure will be to narrow the selection to the most important need.

2. Cross out all needs that are not rated as number one. Participants still have the opportunity at this point to object to the eliminations. If they do object, discuss it. The need can still be added to the list or consolidated into another one.

3. Write each need on a separate sheet of chart paper or easel pad. Have each group write its goal under the appropriate need.

4. Come to a consensus on a *single* need.

5. Assess, as a group, the goals associated with the chosen need.

6. Determine a common goal statement for approval by the whole group. The group must come to consensus on this. (If necessary, suggest that the second need and its goal be addressed after the completion of the first school improvement action plan.)

Activity Sheet
Activity 6-D

School Improvement Activity—Needs

Needs	Group	1	2	3	4	5	6

ERIC

Facilitator's Notes

Summary of points from Consensus Building:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Now that you have all agreed on the area of concern, it is time to decide how to approach the problem. The most difficult task, reaching consensus, has been accomplished. Now we will undertake activities to identify the resources in your community, assign tasks, and obtain feedback as you accomplish your goals.

You might want to use the sample action plan, which is located on page 7-7, to help with this process. Included are suggestions for compiling a notebook. The notebook provides important documentation of your work and will serve as a resource for other school staffs that learn of your success and want to know how to implement a similar plan.

Purpose:

To assist participants in preparing an action plan for school improvement.

Objectives:

1. Develop activities needed to implement successfully the action plan for school improvement.
2. Identify resources needed to implement successfully these activities.
3. Establish a time line for implementation.
4. Identify the outcomes of the activities.
5. Write a completed action plan for school improvement.
6. Create a school improvement notebook for documentation and as a resource for other schools.

Recommendations for Facilitator

To Prepare:

- Be ready to complete all activities in this section.

To Conduct the Workshop:

- Read directions carefully to the group for each activity.
- Give examples for each activity.
- See the sample action plan and the notebook suggestions included at the end of this section, page 7-7.

Activities	Activity Format	Time
7-A Action Plan Work Sheet	small group or whole group	90 minutes
7-B Action Plan for School Improvement	whole group	45 minutes

Directions
Activity 7-A

This activity can be conducted with the whole group or in small groups. If you conduct it in small groups, make sure that all groups share the work sheet with the whole group and that the whole group comes to consensus. This process may include consolidation and revisions of the activities.

Directions

1. Record the goal statement as it was approved by the whole group.

2. Write activities necessary to accomplish the goal.

   Examples: Need—School Pride
   - A. Establish a school pride committee.
   - B. Develop guidelines for a "Take Pride in Our School" essay contest.
   - C. Conduct an awards program for students.

3. Write the activities on the transparencies for all to see. The group must come to consensus on the activities and their order.

4. Determine who will be responsible for completing each activity.

5. List the resources that will be needed to carry out these activities. Points to consider:

   - A. If funds are needed for an activity, where will the school get them?
   - B. Does the school need a fund-raiser to carry out this activity? If so, reflect it in the activity.
   - C. Are there businesses, groups, or individuals who would donate materials or their time to help accomplish the activity or goal?
   - D. Can the required resources be provided by the school or system?

6. Write the resources needed on the transparency. The group must come to consensus on these resources. It is important to decide here on funding and how the resources will be obtained.

7. Have the participants write a time line, specifying when they plan to have each activity completed.

THE GROUP MUST COME TO CONSENSUS ON ALL OF THIS.

Action Plan Work Sheet

Goal _____

Activity	Resources	Time Line

Directions
Activity 7-B

This activity should be conducted with the whole group. Refer to the previous sheet, page 7-4, for activities and the time line. Use the sample action plan to give an example, if needed.

1. Complete the top portion of the "Action Plan for School Improvement" form. This includes the school, the school term in which this plan will be implemented, and the goal agreed upon.

2. Write the activities in the order in which they are to be carried out. (These activities should include obtaining funds or materials needed to implement the goal.)

3. Complete the responsible person(s) column, listing who will be responsible for the completion of that activity.

4. Complete the time line column. This can be copied from the previous work sheet.

5. Complete the "Outcome of Activity" column. The outcome is the documentation needed to show that the activity was completed.

   Examples:

Activity	Outcome of Activity
A. Form a committee to develop school pride.	List of committee members
B. Conduct a workshop on test-taking skills.	Agenda of the workshop

6. Maintain a community copy to use as the school check-off list. Initial and date the outcome upon completion.

Action Plan for School Improvement

School _____

School Term _____

Goal _____

Activities	Responsible Person(s)	Time Line	Outcome of Activity	Initials	Date

7-6

Sample

This page may be helpful for you to see how one school started an action plan. This list of activities is only a sample. We encourage your staff to make their own action plan.

Community Involvement

Goals: To enhance positive relationships among parents, school, and community by using parent and community volunteers in the classroom and school programs.

Activities	Responsible Persons	Time Line	Outcome of Activity	Initials	Date
1. Establish a committee of faculty and parents.	Staff	September	List of committee members identify committee chairpersons		
2. Contact parents and community to develop a resource file.	C. LaFong M. Snerd	Sept. - Oct.	List of who was contacted and resulting resource file		
3. Select a parent coordinator to assist committee.	C. LaFong M. Snerd	November	Name of coordinator		
4. Arrange a volunteer training program, handbook, and awards banquet.	Committee	November	Agenda, dates, participation, and award banquet program with a copy of handbook		
5. Document contacts.	Committee	November	Copy of log		

School Notebook

We also have found that schools benefit from a notebook in which they can organize their information and record their progress. We suggest creating a notebook with sections that address at least these four areas:

Project action plan
Correspondence pertaining to the action plan
Budget
The specific need being addressed

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ERIC

Facilitator's Notes

Summary of main points from Action Plan:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

That completes the process! All that is left to complete the workshop is a general review to help the participants understand the process so that they can use it again. Answer any questions that they might have about what has transpired and how the process is supposed to work. Summarize the steps they have completed, and point out that now they have a process to use for school improvement.

