

Investigating Student Participation – a checklist approach

Abe	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Dana	✓	✓	✓				
Tyler	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Tianna	✓	✓	✓				
Abram	✓	✓					
Briana	✓	✓					
Brent	✓						
Suji	✓						
Adam	✓	✓					
Lauren	✓	✓	✓	✓			
PhiAnh	✓	✓					
William	✓						

Investigating Student Participation – a more detailed approach

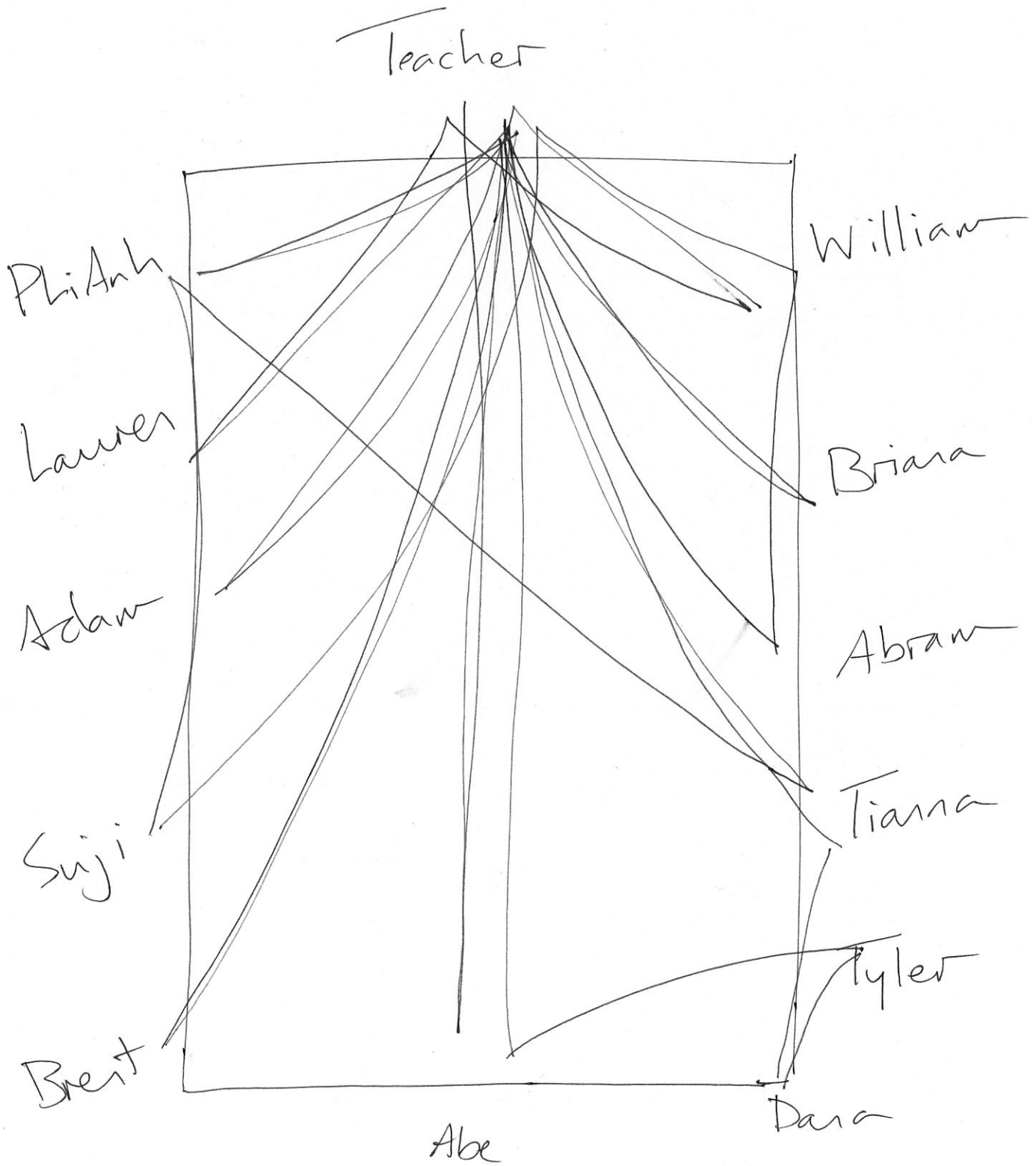
Abe	✓	?	*	*			
Dana	*	✓	✓				
Tyler	*	*	?	✓	✓	✓	
Tianna	✓	*	✓				
Abram	*	*					
Briana	✓	✓					
Brent	✓						
Suji	*						
Adam	*	*					
Lauren	*	?	*	✓			
PhiAnh	*	*					
William	*						

? = asked a question

✓ = comment

* = substantial comment – strong insight, textual support, etc

Investigating Student Participation – a map of classroom talk



Investigating Trends in Students' Writing

This tool is intended to help you identify trends in your students' writing so that you can create a focused writing lesson around a need in your particular class.

Imagine, for example, that you feel like wordiness is a problem for a number of your students. You might decide to use Lesson 7: Concision from Joseph M. Williams's *Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity in Grace* to help improve your students' writing. Before delivering that lesson, however, an analysis of trends in student writing can help you get an even better handle on what exactly is going awry for your students. You could use the following procedure to gather information about student writing. (Please note that this is *not* designed to inform your feedback to individual students; it's really just about identifying trends.)

At random, select one paragraph from each student's most recent writing assignment. Use the chart to identify the following kinds of wordiness:

kind of wordiness	frequency										representative examples
words that mean little or nothing											
words that repeat the meaning of other words											
words implied by other words											
a phrase when a single word would suffice											
a negative where an affirmative would be more concise											

You can then count the frequency of each kind of wordiness and collect representative examples from student writing. This would let you know if student writing is more often wordy because students are using vague words or because they're using long phrases in place of a single word. You can then design your writing lesson around the specific trends you're seeing. (And the five categories above are drawn from Williams's lesson, so you could use his examples in your lesson.)