

Butler University

From the Selected Works of Brandie M. Oliver

Spring 2018

Circles Presentation.pdf

Brandie M. Oliver



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons CC BY-NC International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/).



Available at: https://works.bepress.com/brandie_oliver/39/

Link to Presentation:

goo.gl/oC5YSS

CIRCLES

POWER OF DIALOGUE TO TEACH SOCIAL EMOTIONAL SKILLS & CONNECTEDNESS

DRS. BRANDIE OLIVER & NICK ABEL, BUTLER UNIVERSITY

SESSION OVERVIEW

- ◆ What are Circles?
- ◆ How to use Circles in the classroom & in small group setting
- ◆ Collaboration with teachers to increase ability to deliver Circles
- ◆ Effectiveness of 2 pilot programs that utilized Circles
- ◆ Sample Circle lessons
- ◆ Participate in a Circle—Experience it!



WHAT ARE CIRCLES?

- ◆ The Circle format has been a part of the life of indigenous people for centuries
- ◆ “Circles” refer to a process of facilitating dialogue
- ◆ The Circle symbolizes unity, cooperation, & equality
- ◆ Circles provide a space that allows for all voices to be heard, valued, and respected
- ◆ Circles are a proactive way to build connections & develop relationships
- ◆ Circles provide students an opportunity to develop, practice, and enhance prosocial skills, such as active listening, empathy, problem-solving, and decision-making skills
- ◆ Circles provide students an opportunity to engage in restorative conversations when harm has happened—the goal is for the students to work together to repair the harm and to discover solutions to the conflict/problem
- ◆ Circles are difficult to “define” because they are truly a process unique to the way in which they are being utilized; ultimately, people participating in the Circle develop better relationships with others, learn with others, and actively work to better understand others



WHY CIRCLES?



CONNECTIONS

Intentional strategy to build connectedness in an increasingly disconnected world.

Connection is why we're here.
We are hardwired to connect with others, it's what gives purpose and meaning to our lives.
-Brene Brown



EMPATHY

The shape of the circle provides students the opportunity to not only hear the stories and words shared, but it allows for the visual element of learning the emotions coming from nonverbal communication



EQUITY & CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS

Circles give voice to every student and strives to honor and value the input of all contributions. This format provides a genuine safe space so students can deeply and critically analyze thoughts, feelings, and opinions—expanding cultural identity.

WHY CIRCLES?



RELATIONSHIPS

By designating and protecting time for Circles, students are given time to get to know each other and their teacher—therefore developing meaningful relationships with one another.



TRUST & SAFETY

The shape of the circle lends itself so everyone “sees” each other. Disrespectful behavior such as side conversations or rolling of eyes are discouraged and quickly addressed within the Circle—thus creating trust and safety.



RESPONSIBILITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

The adult facilitator models responsibility & accountability. Additionally, the students behave in a manner where they eventually take ownership of the Circle—leading it, noticing when an agreement/norm is not followed, and then addressing it with the group of students.

FOUNDATIONAL

The circle process is not simply a matter of putting chairs in a circle. Careful preparation is essential to good practice and effective outcomes when implementing circles.

Basic Procedures & Flow to the Circles Process

- ▶ Circle agreement
- ▶ Opening/Check-in
- ▶ Topic/Presenting issue
- ▶ Sharing/Discussion/Inquiry
- ▶ Closing



Types of Circles

- ▶ Classroom/Community Circle
- ▶ Dialogue/Current Event Circle
- ▶ Restorative Circle
- ▶ Social Skill Circle
- ▶ Literature Circle
- ▶ Problem-Solving Circle
- ▶ Re-Entry Circles

CIRCLES IN SCHOOLS

► Talking Piece



Some Details To Consider

► Using “I-Statements”

- People speak from own perspective; leaving titles, roles, & groups out of personal sharing
- Circles are embedded in daily practice—not an “add-on” or only done when there is a problem

“In every one of us there is a deep desire to connect to others in a good way. Circles assume a universal human wish to be connected to others in a good way.”