Purpose:

To review the participatory decision-making process for school improvement.

Objectives:

1. Review the process of participatory decision making.
2. Encourage participants to use the process again for school improvement.

Recommendations for Facilitator

To Prepare:

- Be ready to review the process, using notes you have made.
- Complete the "Certificate of Achievement" for participants, if you are using this. A master is found at the end of this section.

To Conduct the Workshop:

- Read the next page, or summarize it in your own words for the participants. Try to answer any questions they might have.
- Give each participant completing the workshop a "Certificate of Achievement," if you are using this.
- **OPTIONAL:** Have each participant complete the workshop evaluation form from Appendix B, if you are using this form, or the school system's staff development form.

Review and Conclusion

The process you have just completed has taught you participatory decision-making skills and how to use these skills, along with your own creativity, to think of solutions to problems that you face every day. Let's review, briefly, the activities that led to the development of your action plan for school improvement.

The **Perceptions** section taught us that each of us perceive things differently. As a result, our needs and priorities are different.

You attempted some creative problem solving in the **Creativity** session. You were encouraged to free your thinking, to forget any rules or restrictions, and to use any idea to solve the problems. This wasn't easy!

During the **Brainstorming** activities, you saw how more ideas could be generated by group effort than alone. The entire school staff began to focus on the needs for school improvement. Just remember, the critical rule of brainstorming is: **NO IDEA CAN BE DISCUSSED, JUDGED, OR REJECTED!**

The most challenging session of the workshop was **Consensus Building**. You began by looking at and discussing the needs of the school. All of the needs identified are real needs, and reaching consensus to address only one of these needs is difficult.

Through this process, you identified and discussed constraints that are associated with making the dream real. You decided whether the need identified was realistic and determined ways to work around constraints. As the process continued, you changed, consolidated, and rewrote the needs statement until the entire group came to consensus.

Writing the **Action Plan** was the last session in the process. You have prepared an action plan for school improvement that can be put to work by you at your school. Since everyone has participated in the process, all of you now own the plan. You will all have to continue to contribute to make the program a success.

The participatory decision-making process was designed to be used again and again as a means of continued school improvement. Each plan that you write will be tailored to your own school situation, even as that situation continues to change. You should continue to use this process when planning the future of rural schools and students.

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

Presented to

For creative contributions and ideas during *Teachers' Aspirations for School Improvement: A Participatory Decision-Making Workshop*

Held on the _____ day of , _____ A.D.

_____
Facilitator

_____
Principal

Facilitator's Notes

Summary of main points from Review and Conclusion:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Appendix A
Decision Making: An Overview

Decision Making: An Overview[1]

Decision making is a fundamental process in any organization. The importance of decision making in educational organizations has been recognized as a key function required by administrators (Griffiths, 1959; Lipham, 1974; Lipham, 1981). In schools, decision making is a fundamental process and is, therefore, critical to the effective operation of a school.

Lipham (1974, p. 155) defined "decision making" as a rational process "wherein awareness of a problematic state of a system, influenced by information and values, is reduced to competing alternatives, among which a choice is made, based upon estimated outcome states of the system." According to Lipham, the three dimensions of the decision-making process include: decision content, decision stages, and decision involvement. "Decision content" refers to "what" a decision involves. In schools, decisions are made at the instructional level and at the school-wide or district levels. "Decision involvement" refers to "who" is involved in making the decisions and the extent of their involvement in the overall decision process. "Decision stages" refers to "how" a decision is made.

Lipham (1974) reported the six stages of decision making to include the following:

1. Identifying the nature of the problem.
2. Clarifying and defining the problem.
3. Formulating and weighing alternatives.
4. Making the decision.
5. Implementing the decision solution.
6. Evaluating the effectiveness of the decision.

Also important are the influences of the amount, form, and flow of information; the societal, organizational, and individual values; and the effects of feedback on the overall decision-making process.

Decision-making processes are dramatically affected by the philosophy and organization of the school (Feldman, 1977; Moyle, 1977; Watkins, 1978). A school climate that encourages innovative thinking, openness, and frankness among the members of school-wide decision-making groups is thought to be essential (Moyle, 1977; Hall and Griffin, 1982).

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1 This review of literature was taken from, Short, Paula M., & Greer, John T., (1989, March). *Increasing teacher autonomy through shared governance: Effects on policy making and student outcomes.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA. Copies of the full paper are available from the Southeastern Educational Improvement Laboratory.

Categories of decision making

Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) categorized decision making into two contrasting types, according to the degree to which individuals of an organization participate in the decision-making process. Collective decisions deal with those decisions made by the majority or all of the individuals in the organization. The second category of decision making, referred to as "authority decisions," is initiated and controlled from the organizational hierarchy. Decisions at the school-wide level are authority decisions and are the ultimate responsibility of the principal. Authority decisions fall into two subcategories, which involve the authoritative approach or the participative approach. In the authoritative approach, decisions are unilaterally made by the principal, without any member participation or input. On the other hand, the participative approach involves sharing viewpoints from those members in the organization who will be affected by the decision outcome.

Mohrman, Cooke, and Mohrman (1978) stated that there were qualitatively different types of decisions made within the various levels of an organization's hierarchy. These types of decisions include: institutional decisions, managerial decisions, and technical decisions. These researchers also examined involvement in decision making in relation to Parson's (1951) technical and managerial domains and concluded that teachers desire greater involvement in technical issues than in managerial issues.

