Chapter 7: The 5E Instructional Model and Student-Centered Inquiry—Reflect and Discuss

I encourage you to pause here to reflect on or discuss the following questions. If you are reading this book on your own, you can reflect on these questions in a blog post, publish your thoughts on your favorite social media platform, or capture your thoughts in a journal or notebook. If you are reading this book as part of a book club or book study, use the following questions to facilitate vibrant in-person or online discussions.

1. What form has inquiry taken in your class? How often do students get to engage in inquiry and investigate a high-interest topic? What is both challenging and rewarding about facilitating student-centered inquiry?

2. Think about your next unit and brainstorm relevant, high-interest essential questions that might yield a strong 5E investigation. Could this 5E instructional model be the sole focus of your work with students for two to three weeks? Or would it run parallel to a traditional unit and provide a deep dive into a topic related to an existing unit?

3. Which of the Engage activities were you most drawn to and why? How might you modify this activity for your grade level, content area, or population of learners? What supports and scaffolds might they need to successfully engage in this activity?

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4. What forms of exploration would work best for your grade level, content area, or population of learners? If you were going to select one online and one offline exploration activity to help students learn about a topic, which would you choose and why? What specific skills might you need to explicitly teach them to ensure they would be successful during this stage of the 5E?

5. How would you like students to explain what they learned or discovered? Would you facilitate synchronous small-group discussions or ask them to post synchronous responses online? What barriers might exist when you ask students to share in small groups or online? How might you strive to remove those barriers to ensure all students feel confident expressing their learning?

6. Which of the strategies described in the Elaborate stage was the most appealing? How might you modify this activity for your grade level, content area, or population of learners? What supports and scaffolds might they need to successfully engage in this activity?

7. What are the advantages and potential drawbacks of using projects and performance tasks to assess student progress toward learning objectives at the end of a 5E? Which type of assessment are you most drawn to and why? How might you build student agency into the assessment process?

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