The Little Book of Circle Processes

- Shape is critical—students need to be seated in an open circle so everyone can see each other (preferable no tables/desks)



► Circle Facilitator

- Responsible for Circle agreement; ensuring agreement is followed

SOME EXAMPLES



Circles Agreement



Be supportive and encourage others

Respect others' thoughts & feelings

Offer your ideas and insight—you are valued and we want all voices to be heard

Never give up—keep a growth mindset

Courage—be willing to take risks and open yourself up to challenges

Have fun!

Open-minded—be open to learning from others that may have a different perspective than you

Stay in the circle—even if you become irritated or frustrated, it is important that you stay in the circle



Signature Box

COLLABORATION

TEACHERS: SEL

Teachers facilitate Circles with students. Training is provided to all educators so they are knowledgeable and skilled to implement Circles within their daily practice. Teachers are asked to come up with own discussion topics that target the development of social/emotional learning.

TARGETED GROUPS

School counselor and teacher worked together to deliver a 6-week pilot program utilizing the Circle format to address school connectedness—students selected based on attendance & GPA.

GUIDANCE CURRICULUM

Areas/topics of the guidance curriculum can be delivered through Circles. Providing teachers training and support will equip them with the confidence to deliver the guidance curriculum that school counselors develop.

CONTENT: LITERATURE

3rd grade teacher piloted a 6-week Circle program using children's literature as a teaching and discussion tool. The books selected focused on social/emotional learning, growth mindset, resilience, kindness, emotional awareness, and mindfulness.

CIRCLES WITHIN THE TIERS



REPAIR HARM;
RE-ENTRY

1-5% OF STUDENTS

Re-Entry Circles;
Conferencing Circle;
Support/Healing Circle

TARGETED

10-15% OF STUDENTS

Problem-Solving Circles;
Restorative Circles; Social
Skill Circles

WHOLE SCHOOL

100% OF STUDENTS

Classroom Community-
Building Circles; Dialogue/
Current Event Circles;
Literature Circles

2 CIRCLE PILOT STUDIES

Power of YET Youth Engaging Together



Power of YET focused on developing relationships to help build school connectedness with students identified as “high risk” due to high absence rates and low GPA. Participating students were enrolled in a Learning Lab course where they were working on credit recovery and/or missing homework. Circle lessons focused on identifying strength/assets (self-efficacy), growth mindset, social awareness (empathy), communication, and stress management skills. School counselors were trained on program and co-delivered it with teacher in the Learning Lab.

Project TEAM



Together building Empathy, Awareness, & Mindset

Project TEAM focused on the social and emotional development of elementary 3rd grade students using literature. Whole class readings of books were followed by Circles to reinforce key concepts. Additional teaching/learning strategies supported Circles (bulletin board, posters, PBIS growth mindset incentive tickets, process praise by teacher). Weekly consultation and support provided to classroom teacher by university researcher.

LESSON FROM HS

HOW DO OTHERS SEE ME?

Overview & Purpose

This lesson seeks for students to understand how others (peers, family, teachers, etc.) view them and how their self-perceived identity coincides or differentiates from outside perspectives. It is important to evaluate other's opinions and interpretations and determine what, if any, changes they see themselves making over the course of time.

Opening: Quote

Share this quote and ask the students for their response.

“Wanting to be someone else is a waste of the person you are.” – Marilyn Monroe

Topic: Self-Efficacy & Positive Self Image

Sharing/Discussion

In rounds, invite students to respond to the below question to get them thinking about today's topic. Be ready to share an example too. Before moving to the activity, summarize the students' responses.

- o A time I felt I was understood was when...
- o A time I felt I was misunderstood was when...
- o Ways that I help people see me for who I am...