These findings confirmed an earlier study by Bridges (1967), which reported that teachers preferred to have more participation in technical decisions that were pertinent to their daily professional operations than in managerial decisions. According to Speed (1979), teachers exhibit greater decisional deprivation in managerial decisions than in those decisions made on the technical level. Duke, Showers, and Imber (1980) investigated teacher involvement in and commitment to decision making and concluded that most teachers were less anxious to participate in school-wide or managerial decision making and derived minimal job satisfaction when they did. Contrary to these findings, Schneider (1984) reported there is a greater discrepancy between actual and desired levels of involvement regarding managerial than technical decisions.

Alutto and Belasco (1972) reported that decision involvement should be assessed in terms of the discrepancy between the actual and desired levels of involvement. The discrepancy between these two levels results in decision deprivation, decision equilibrium, or decision satiation.

According to Chamberlain (1975), both principals and teachers agree that teachers should have greater participation in decision making, but the groups differ in their perceptions of what is and what ought to be. A study conducted by Schneider (1984) confirmed Chamberlain's findings. The need for administrators to assess teachers' actual and desired levels of involvement in the decision-making process is an important issue in participative decision making. It appears that both groups need to understand and be in mutual agreement about their present level of involvement and what it ought to be in the decision-making process.

Participative decision making

"Participative decision making" has been defined by Crane (1976) as a management approach that allows and encourages subordinates, in particular situations, to participate in decisions that will affect them. Earlier, Lowin's study (cited in Dunstan, 1981) described participative management as an organizational operation by which decisions are determined by including those persons who are to execute them. Patterns, Purkey, and Parker (cited in Rice, 1977) concluded that putting decision-making power as close to the point of delivery as possible makes implementation of those decisions not only possible, but successful. The overall benefits of adopting a team-management approach to school governance include improving the quality of communications and the decision-making practices, motivating staff, and coordinating tasks and plans more effectively (Erickson and Gmelch, 1977).

Participatory management practices are supported and endorsed by many professional and national organizations (Grindle, 1982). Erickson and Gmelch (1977) cited the increased national attention on education, combined with the push for accountability and the increased pressure on administrators to run effective schools, as reasons for the increased support for participative management.

Several participatory management models have been described in literature. Erickson and Gmelch (1977) developed a participative management model that identified six components of participatory management in a team-management concept.

1. Two or more people work together on a management activity with a common mission or goal.

2. The team consists of representatives of important subsystems in the organization who work together on a common goal.

3. General input into administrative policy decisions is provided (excluding the details of management).

4. Teams are comprised of a small number of individuals throughout the organization who have different backgrounds, skills, and knowledge and who work together toward a specific goal.

5. Participative management involves employees in the decision-making process that affects their work.

6. Team management is synonymous with participatory management, administrative team, leadership team, executive team, or representative team.

Kuhns (1986) described a team-management model that used Likert's "linking pin" concept. This model emphasizes the use of overlapping work groups. In this model, the principal is a facilitator of his own team, as well as a leader who is able to influence the superintendent's team. Therefore, the principal must be skilled as a team leader, as well as a team member. This style of management significantly differs from the traditional style of management, which views principals as planners, organizers, and evaluators (Kuhns, 1986).

Theory Z is a relatively new management model that originated in Japan, which relies on the team management approach. This model promotes individuals working together effectively to yield greater productivity, profit, job satisfaction, loyalty, and performance (Ouchi, 1981). This management model relies exclusively on decision making by consensus. Individuals who are affected have input and involvement in the process of making the decisions. The feeling of ownership in the decision process is an essential element to the overall effectiveness of this model.

Literature on organizational dynamics supports the belief that employees are more productive if they are involved in making decisions that affect their work lives. However, the desire of individuals to participate in the decision-making process is neither universal among members of a group nor evenly distributed throughout the organization. Maeroff (1988) stated that "two main issues surrounding teachers and their ability to be change agents have to do with the use of their time and the extent to which teachers shape instructional philosophy and content rather than have it dictated to them" (p.97).

Prior to this, Dawson (1984) examined educational change in relation to three contextual factors that influenced teacher involvement in decision making and planning. These factors were: the availability of time and other resources, local concerns and priorities, and staff perceptions of administrative commitment to change. Grindle (1982) believed that teachers must perceive their involvement in the decision making to be genuine and that their opinion has a significant impact in the decision outcome.

Power and empowerment

The traditional definition of power revolves around an economic scarcity theory: that power is limited, so that if I have less, you have more, and vice versa. This definition is contrary to the ideas of empowerment. Empowerment broadens the base of decision making because it results in better, more-informed, more-accepted programs and policies and includes total commitment of the school board, superintendent, principals, teachers, staff, students, parents, and community (American Education, 1987). Everyone "releases a feeling of professional pride and investment in 'this school is my school'" (p. 46).

Empowerment requires that the governing structures in schools be modified. This means that change must occur, and change is often met with resistance. School-site management systems promote the concepts of empowerment and of empowering individuals in schools. This system also promotes the adoption of school-site committees comprised of teachers, administrators, and community representatives. In addition, school-site management provides teachers with opportunities to participate in decision making in all areas that affect them and their students. It is based on the principle that schools need to be autonomous and have their own school culture. It is supported by innovative management theories that stress the importance of decentralization, employee motivation in the decisions that affect their work, and the development of feelings of ownership in the decision process, as well as in the decision outcome.

> The autonomy that teachers have within their classrooms is considerably compromised by their exclusion from decisions on issues that affect life in the classroom, such as school structure and

organization, disciplinary procedures, curriculum content, academic standards, staffing needs and hiring decisions, and spending priorities (p.10).

