

Historical Scan¹



Timing: Approximately 60 Minutes



Purpose

This “warm-up” exercise can help contextualize events and influencing factors for both new and seasoned groups working together formally or informally within your school. It helps develop a shared understanding of the past, from multiple perspectives, and surfaces a common language with which to discuss the future.



Process

1. **Think:** Each member of the group is asked to reflect on the following question:

“What are the key events (positive and negative milestones) in the past 3 years that were important to you? Professionally? Organizationally? Nationally? Globally/ Internationally? Personally?”

2. **Pair and Record:** Talk with a partner and then record each key milestone on a separate sticky note with the Month and Year clearly noted.
3. **Share:** Place sticky notes across the timeline being created on a wall. Ask everyone to work organizing the sticky notes and stack them vertically where their events are the same or very similar as someone else’s. The discussion regarding the timing of events and their significance is an essential part of this exercise and the group is encouraged to work through this.
4. **Noticing, Analyzing, and Discussing:** The group is encouraged to walk through the timeline again in chronological order and then to face the wall “shoulder to shoulder” and share observations.

How might you name the periods?

What patterns do you notice?

Are there any voices or insights missing that need to be added?

Do any key turning points emerge?

What reflections and new questions does this raise? About the past? the present moment? the future?

¹ adapted from IDRC’s Outcome Mapping Facilitator’s Guide with credit to the Institute of Cultural Affairs, Canada



Notes