

Compass Points

A routine for examining propositions

	1 E = Excited What ex What's
	2 W = Worried What do proposi
	3 N = Need to What el this ide informa
	4 S = Stance What is or propo your ev



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Version

Purpose: What kind of thinking does this routine encourage?

To help students flesh out an idea or proposition and eventually evaluate it.

Application: When and Where can it be used?

This routine works well to explore various sides and facets of a proposition or idea prior to taking a stand or expressing an opinion on it. For instance, the school may be considering the idea of a dress code, a teacher might present the class with idea of altering the room arrangement, a character in a book might be confronted with making a choice, a politician might be putting forth a new way of structuring taxes, and so on.

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

The routine needs to be modeled with the whole group initially with responses recorded for the entire class to see. This enables students to build on each other's ideas. You might record responses using the directions of a compass to provide a visual anchor. That is, draw a compass in the center of the board and then record responses corresponding the appropriate direction: E, W, N, or S. It is generally easiest for students to begin with what is exciting or positive about the idea or proposition and then move to worrisome and need to know. Students might be asked to write down their individual stance or suggestion for moving forward after the initial group discussion.

You can also ask students to make an initial judgment or evaluation of the idea or proposition before doing the compass points and then ask them how their thinking has changed after discussion using the compass points routine.

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