As a result, teachers have been denied the opportunity to demonstrate fully their professional abilities, and the schools and students have been penalized and denied the full benefits of their expertise. There is a strong feeling that if teaching is to emerge as a profession, teachers need more control over all the conditions that affect teaching and learning.

Lightfoot (1986) defined empowerment as "the opportunities a person has for autonomy, responsibility, choice, and authority" (p. 9). Various themes of empowerment evolved as a result of her research. In her studies, principals established close alliances with trusted associates within the organization. Furthermore, they understood the powerful dynamics of the organization and the role it served in shaping the forces within the school.

These principals were cognizant of the effect of their own personalities and leadership styles on the forces within their respective schools. In addition, these principals shared their power and redistributed that power within the school organization. By encouraging and sharing their power, they attempted to redefine the traditional hierarchical patterns between administrators and teachers. By actively encouraging and promoting participation among the various groups/members in their schools, they created environments that allowed teachers to be empowered.

According to Gibboney and Gould (1987), "empowerment" is defined as the shifting of the decision-making process from the superintendent's office (district level) or the principal's office (school level) to the teacher-administrative work groups/committees (building level). This shift is responsible for providing some of the impetus for change from the traditional authoritarianism practices to a more collaborative decision-making process.

Lightfoot (1986) stressed that greater participation in the decision-making process allows teachers and students, alike, to feel more connected, more committed, and pulled into the process. Teachers need to be treated as central actors in the chain of empowerment. "In good schools, the image is one of teachers with voice and vision"(Lightfoot, 1986, p. 24). School cultures that support experimentation and risk taking provide empowering opportunities for teachers to shape the educational environment. Teachers who were empowered themselves were able to create environments that promoted opportunities for students to be empowered.

Studies have been conducted examining the positive effects of participative decision making on job satisfaction (Alutto & Belasco, 1972; Lipham, Dunstan & Rankin, 1981; Theirbach, 1980; Watkins, 1978). Brodinsky (1984) found that employees tend to become more effective and feel more job satisfaction as they are provided with more opportunity and power. However, greater teacher participation in the decision making alone does not ensure job satisfaction.

For students, schools that are organized to provide greater opportunities for participant involvement in decision making can increase student self-esteem and motivation to learn in several ways. When teachers are joined in a collaborative environment where planning and problem solving in response to the different needs and learning styles of students are conducted through participant decision making, the quality of student learning is greatly

enhanced (Lightfoot, 1986). In addition, teachers' sense of empowerment through shared governance can heighten teacher morale and performance, increasing the chances that students will benefit. Students benefit when teachers are more directly involved in decisions that impact curriculum, structuring and groupings of students, instruction, and school climate (Carnegie Schools, 1988).

Constraints of participative decision making

Although numerous researchers have described the advantages of participative decision making, there are those who describe the constraints that participative management entails. Dunstan (1981) reported seven major constraints of participative decision making:

1. Inherent hierarchial constraints.
2. Limited effects on nonparticipants.
3. Greater distance of the decision from the point of implementation.
4. Increased involvement of members in too many decisions.
5. Some issues irrelevant to group members.
6. Basic disadvantages of group problem solving.
7. Poor implementation of decisions.

Any attempt at developing a sense of shared governance in a school has the potential to impact policy. Participant roles and decision-making structures, dictated by policy at the state, district, and school level, will change drastically in an empowered school environment.

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Appendix B
Evaluation Form

Evaluation Form

Directions:

Please complete the following evaluation form. Your honest, candid response to each question will be most helpful in improving this workshop. As you answer the questions, attempt to give specific examples or suggestions.

Background: Grade level taught _____ Number of years in education _____

Subject matter or field of specialization _____

Complete the section below by circling one number for each item.

General Workshop Questions	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
1. Workshop goals and objective	5	4	3	2	1
2. Workshop supplies and materials	5	4	3	2	1
3. Workshop facilitator	5	4	3	2	1
4. Pace of the workshop sessions	5	4	3	2	1
5. Length of the workshop	5	4	3	2	1
6. Overall outcomes of the workshop for you	5	4	3	2	1
Workshop Sessions					
1. Introduction	5	4	3	2	1
Comments on the Introduction session:					
2. Perceptions	5	4	3	2	1
Comments on the Perceptions session:					
3. Creativity	5	4	3	2	1
Comments on the Creativity session:					

4. Brainstorming	5	4	3	2	1
Comments on the Brainstorming session:					
5. Consensus Building	5	4	3	2	1
Comments on the Consensus Building session:					
6. Action Plan	5	4	3	2	1
Comments on the Action Plan session:					
7. Review and Conclusion	5	4	3	2	1
Comments on the Review and Conclusion session:					

8. How could we improve the length of the workshop and the timing of the sessions?

9. What was the most beneficial aspect of the workshop? Why?

10. What was the weakest session in the workshop? How would you improve it?

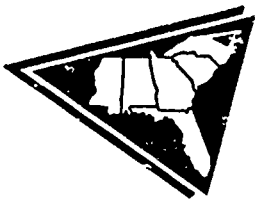
11. If you were developing this workshop, what additional features would you include? Feel free to make additional comments about the workshop on the back of this page.

Teachers' Aspirations for School Improvement:

A Participatory Decision-Making Workshop

Participant's Packet

Southeastern Educational Improvement Laboratory
Rural Education Initiative
Research Triangle Park, North Carolina
Spring 1990

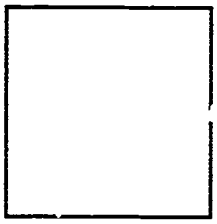


Activity Sheet
Activity 3-A

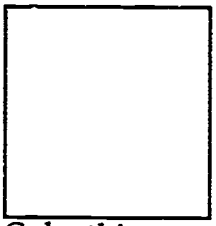
Is Everything Exactly What It Appears To Be?

