

# Global Thinking Routines: Foundations for our work

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## Introduction

The Interdisciplinary and Global Studies initiative at Project Zero, examines the nature of **global consciousness** and **global competence** among youth, teachers and experts in multiple contexts of learning. Global competence is defined as “the capacity and disposition to understand and act on issues of global significance.” Globally competent individuals are aware, curious, and interested in learning about the world and how it works. They investigate issues of global significance, recognize multiple perspectives, communicate their views effectively across cultural and linguistic differences, and take action to improve conditions. Global consciousness deepens this idea. An individual exhibits global consciousness when she is “attuned to local-global connections and phenomena; can understand them in a global context, and perceives herself as an actor in such a global context.” As here defined, global competence and consciousness go beyond *having* information or skill; they involve the habits of mind with which students come to understand the world and live and work in it successfully. How can we effectively support students to understand and act on global-local phenomena within and across disciplines? How might we nurture a global sense of self through enduring understandings and global habits of mind? How can we create classroom cultures that nurture global consciousness or competence?

To begin to address these important questions, in this project we draw on a long-standing line of work at Project Zero (see David Perkins, Ron Ritchhart, Shari Tishman). For over two decades the Visible Thinking and Cultures of Thinking initiatives at Project Zero have investigated qualities of higher order thinking and the establishment of classroom cultures that promote such forms of thinking among learners of all ages. A key contribution of this line of work has been the design and testing of *thinking routines*. Broadly adopted routines such as “See Think Wonder”, or “I used to think/Now I think” involve patterns of intellectual activity that are repeated over time shaping the fabric of a thinking classroom. Thinking routines have been designed to support students in various essential cognitive tasks such as introducing and exploring ideas; synthesizing and organizing ideas; and digging deeper into ideas (Ritchhart, Church and Morrison, 2012). While existing *thinking routines* can be applied to content of global significance, the development of a globally competent person requires the nurturing of rather specific habits of mind such as the dispositions of moving beyond the familiar to engage new ideas and experiences openly, discerning local-global significance, comparing places, contexts and cultures, taking cultural perspective and challenging stereotypes.

## Global Thinking Routines

To nurture the dispositions described above we are testing a battery of *Global Thinking Routines* – carefully designed patterns of reflection geared to preparing students to understand and act on matters of local and global significance throughout their travels.

Global thinking routines are simple patterns of thought that are used repeatedly in a learning environment to facilitate the development of *global competence/consciousness* among learners. Over time, they become part of the fabric of the learning environment, contributing to a culture of global competence. A few characteristics drive global competence thinking routines:

- They are *elegant thinking sequences* rooted in close analysis of forms of thinking embodied in global competence and consciousness.
- They are *open ended* guides assuming no right or wrong answer but able to make learners' global thinking visible.
- They can be used as a tool by teachers – micro-interventions to support and assess students' global competence development
- They can be used by learners individually and in groups as structures to scaffold and make visible global thinking.
- They contribute to a *culture of global competence* as they become recurrent or routine forms of practice, and part of “the way we do things here.”

## Selected global dispositions for inquiry

In what follows we include two examples of key dispositions associated with global competence. We characterize each disposition and the learning they involve and describe an associated possible global thinking routine.

(1) Disposition to discern significance of a situation, topic or issue keeping global and local connections in mind.

Intrinsic motivation is a key engine of deep learning. As humans we are motivated to learn when to believe that a topic or body of knowledge matters. However, gauging significance (i.e., determining whether something matters and why) is a capacity seldom taught. There are multiple criteria against which one can assess the significance of an event. In some cases an event or a place is significant because of its *universality* or reach (i.e., a large number of people are affected by it, such as with a global economic crisis). In other cases we consider something significant because it is visibly *original* or new (e.g., the internet in 1992). Sometimes significance is *personal*—it compels us emotionally and cognitively. Still other times it *is generativity*—the capacity to generate new questions, lines of inquiry, or work—or explanatory power—the capacity to explain why something happens—that adds importance to a theme. Significance is not a fixed quality of objects, places or events. Rather it is attributed and constructed by viewers. Assessing global and local significance requires that the mind operates at several levels at once. The 3Ys routine invites learners to move across personal, local and global spheres. In doing so they not only learn to weigh the topic’s relevance, they learn to unearth connections across different geographical spheres. This routine encourages students to develop intrinsic motivation to investigate a topic by uncovering the significance of such topics in multiple contexts.

*The 3 Ys*

1. **Why** might this [topic, question] matter to me?
2. **Why** might it matter to people around me [family, friends, city, nation]?
3. **Why** might it matter to the world?

## (2) Disposition to take social/cultural perspective

While as human beings we are typically curious about the experiences and views of others, taking social perspective is a challenging cognitive and emotional task. In developing a disposition toward social and cultural perspective taking individuals move from (1) “acknowledging” that a person or group has a perspective that is similar or different from one’s own to (2) “positioning” such perspectives—i.e., providing evidence for why a person may feel or think the way they do, such as taking into account the role and relationship a person has. Viewed in this way, social and cultural perspective taking demands some understanding of contextual and cultural influences.

Traditionally, developmental stages in cultural perspective taking were seen to move from *informational* perspective taking (whereby differences were seen simply as a matter of having or lacking information), to *self-reflective* perspective taking (whereby individuals can imagine themselves in the position of others); to *third party* perspective taking (whereby students examine different perspectives from the view point of a bystander); and finally to *societal* perspective taking (whereby they consider how perspectives are influenced by systems and broader social values).

Generally speaking successful perspective takers are able to (a) identify various perspectives in a given situation; (b) provide evidence for thoughts, values and feelings these individuals may hold; and (c) explain how societal or more macro forces—particularly roles and relationships—shape their perspectives.

### *Point of view*

<b>Who is involved in the situation?</b>	Identify various actors in the situation
<b>How does he/she feel, think or act?</b>	Describe thoughts, feelings, behaviors
<b>Why might he/she think this way?</b>	Explain how social relations, cultural values and views of themselves may shape their perspective in the situation.
<b>What else might I need to find out?</b>	Reflect on the limitations of one’s interpretation and the questions that could still be pursued.