Quadrant activity: Have students title the top left quadrant '**How I See Myself**', the top right quadrant '**How My Friends/Peers See Me**', the bottom left quadrant '**How My Family Sees Me**' and in bottom right quadrant '**How My Teachers See Me**'. On back, students will then respond to, "**How I Want Others To See Me**"—filling in each area with words, phrases, images. Process activity with guided questions offered in lesson.

Closing

Invite each student to share one word or phrase that truly depicts who he or she is and how he or she wishes others would see him or her OR they can share something new that they learned about a peer from this activity.

Objectives

1. To apply critical-thinking skills.
2. To develop positive attitudes toward self as a unique and worthy person.

OUTCOMES OF HS PILOT

- 26 students total participated in at least some portion of group (9th gr = 9, 11th gr = 17)
- 10 students took both the pre- and post-survey
- Attendance data provided for 15 students who participated in the entire group

Pre-Post Survey

| Item | Pre-Test (<i>M</i>) | Post-Test (<i>M</i>) | Sig (<i>p</i>) |
|--|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Students in this school help each other, even if they are not friends. | 2.60 | 2.62 | 0.96 |
| There is an adult at this school that I trust. | 3.20 | 3.32 | 0.62 |
| At this school, students are encouraged to do their best. | 2.30 | 3.46 | 0.32 |
| If something is bothering me, I can think of different ways I can react. | 2.50 | 3.00 | 0.09 |
| I feel my opinion is valued during classroom discussions. | 2.7 | 2.92 | 0.29 |
| I care about other people's feelings and what they think. | 2.60 | 3.10 | 0.15 |
| It is important for me to help others in my school. | 2.80 | 2.77 | 0.93 |
| I can identify how my strengths connect with my learning. | 3.30 | 3.00 | 0.31 |
| I know how to build connections with new people. | 2.90 | 2.62 | 0.30 |
| I know I am capable of learning new things. | 3.40 | 3.31 | 0.66 |

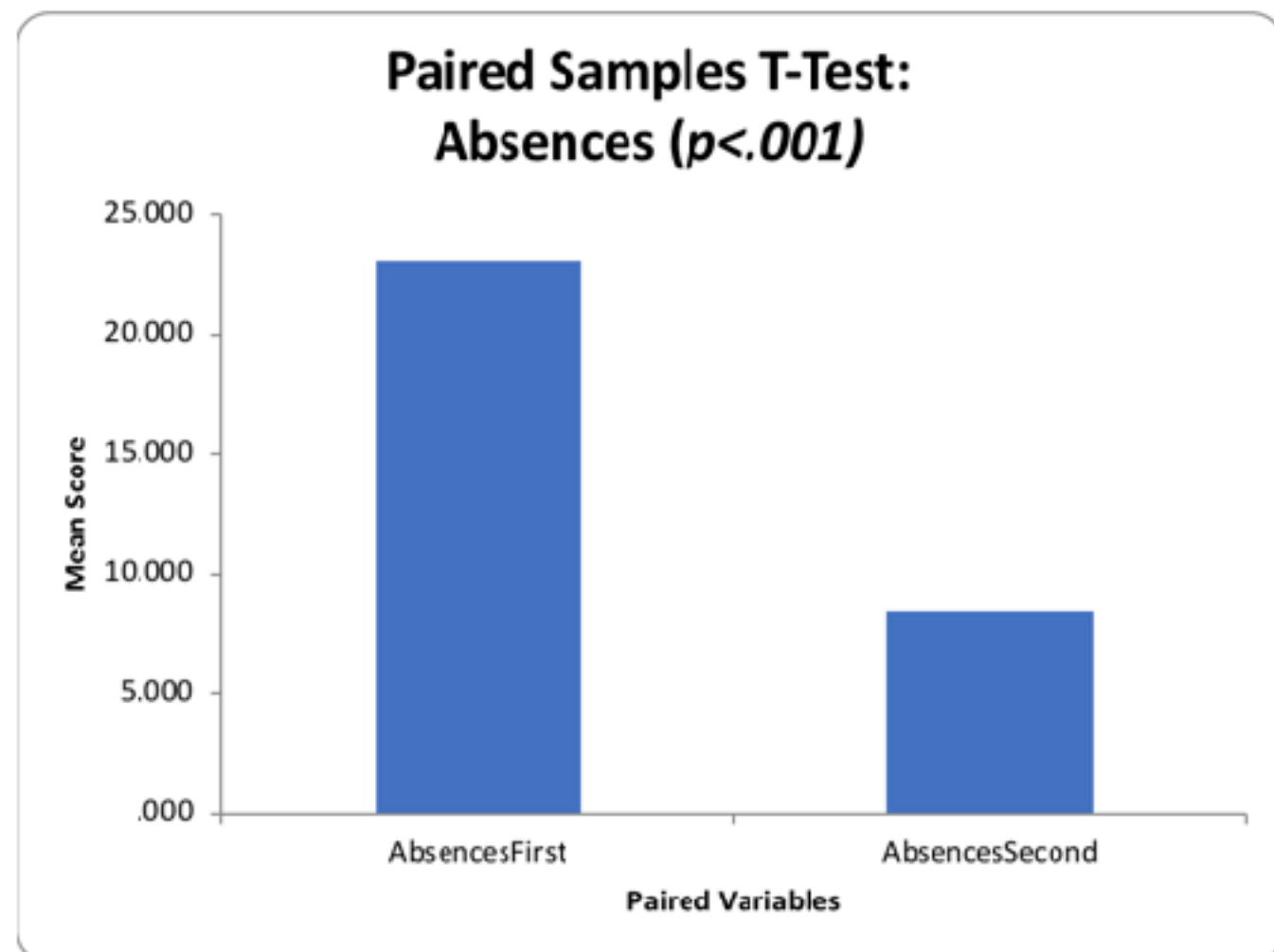
What did you like about the circles?