Directions:

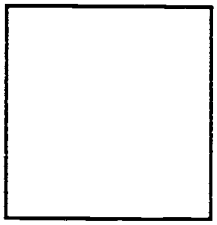
1. Color squares below as indicated
2. Put a black dot in the center of each box.
3. Cover other boxes with scrap paper.
4. Stare at the colored square for 60 seconds.
5. Look at the white section of the paper to the side.
6. Record what color you see
   NOTE: stare at only one colored box at a time!
7. Continue this process with each square.



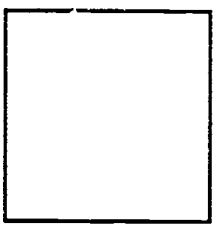
Color this square RED. Color observed _____



Color this square GREEN. Color observed _____



Color this square BLUE. Color observed _____



Color this square BLACK. Color observed _____

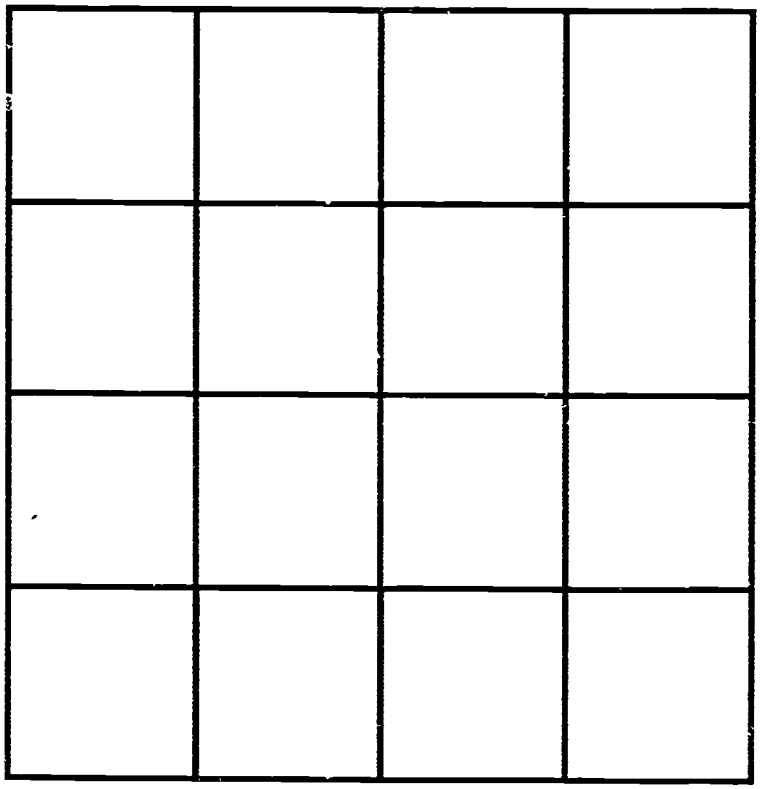
This concept is called "afterimaging." If you would like another example of such an exercise see the *World Book Encyclopedia* under the subject "Color."

☆

Activity Sheet
Activity 3-B

How Many Squares Can You Count?

The importance of this exercise is not the answer, but how you arrived at the answer.



How many squares did you count?_____ How did you go about it?

This activity was taken from:
Noller, R.B., Parnes, S.J., & Biondi, A.M. (1976). *Creative actionbook.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, p. 78.
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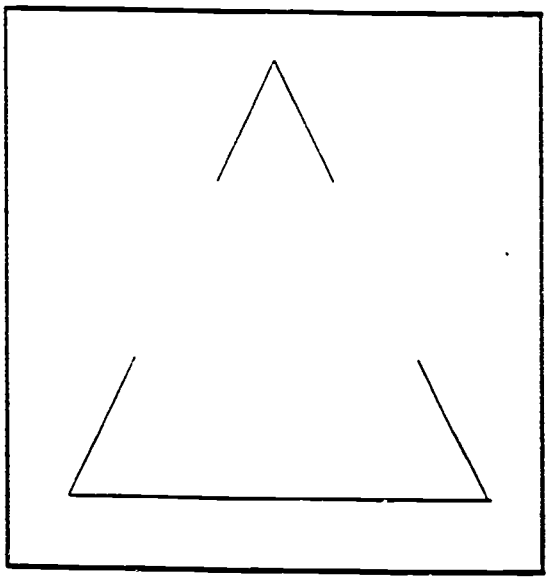
Activity Sheet
Activity 3-C

Optical Illusions

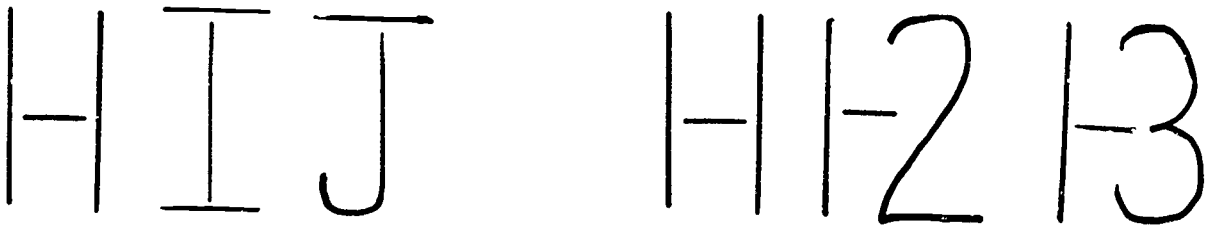
Below are several common optical illusions. See if you can get your eyes to see what your brain says it sees.

