

Line of Learning

Line of Learning is a reflective writing strategy that engages students in thinking about what they have learned in relation to what they previously thought. Students are given a prompt or topic for writing in which they record their initial thinking about the subject. After students have an opportunity to engage in inquiry investigations, discussions, research, reading and other learning activities, they draw and date a “line of learning.” The students think about the original prompt in light of the experiences they have had and record any changes in their thinking that have occurred as a result of the new learning. Multiple lines of learning can be used dependent of the complexity of the concepts being studied.

The “line of learning” serves as a reminder to students that learning is an ongoing process and that thinking is subject to change as our knowledge and understanding deepens. This strategy provides concrete evidence of learning that can boost student motivation and confidence as they become critical observers of their own learning.

How to implement the strategy:

1. Begin by sharing a topic or prompt with the class and recording it where all the students can see it.
2. Have the students record the prompt and their response to it in their notebooks.
3. Engage students in appropriate learning activities such as inquiry investigation, discussion, research, or reading a text selection that supports and promotes their learning of the concepts.
4. Have students revisit the original prompt and draw and date the “Line of Learning.”
5. Tell the students to record add any new learning they have had or revise their thinking.
6. Tell students not to erase or mark out the original response since it shows how they have grown in their understanding of the concept.
7. Engage the students in a brief discussion about what they have noticed about how their thinking has changed.

Additional resources:

- FOSS: Lawrence Hall of Science, University of California, Berkeley, CA.
http://lhsfoss.org/fossweb/news/pdfs/Science_Notebook_FOLIO.pdf
- Mintz, E., & Calhoun, J. (2004). Project notebook. *Science and Children*, 42(3), 30-34.