

Chapter 1
Understanding Learning as the Core Business of School

1. What would/does “making learning the core business of school” look like in your school or district? What would need to change? Is there a “small win” you can identify?
2. Who are the current learning leaders in your school or district? What is the value of establishing learning leaders at all levels of an educational organization (vs. just school-level or district-level administrators)?
3. What steps might your educational community take to develop learning leaders throughout the organization?
4. Describe your “bifocal lens”—your future vision for students vs. present demands. In what ways do you find yourself moving between these two perspectives?

Chapter 2
Bringing the Science of Learning to the Classroom

1. Review the quotes from Christensen, Horn and Johnson noted on page 19:
 - > *“every student learns in a different way”*
 - > *“a key step toward making school intrinsically motivating is to customize an education to match the way each child learns best”*

In your experience, does every student really learn in a different way? How practical is it to customize the education of every student?

2. How are strengths and affinities leveraged and nurtured in your classroom, school, or district? What opportunities do students have to develop their assets?
3. Many other scholars and practitioners are working to bring the “science of learning” to education—including some who have been noted throughout this book. In what ways have you or your colleagues begun to incorporate some of their ideas into your practice? How does the approach described by All Kinds of Minds align with these efforts?

Chapter 3

Key Ingredients of Learning

1. How is the description of attention on pages 38-40 similar to or different from your prior knowledge of attention?
2. Do you believe that *“being able to understand and utilize language is central to success in school”*? (page 43) Why or why not? What strategies do you use to support students with language weaknesses?
3. In the All Kinds of Minds framework, social cognition is defined as *thinking* about social interactions. What opportunities exist in your classroom, school, or district to develop and refine this type of thinking?

Chapter 4

Digging Deeper: Knowing Students as Learners

1. The authors argue that a shared framework (and vocabulary) among educators, parents and students is critical for creating understanding about learning and how it varies from student to student. Describe the effect this would have on student outcomes in your school.
2. How is the 4-part problem-solving model described on page 80 similar to or different from the process currently used in your school or district?
3. Describe the strategies and techniques you have used to encourage students to share their insights into how they learn best. How do you use this information to inform your instruction?
4. Think of a student with whom you would like to establish a “trust fund.”
 - > Who will contribute to the trust fund?
 - > What “deposit” can you make today regarding the student’s strengths?
 - > What is your plan for working collaboratively with members of this student’s learning community?

Chapter 5

Building on Student Assets

1. Think about your career path, hobbies, personal interests and tasks you do well. How do these aspects of your life play to your strengths? to your affinities?
2. Think about a student you know who struggles in school. What does this student do well? Which constructs or functions (described in Chapter 3) seem most directly related to this student’s strengths?
3. Talk about the difference between an accommodation and an intervention. (See page 70 for definitions of these terms.) Give examples of both accommodations and interventions used in your classroom, school, or district.

Chapter 6

Looking Deeper – A Fresh Perspective on Behavior

1. In what ways does your school climate facilitate positive behavior?
2. Imagine one of your students approaching you and politely stating, “My mental energy is low this morning and I am worried that I will have a hard time paying attention in class. May I stand during math class instead of sitting at my desk?”

How would you respond? How can you further empower this student to embrace and manage his/her own strengths and weaknesses?

3. Consider the neurodevelopmental suspects associated with behavior (described on pages 117-126). Think of a student you know who is struggling with his/her behavior.
 - > Which constructs or functions do you think are breaking down for this student?
 - > What evidence supports your hypothesis?
 - > What strategies can you try with this individual?

Chapter 7

Boosting Writing Achievement through the Science of Learning

1. Consider the neurodevelopmental suspects associated with writing (described on pages 145-154). Think of a student you know is struggling with this academic area.
 - > Which constructs or functions do you think are breaking down for this student?
 - > What evidence supports your hypothesis?
 - > What strategies can you try with this individual? (Check out the LearningBase on www.allkindsofminds.org for writing strategies.)
2. Discuss how the writing interview (pages 166-168) could be a useful tool for refining your writing instruction and/or strategies you use with individual struggling writers.
3. You and your colleagues are involved in analyzing student work. Think of the processes and protocols you use. How does the additional neurodevelopmental knowledge about writing production factor in to how you now look at student work products?

Chapter 8

Getting Started – Creating Schools for All Kinds of Minds

1. Discuss the following statement:

“Schools can have a goal that all students are highly productive, but they do not all need to be turning out the same products” (page 206).

 - > Do you agree with this idea?
 - > What would the implementation of this idea look like for your classroom, school or district?
2. Think about the “system” of your school or district. What can you as a learning leader do to help students achieve greater success within that system?