1. What do you see inside the box?



This activity was taken from:
Glietman, Henry. (©1981). *Psychology* New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.
(Illustration used with permission of W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.)

2. What do you see below?



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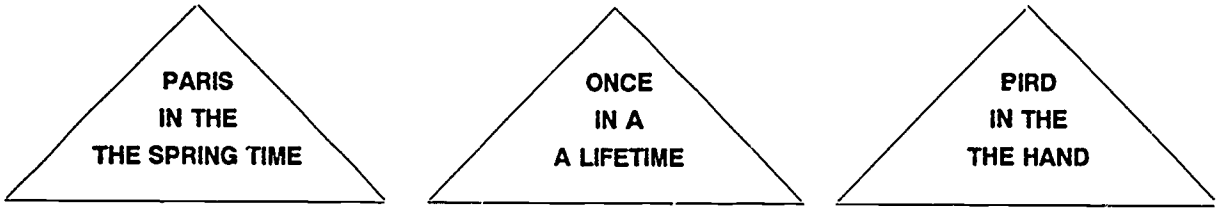
Activity Sheet
Activity 3-C—continued

3. Read aloud the words in the triangles.



This activity was taken from:

Donaldson, Les & Scannell, E.E. (©1986) Human Resource Development. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc., p. 96.
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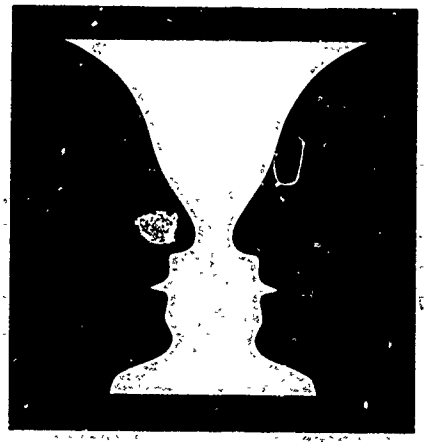
4. Count the Fs in the statement in the box.

FINISHED FILES ARE THE RESULT OF YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY COMBINED WITH THE EXPERIENCES OF MANY YEARS.

This activity was taken from:

In-House Graphics, 4550 Montgomery Ave. Suite 700N, Bethesda, MD 20814 (February, 1990). "Take this proofing test." *Communication Briefs, 9* (4), p.3.
(Reprinted with permission from Communication Briefs, 140 S. Broadway, Pitman, N.J. 08071)

5. What do you see?



This activity was taken from:

Illustration on page 161, by Garbor Kiss from "The Interpretations of Visual Illusions," by Donald D. Hoffman. *Scientific American.* Copyright © December 1983 by Scientific American, Inc. All rights reserved.

ERIC

Activity Sheet
Activity 3-C—continued

6. Describe the lady you see in this drawing.
   How old is she? How attractive?

This activity was taken from:

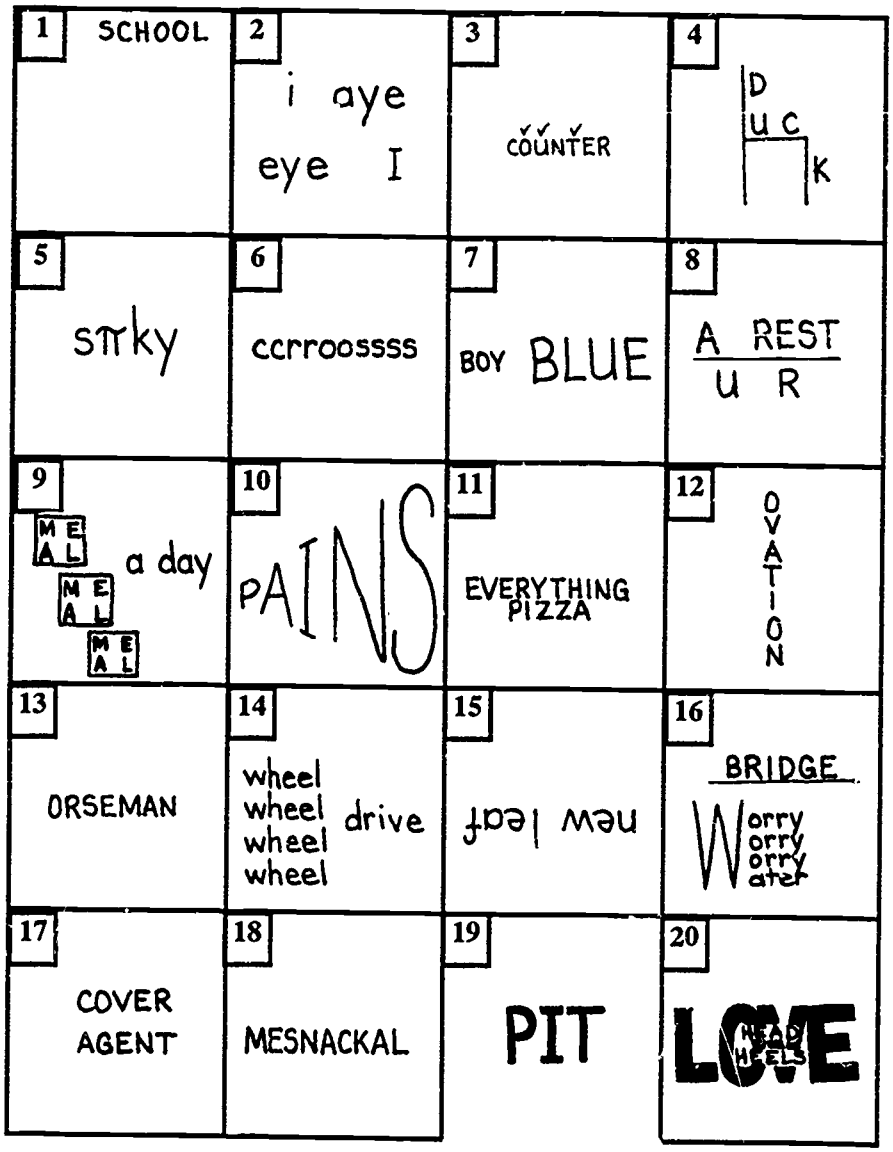
Crone, C.D., & St. John Hunter, C. (1980). ***From the field: Tested participatory activities for trainers.*** Boston, MA: World Education, p. 87. (Originally drawn by W.E. Hill and appearing in *Puck* on November 6, 1905.)
(Reprinted with permission from World Education.)

