

STRENGTHS MAP OF LEARNERS

Relationship-building starts with learners knowing that they are seen, heard, and have a sense of belonging. One way to foster belonging and develop ownership of learning is to actively identify and incorporate learners' strengths and interests.

Use the space below to list all of the learners with whom you work. List the specific skills, talents, and unique strengths (academic, interpersonal, and extracurricular) of each learner.

Learner Name	What are this learner's strengths and areas of interest?	How is this learner responding to my sharing those learner strengths?	What shifts might I make to be more responsive to this learner?

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For those learners for whom you do not list anything, try one of the strategies below to learn about their strengths and areas of interest:

1. Conduct a learner interest survey. For those learners who may not yet be able to read and/or write, ask parents to complete the survey. Questions could include:
 - a. What do you enjoy doing during your free time?
 - b. What do you want to learn more about?
 - c. What are the three things you do best?
 - d. What do you enjoy creating?
2. Engage learners in a working styles or strengths assessment. These assessments can provide insight into how learners engage with work and one another. **Compass Points** by the National School Reform Initiative is a protocol written for adults but easily adaptable to students.
3. Host conversations with learners that utilize **constructivist listening** strategies. When we ask learners to share information about themselves beyond school, it is important to enlist active, non-judgmental listening skills. These include:
 - a. Be fully present with the learner.
 - b. Ask clarifying questions.
 - c. Provide space for them to finish their thoughts. Don't interrupt.
 - d. Listen for what is not said.
 - e. Avoid fixing or suggesting solutions.
 - f. Remember that the conversation is about them. Avoid jumping in with your own story or experience of a similar situation.

NOTES