- ♦ I liked developing new friendships and finding convenient and painless ways to improve myself.
- ♦ I liked how ones opinion was expressed in a different way but not by being judged
- ♦ Being able to talk to people and not get judged
- ♦ Everyone really started opening up towards the end and were more relaxed towards each other

Would you recommend that other NHS students be able to participate in circles?

- ♦ 11/12 students that completed the post-test said, YES

| Attendance | | |
|--------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Student | # Blocks Absent Term 1 | # Blocks Absent Term 2 |
| 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 2 | 25 | 9 |
| 3 | 16 | 2 |
| 4 | 9 | 8 |
| 5 | 6 | 0 |
| 6 | 13 | 7 |
| 7 | 60 | 35 |
| 8 | 12 | 0 |
| 9 | 28 | 4 |
| 10 | 19 | 4 |
| 11 | 32 | 7 |
| 12 | 46 | 17 |
| 13 | 24 | 11 |
| 14 | 29 | 14 |
| 15 | 25 | 7 |
| TOTAL | <i>M</i> = 23 | <i>M</i> = 8.4 |



LESSON FROM ELEMENTARY

DON'T SQUISH MY ISH...

Overview & Purpose

To help students understand that it is okay to struggle, fail, and make mistakes. Mistakes are opportunities to learn—being creative and seeing our struggles or challenges as growth moments is an important part of our learning.

Objectives

1. To demonstrate it is okay to make mistakes
2. To explain that we can learn from our mistakes
3. To practice opportunities for students to support each other when faced with difficult learning tasks

Opening: Mindfulness Activity

Topic: Growth Mindset

Sharing/Discussion

Show students the page in the book where Ramon crumples up his paper.
Ask students the following questions.