ERIC

Activity Sheet
Activity 4-A

Creativity Quiz

Directions: Look at the diagrams in the boxes below, and write the meaning on the lines on the next page.



This activity was taken from:

Phipps, Harold & Susan. (1986). Games right-brained people play. *North Carolina Education, 17,* (2), p. 21.

(Reprinted with permission from *North Carolina Education.*)

Activity 4-A

Creativity Quiz (Answers)

1. _____ 11. _____

2. _____ 12. _____

3. _____ 13. _____

4. _____ 14. _____

5. _____ 15. _____

6. _____ 16. _____

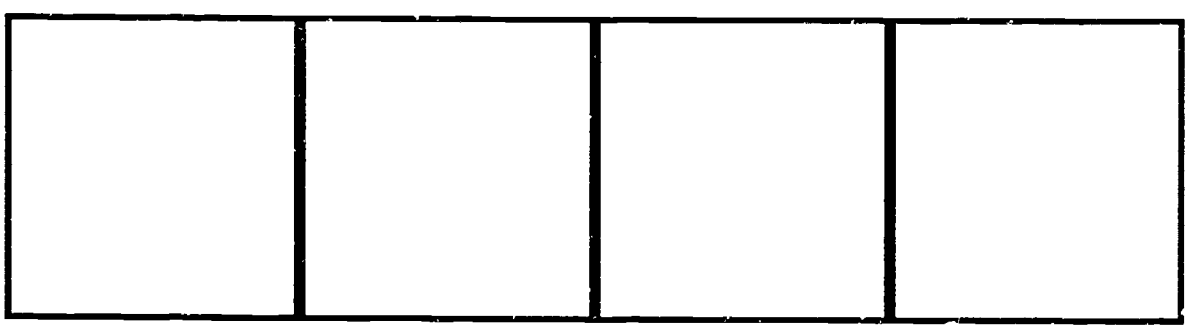
7. _____ 17. _____

8. _____ 18. _____

9. _____ 19. _____

10. _____ 20. _____

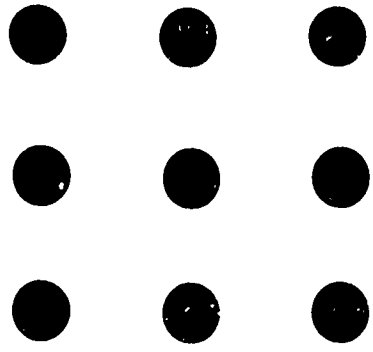
Create four of your own:



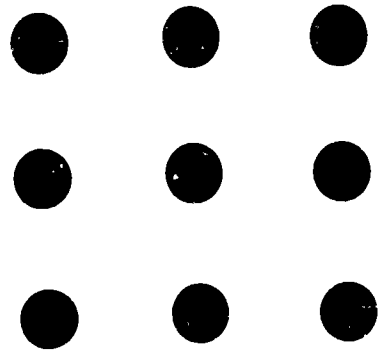
Activity Sheet
Activity 4-B

Don't Limit Yourself

In this exercise, try to draw four straight lines (without lifting your pencil) that will cross through all nine dots.



Now try to draw three straight lines (without lifting your pencil) that will cross through all nine dots.



1. It's easy.
2. Each line will not go through the center of each dot.
3. You can go outside the parameters of the dots.

Remember: Don't Limit Yourself!

Taken from:

Adams, J.L. (©1986). *Conceptual blockbusting.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Inc., pp. 16-17.
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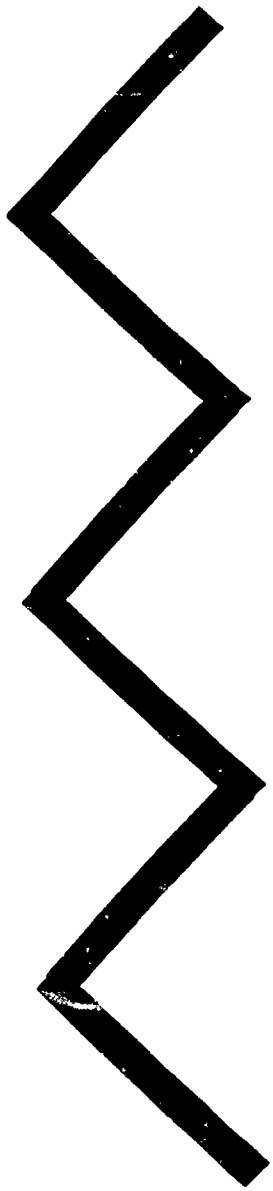
Activity Sheet
Activity 4-C



