

## The Final Word

### Purpose

This discussion format helps students process text. It is designed to allow everyone to participate and to keep the conversation grounded in the text. The process works in a small group of 4-6 students to explore text, clarify thinking, and to question assumptions and beliefs in order to gain deeper understanding. It can be used with articles, chapters of a book or selected excerpts; it can be used when everyone has read the same material or in situations where participants read different items.

### Roles

- Timekeeper
- Participants

### Process

1. Provide students with a prompt related to the text. For example,
  - identify the most significant idea from the text, or
  - a selection from the text that particularly struck you, or
  - a passage that raises questions for you, or
  - text that surprised you.
2. Ask each student to select two passages from the text, noting the page number and paragraph for each. They should be able to explain what prompted their selections.
3. Form small groups of 4-6 students. Each group should select a timekeeper.
4. The sharing begins with one person giving others in the group the page number/paragraph of their selection. The others turn to the page and follow along as it is read aloud.
5. The person tells why they made their selection *in less than 3 minutes*.
6. Proceeding around the group, each person responds in *less than 1 minute* each.
7. The person that began this round has *the final word – no more than 1 minute* to respond to what's been said by the others.
8. The person sitting next to the one who began the first round now shares the page number/paragraph of their selection. The others in the group turn to the page and follow along as it is read aloud. Repeat steps 5-8 until everyone in the group has had the opportunity to have to share their text selection and have *the final word*.

Note: the group should maintain the discussion format and wait until everyone has had their turn before having a free flowing conversation.