- ◆ *What do you think Ramon was thinking when he crumpled up his paper?*
- ◆ *How do you think he was feeling?*
- ◆ *How would you feel if someone said that to you about an activity that you really enjoyed?*

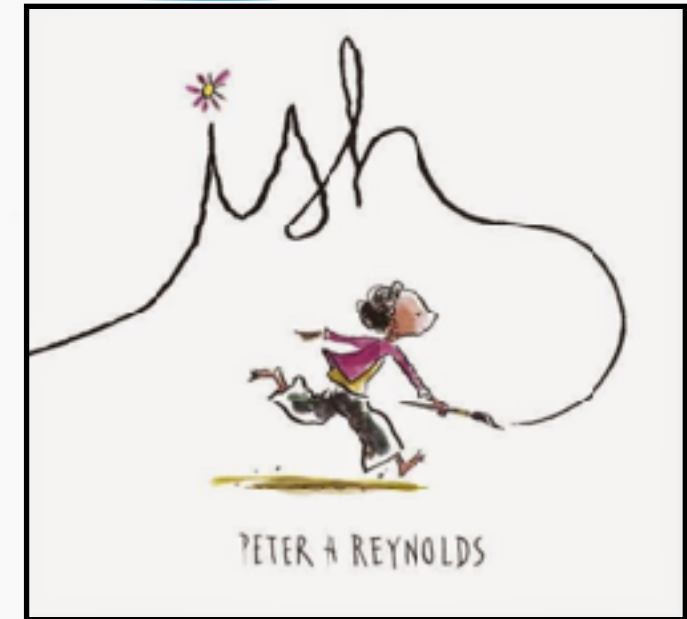
Ramon decided to stop drawing but something happens when he sees all of his crumpled art on his sister's wall---what happens?

- ◆ *How does her –“Ish” view of Ramon’s drawings help him?*
- ◆ *What do you think –“Ish” mean?*
- ◆ *What would it look like if students had an –“Ish” mindset to help when they get frustrated or upset when they don’t understand something? or if their first try isn’t perfect?*

Closing

Invite students as you go around the circle to think of ways that we all can help each other to remember not to “Squish our –Ish” and ways to help support each other in making mistakes and keeping a growth mindset. Invite “-Ish” ideas from each student.

- ◆ Invite simple statements students can say to each other if they see another student getting frustrated or upset after a mistake or if they are confused.
- ◆ *Sample statements: You got this; How can I help? I know you can do this; Keep trying—you are so close. Keep your head up. We all make mistakes sometimes.*













































Reinforcer: Give each student one of the “squiggly” drawings. Explain to the students this is an “Ish” inspired drawing. What do they see? What can they create from this –Ish? It is something to help them remember not to let anyone “Squish their Ish”—have students place their drawing somewhere they can see it to remind them to learn from their mistakes.



PRE/POST

This is how I think I am doing...

| | Never | Sometimes | Always |
|---|---|---|---|
| I try my best on all my work. |  |  |  |
| I get my work done when I am supposed to. |  |  |  |
| I show kindness to all my classmates . |  |  |  |
| I show kindness to my teacher. |  |  |  |
| I am able to use my personal strengths to help others and myself in school. |  |  |  |
| I know how to use problem-solving skills. |  |  |  |
| I can name 3 great things about myself. |  |  |  |
| I am a smart and capable student. |  |  |  |
| I know how to show empathy to other students. |  |  |  |
| Mistakes are part of learning. |  |  |  |
| I am a good friend. |  |  |  |
| I am responsible. |  |  |  |
| I can control my emotions. |  |  |  |
| I use deep breathing to calm down. |  |  |  |

OUTCOMES OF ELEMENTARY PILOT

- 26 students participated in groups
- All 26 students took both the pre- and post-survey

