Block Party
A Pre-Reading Text-Based Activity

Adapted by Debbie Bambino from Kylene Beers' pre-reading strategy.

This activity can be used with a variety of texts, poems, articles, or whole books. It works well with large groups.

Process

1. Facilitator writes quotes on index cards prior to the session. You may choose one quote per participant, or repeat some quotes.

2. Participants randomly select quotes/cards and spend a few minutes reflecting upon their quote's meaning for them and their work. (3 minutes)

3. Participants mingle and share quotes in pairs. Participants are encouraged to share with 3 other participants in 5 minute segments. (15 minutes)

4. (Optional) Form triads or quads and share quotes and insights about the text and its implications for our work. (Extension: Speculate on the purpose/origin of the text.) (12-15 minutes)

5. As a whole group, share of ideas and questions raised by the experience. This can be done popcorn style or as a round, but is usually not a conversation. (10-12 minutes)

6. The facilitator shares the source of the quotes, posting the link, distributing the article etc. for future work. (1 minute)

7. Debrief the process. (5 minutes)

Note: At the 2005 National Facilitator's Meeting in Chicago the following possibilities were shared: 1) Have participants exchange cards/quotes after each round, 2) Use this format to share end of year reflections or start-up aspirations, 3) Use quotes from longer pieces to open up the conversation in large, mixed groups where students and family members might have previously been excluded from the discussion of the material.