

My Capable Body - Creative Challenge

The intention of this activity is to provide space for students to identify and celebrate their own skills acquisition. When we take time to reflect on a particular learning path - to recall the phases of skill development we passed through - the struggles and frustrations we faced - and the little epiphanies we enjoyed; we get a retrospective of ourselves embracing the ambiguous and taking risks. We can zoom out to a bird's eye view of our past where we see the many unknowns we've successfully navigated. Learning to see ourselves as competent and capable of growth can be likened to arriving at the trailhead with the appropriate hiking gear and supplies. We journey into any new learning experience more adequately prepared.

Directions:

1. Take 4 minutes to brainstorm a list of skills you have spent time developing. Focus on physical skills, things you can do with your hands and feet. Start way back in your early learning (bouncing a ball, tying your shoes) and move forward into your more recently developed skills. Simple skills you might take for granted work great for this exercise.
2. Either in a live or video format, compose a short demonstration of your developed skill. Take us through the steps, procedures, and trickiest parts of your skill. What were the challenges around learning this skill? Where were those moments of tolerating ambiguity, risk taking and mistake-making? Slow it down.
3. Narrate your process. You can use actual tools and materials in your demo or you can gesture or mime your process.
What makes an effective demo?
 - Consider camera angle and framing
 - Introduce yourself and your skill
 - Show the challenges, places of growth
 - Talking through it as you demonstrate vs. silent demo

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TIPS

The internet is full of demo videos. Search “How to...” for examples to share with students.

Reflection Questions:

Which of your competencies do you use most frequently?

Which of your skills feels most like a superpower?

Which one would surprise even someone who knows you well?

What competency/skill do you want to develop?

What challenges did you encounter while creating your demo?

In revisiting this skill you developed over time, can you recall where you stumbled along the way? ...moments of frustration...wanting to quit? Do you recall being certain/uncertain about succeeding?

What about learning this skill required you to tolerate ambiguity?

How did you persevere?

WHICH CREATIVE RESOURCES ARE WE GROWING?

Storymaking, tolerance for ambiguity, self efficacy, embodiment, gestural, mindfulness, mistake-making, risk taking

WHAT KINDS OF THINKING DOES THIS ROUTINE ENCOURAGE?

Sequential thinking, close observation, growth mindset, envisioning

WHEN AND WHERE CAN IT BE USED?

To prepare for learning something new, a way to activate resilience and embrace a beginner mindset.

Primer for other communication tasks that involve giving instructions - “How to.....” (plant a seed, conduct an experiment, complete a math problem). This could be the first step in a more complex “instructional” task for demonstrating understanding of content area knowledge.

What happens if we break down the task into 1) Envision (mind's eye) 2) Pantomime/Gesture (no verbal language) 3) Narrate (voice-over style). That process feels promising for many tasks that we're demonstrating understanding around OR trying to learn.

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