Pre-Post Survey

| Item | Pre-Test (<i>M</i>) | Post-Test (<i>M</i>) | Sig (<i>p</i>) |
|---|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| I try my best on all my work. | 2.19 | 2.54 | 0.004 |
| I get my work done when I am supposed to | 2.27 | 2.42 | 0.043 |
| I show kindness to all my classmates and my teacher. | 2.12 | 2.50 | 0.015 |
| I am able to use my personal strengths to help others and myself in school. | 2.12 | 2.54 | <.001 |
| I know how to use problem-solving skills. | 1.73 | 2.58 | <.001 |
| I can name 3 great things about myself. | 1.58 | 2.58 | <.001 |
| I am a smart and capable student. | 2.00 | 2.35 | 0.017 |
| I know how to show empathy to other students. | 1.58 | 2.23 | <.001 |
| Mistakes are part of learning. | 1.58 | 2.42 | <.001 |
| I am a good friend. | 1.96 | 2.62 | <.001 |
| I am responsible and can control my emotions. | 2.19 | 2.42 | 0.031 |
| I use deep breathing to calm down. | 1.58 | 2.31 | 0.001 |

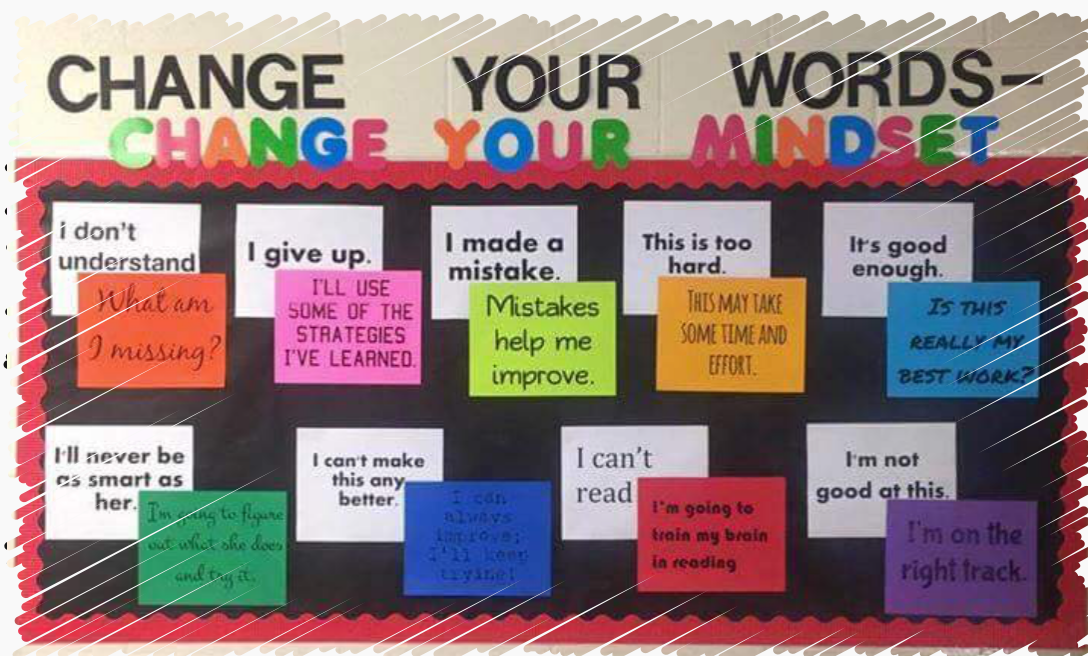
OTHER DATA & FEEDBACK

PBIS INCENTIVE TICKET FEEDBACK STICKERS



- ◆ 21/26 students earned 10/12 effort tickets
- ◆ Aided in classroom discussions
- ◆ Bulletin board was often used as a reference in the class when situations came up (i.e., when students said, “This is too hard” or “I’m not good at this.”)
- ◆ Helped to meet Accelerated Reader goals (22/26 students)
- ◆ **Teacher reported an increased interest in reading from the book discussions.*
 - ◆ It would be helpful to provide Social Skill Circles for students that need targeted supports and extra time to learn the behavioral expectations to be successful in the classroom Circle.