Activity Sheet
Activity 6-C

Setting Priorities for Three Major Needs

Rating Scale:
1 = First Priority
2 = Second Priority
3 = Third Priority

Needs	Rating

Needs	Rating

Goal for Top-Rated Need

To create _____

To improve _____

To develop _____

To promote _____

To establish _____

To motivate _____

ERIC

Action Plan Work Sheet

Goal _____

Activity	Resources	Time Line

Action Plan for School Improvement

School _____

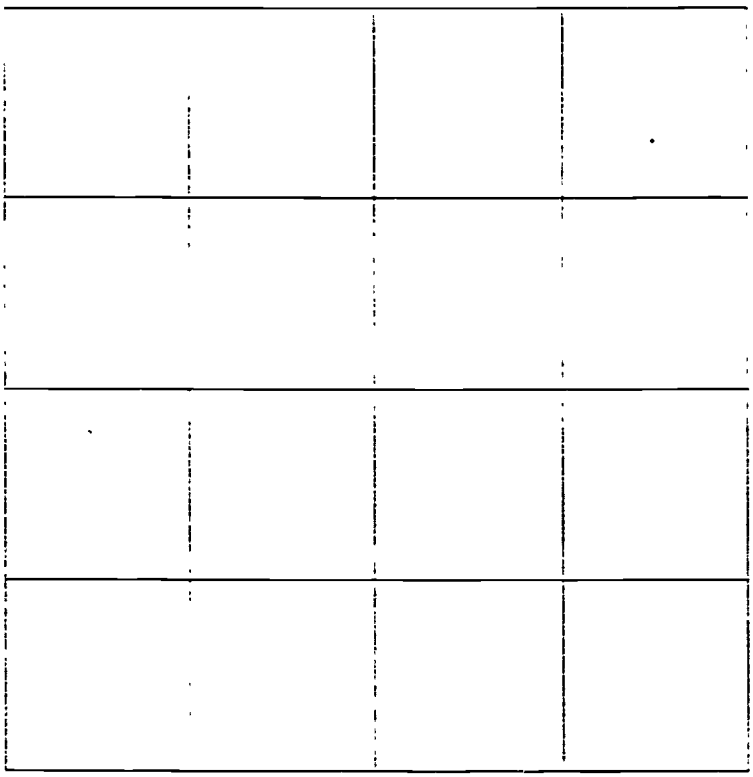
School Term _____

Goal _____

Activities	Responsible Person(s)	Time Line	Outcome of Activity	Initials	Date

How Many Squares Can You Count?

The importance of this exercise is not the answer, but how you arrived at the answer.



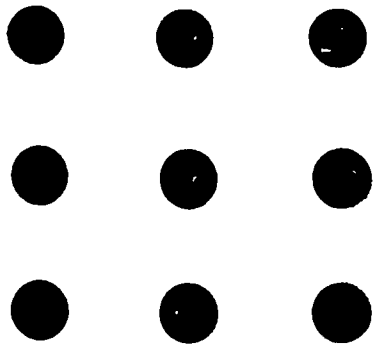
How many squares did you count?_____ How did you go about it?

This activity was taken from:

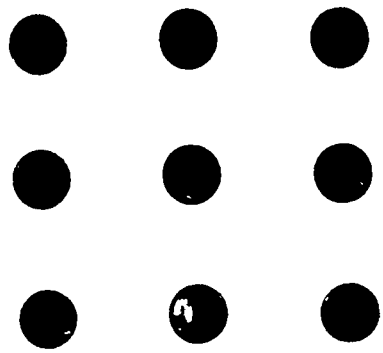
Noller, R.B., Parnes, S.J., & Biondi, A.M. (1976). ***Creative actionbook.*** New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, p. 78.
(Reprinted with permission from the Creative Education Foundation.)

Don't Limit Yourself

In this exercise, try to draw four straight lines (without lifting your pencil) that will cross through all nine dots.



Now try to draw three straight lines (without lifting your pencil) that will cross through all nine dots.



1. It's easy.
2. Each line will not go through the center of each dot.
3. You can go outside the parameters of the dots.

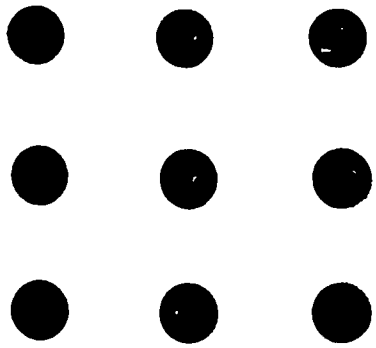
Remember: Don't Limit Yourself!

Taken from:

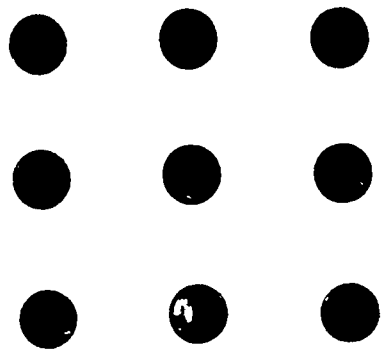
Adams, J.L. (©1986). *Conceptual blockbusting.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Inc., pp. 16-17.
(Reprinted with permission from the publisher.)

Don't Limit Yourself

In this exercise, try to draw four straight lines (without lifting your pencil) that will cross through all nine dots.



Now try to draw three straight lines (without lifting your pencil) that will cross through all nine dots.



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Taken from:

Adams, J.L. (©1986). *Conceptual blockbusting.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Inc., pp. 16-17.
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Brainstorming Guidelines

- Record each idea as it is stated.
- Move rapidly.
- Build on others' ideas.
- Remember: the **quantity** of ideas is important.

RULE: NO IDEA CAN BE DISCUSSED, JUDGED, OR REJECTED!

Consensus Building Guidelines

- State the issue.
- State the individual's position on the issue.
- Discuss the issue.
- Make a decision.
- Write the final goal statement.

Action Plan for School Improvement

School _____

School Term _____

Goal _____

Activities	Responsible Person(s)	Time Line	Outcome of Activity	Initials	Date