



Qualitative Data in an Evidence-Based Environment Workshop Wrap-Up and Next Steps

Background

On March 5, 2014 over 80 staff members joined Research and Assessment Services in exploring the role of qualitative data in schools and school Boards. The half day session began with a presentation on the collection, interpretation, use, and display of qualitative data.

Following this brief overview, and an opportunity to engage in some hands-on qualitative analysis techniques, participants explored:

- the use of alternative approaches to qualitative research;
- visualizing data using infographics; and
- questions and ideas for moving forward with qualitative data.



Overview of Qualitative Research

Dr. Steve Killip and Ann McKerlie presented four key components of qualitative research:

- identify and articulate the purpose of your research;
- be intentional and systematic when collecting data. Consider using multiple methods;
- review and reflect on data then move on to sorting, coding, and looking for connections and overall themes; and
- share your information in an accessible and meaningful way. Be true to the data and make explicit connections with the purpose of your work.



Click [here](#) to view Steve and Ann's presentation.



Alternative Approaches

Participants were invited to explore the use of alternative approaches to qualitative research with Dr. Michelle Searle. All attendees experienced firsthand the use of image elicitation to facilitate rich discussion. They used the technique to share their feelings on experimenting with alternative approaches.

In addition, participants had the choice to learn more about collage data or poetic technique.



Check out Michelle's [website](#) for more information and resources to help you get started.

Infographics

Together with Jackie Wood, participants unpacked the development and use of infographics as a tool for sharing information with diverse stakeholders.

Groups explored important aspects of these visual narratives and critiqued a variety of existing products. Ideas generated by the groups were situated within theory and literature.



Click [here](#) to view Jackie's presentation.

Image Elicitation Themes

- Enthusiasm for exploring qualitative data and perceived their knowledge as developing
- Unease with the use of qualitative data due to unfamiliarity
- Sense of delight and wonder in regards to the creative aspect of qualitative data
- Sense of tranquility and comfort
- Belief that qualitative approaches enable meaningful representation of all voices
- Feel that qualitative data allows forward and purposeful movement

What Makes a "Good" Infographic?

- Stimulating and visually appealing designs
- Concise and clear information
- Simple and well-organized layout
- Engaging and accessible for intended audience



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Feedback and Next Steps

Collecting and Analysing

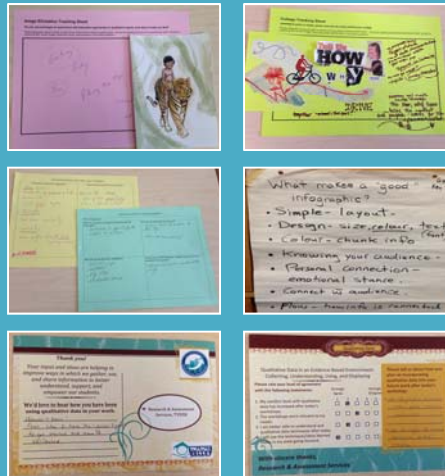
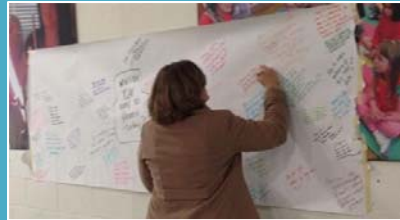
Throughout the morning, there were several opportunities and formats for participants to share their ideas, ask questions, and provide feedback.

Members of the R&A team transcribed, reviewed, and analysed the data collected. The type of analyses varied by the format used to collect the data and the data itself. Qualitative data was analysed by:

- identifying key words and phrases;
- organizing these into similar groupings;
- assigning codes to groupings; and
- writing a brief summary of the groupings to identify the main themes.

Quantitative data, collected on the postcard using a five point likert scale, was analysed by calculating percentage responses.

Data Collection Methods and Tools



Click on the pictures above to enlarge.

R&A Next Steps

R&A is undertaking or had undertaken the following actions in response to reflecting on feedback from participants and ongoing internal team dialogue:

- Share workshop wrap-up with participants and beyond
- Provide additional resources related to qualitative research and data visualization
- Revise R&A website to respond to diverse needs and interests
- Moving forward, revise in-house infographics to reflect feedback provided by participants
- Explore further interest regarding qualitative research/data (i.e., specific needs and interests)

Participant Next Steps

Ways participants plan on incorporating data into their future work:

- alternative approaches (e.g., poetic technique, collage, graffiti wall) to prompt dialogue and collect feedback at staff meetings or professional learning sessions;
- utilize creative and visually appealing strategies (e.g., infographics) to share information (e.g., student voice, EQAO) with a broad range of audiences (e.g., staff, students, parents); and
- incorporate ideas learned from today within school improvement planning process.

Resources

Approaches

- *[Moen \(2006\)](#)
- *[Patton \(2003\)](#)
- *[University of Plymouth](#)
- *[Center for Arts-Informed Research](#)

Analysis

- *[Jirwe \(2011\)](#)
- *[Taylor-Powell & Renner \(2003\)](#)
- *[Saldana \(2013\)](#)
- *[American Evaluation Association](#)

Sharing

- *[Information is Beautiful](#)
- *[Association of Educational Researchers of Ontario](#)
- *[Best Education Infographics](#)
- *[Free Infographic Applications](#)