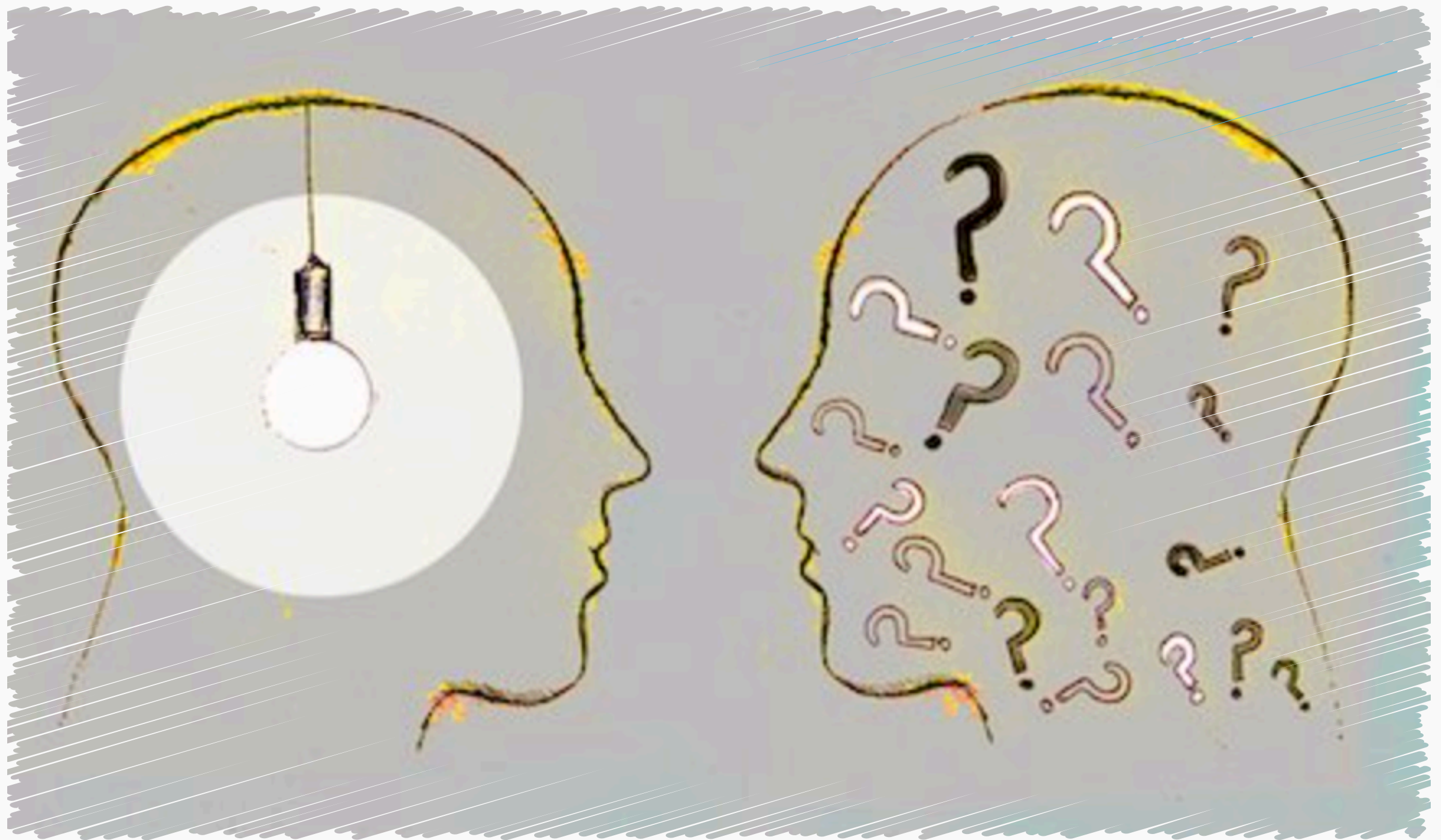
CLASSROOM BULLETIN BOARD





LET'S
PRACTICE

QUESTIONS & IDEAS



CONTACT INFO

Dr. Brandie Oliver

bmoliver@butler.edu

Dr. Nick Abel

nabel@butler.edu

BUTLER

COLLEGE *of* EDUCATION