Open-Ended Writing


- Write for 15 to 20 minutes without stopping. Put down as fast as you can all the thoughts, feelings, and facts you happen to have about the topic. Write fast. Don’t think, “Oh, now I need to analyze, synthesize, deconstruct and consider context.” Rather, just pour words onto a page about the incident, data, or question you have.
- Release your writing – let it go where it goes.
- Pause. Find the center or focus or main point in what you wrote. Write it down in a single synthesizing sentence.
- From this single synthesized sentence, let loose with a new round of writing. Use that focusing sentence for a new burst of nonstop writing. Don’t try to consciously connect the sections of writing and, again, resist thinking, “Okay, it is time to analyze the data.”
- Keep alternating this cycle until you feel you’ve gotten to that “something” that you knew was there in the data, knew you wanted to see in the incident, or possible ways to re-frame a dilemma.
- Now, draft a memo addressing your action research data.