

How to Use the *Conversations about Equity that Link Theory to Practice Tool*

The [Conversations about Equity that Link Theory to Practice Tool](#) supports meaningful conversations about equity at the theory-practice nexus. Use these steps to guide your use of the tool, along with the general principles outlined in [STEM Teaching Tool #88](#).

1. **Review the equity goals in the tool individually**, focusing on the description of the goal and the related theory. You can consider asking teachers for their own interpretations of the goals or rewriting the goals in a way that is meaningful to their own community.
2. **Discuss what the goal might look like in your particular context** and the local resources that can be leveraged. For example, applying the theory of Place-based Knowledge could involve teachers, families, and students who have knowledge of the local natural ecology.
3. **Add to the description** of what the teacher might do to build towards the goal. This is an opportunity to generate ideas and build shared understanding, not pass judgment. Record all of the ideas that are generated and come back to them in later discussions.
4. **For each goal, have teachers generate observable evidence of the goal being met.** For example, “All of my students share their science thinking in either written or verbal form” is easier to observe than “Students will be more comfortable sharing their science ideas.”
5. **Invite members of the group to bring artifacts of teaching practice** to review together, like classroom videos or examples of student work.
6. **Ask probing questions that deepen the group’s shared sensemaking**, such as “What evidence did you see of progress towards the equity goal?” or “Even though we were not able to see evidence of the goal in the video, what stood out to you?”
7. **Maintain an asset-based approach with teachers**, just as you ask them to do with students. Find classroom examples that highlight their teaching strengths and facilitate conversation that values the perspective of each member of the group.