

Welcome!

You are in the right place if at least one of these is true:

- You registered for the session on “Evaluative Thinking”
- You are wondering what “evaluative thinking” means
- You like asking questions and figuring out if something is working
- You think the Hartford Foundation Nonprofit Support Program offers great sessions
- You want to have a little (nerdy) fun.

**Grab a snack, close out of your inbox, and get comfy –
we will get started soon!**

Where Are We Going? Using Evaluative Thinking to Inform Your Programming

Hartford Foundation for Public Giving
September 22, 2021

Today's Zoom Room

Video on, sound off.

We have eyes on the chat.

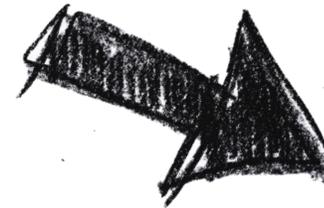
Sit back and relax; this content will be available later.

Let's test out the chat:

Name, organization, why you're here

What Do We Mean By Evaluative Thinking?

The ability to use evaluation skills to inform learning and decision making



Organizational evaluative thinking means doing this to inform programs, strategies, initiatives *as well as* human resources, marketing, finance, fundraising, board management, partnerships, etc.

- Ask substantive questions
- Determine what data you need to answer those questions
- Appropriately collect that data
- Interpret (analyze) that data
- Use the findings
- Think critically about your work

Top Five Tips To Realistically Sprinkle Evaluative Thinking Into Your Organization

1. Learning is good.
2. Focus on the Ws.
3. Pick a destination.
4. Use what you have.
5. Find and feed your (future) experts.

1. Learning is good

- Paradigm shift from “judgment” to “learning”
- Needs: A supportive learning environment, concrete processes and practices, modeled and reinforced by leadership

What does this look like in practice?

- Normalizing the half-baked draft and “yes if”
- Staff survey about HR practices, share results with team, make changes to organizational policy as a result.
- Regular topical “lunch and learns” to share knowledge among individuals and across groups

2. Focus on the Ws

- Who – is impacted by our work?
- What – do we expect as a result?
- When – do we reasonably expect to see change?
- Why – do we think this will work?

What does this look like in practice?

- Logic model or a theory of change that talks about relationship between activities, outcomes, and rationale
- Reporting templates that staff fill in based on quarterly participant satisfaction survey results
- Marketing communications that are tailored to specific audiences, based on how mailing list registrants completed your registration form

3. Pick a destination

- Set targets; make them SMARTIE
- Consider whether to keep them internal
- It's OK if you don't end up there (learning is good!)

What does this look like in practice?

- Asking (and facilitating discussion around) what we are aiming for when we kick off an initiative.
- “75% of the session attendees will report that they learned at least one new skill.”
- “By the end of 2022, we will grow our distribution list to 500 members.”

“If you don't know where you're going, you'll end up someplace else.”
– Yogi Berra

4. Use what you have

- Inventory of everything you already collect
- Identify where there are gaps in existing tools



What is its purpose?

What (else) can we deduce from it?

What does this look like in practice?

- Counting the number and tracking what type of books are taken out of the library after your reading program (quantitative data!)
- Having staff complete exit interviews for HR offboarding and using that data to design onboard curriculum (qualitative data!)
- Asking students to write thank you notes to presenters highlighting the most important thing they learned during their presentation

5. Find and feed your (future) experts

- Look for them in likely and unlikely places; acknowledge and encourage them!
- Support their efforts with dedicated time and professional development, and create opportunities to flex those muscles.

What does this look like in practice?

- The youth counselor who did an impromptu focus group to decide on topics for their upcoming group series
- The executive assistant who noticed that a subset of participants stopped coming to programming and wondered why
- The grant writer who spent their evening redesigning a graph to make the headline more prominent and the visual more dynamic



Spotlight Discussion

Rie Poirier-Campbell, Executive Director, Hartford Performs
Uneder Ruth, Senior Manager, YWCA Hartford Region

“Inspiring Student Success through the Arts”

Student programs

- Teaching artists give students creative new entry points into English, math, science and social studies curriculum
- Students find new ways to express what they know

Professional Learning for Educators

- Teachers learn creative arts techniques to make their lessons more engaging and effective
- Teachers can assess student understanding through more than just written tests

4 full-time, 2 part-time staff

10-12 classrooms served every school day

3,000 program hours per year

“Learning is Good”

- We need our report card too!
- Knowing what works is important
 - So you can do more of it
 - So you can teach successful strategies to others
- Prompts continuous improvement
- Connects all staff to mission
- Think of it as documentation – and storytelling

Evaluating “Creative Coaching”

Goal setting:

- Standards targeted
- Activities – including each party’s role
- Materials to be used – texts, art techniques, vocabulary, instruments, etc.

Data collection:

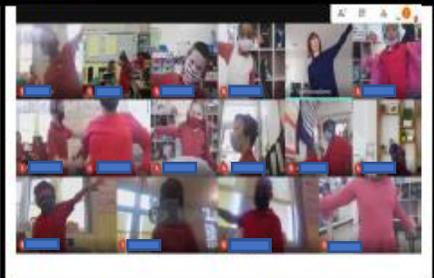
- Program observation, documented using a “look for” form
 - Photographs, showing what happened during the program
 - Post-program interviews after each session, documented with structured note taking
 - Student work
-



1st Graders use dance to explore biodiversity in the non-fiction text *Kids Saving the Rainforest: Charities Started by Kids!* by Melissa Sherman Pearl and David A. Sherman

Students choreographed a Biodiversity Rainforest Dance depicting an animal in each of the different layers of the rainforest while building their vocabulary about the rainforest and biodiversity from the non-fiction text *Kids Saving the Rainforest: Charities Started by Kids!*

The choreographer's tools box includes the dance vocabulary: levels, interesting shapes, flow, stillness, and locking. Students use their body, mind, creativity, and collaboration to choreograph movements for the different animals found in the rainforest.

First	Then	Next	Last
			
<p>Ms. Lewis first warmed-up the students with the choreographer's toolbox mantra and built the foundation for dance vocabulary. Students explored levels (high, medium, and low), made interesting shapes with their bodies, and practiced slow and fast movements using animals as inspiration (ie. Slow like a Sloth or low like a jaguar).</p>	<p>Then during a co-teaching session, students and teachers started to create a rainforest dance depicting the 4 layers of the rainforest including the plants and animals that live in each layer: forest floor, understory, canopy, and emergent.</p> <p>In the next co-teaching session, the dance structure was introduced with a beginning, middle and end. Students started with a biodiversity movement, followed by 1 animal movement in each layer of the rainforest and finally ending the dance in stillness. Some students created animal masks and brought in costumes in their eagerness to add to the performance. Students learned locking movements for more cultural relevance, which were added to the dance.</p> <p>Finally, the teachers lead the warm-up and guided the rainforest dance from beginning to end, putting it all together to music.</p>		

Literacy Objectives / Learning Targets

(Based on the CCSS)

RI. 1.1 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

RI.1.4 Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text.

RI.1.3 Describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.

Arts Objectives / Learning Targets

(Based on the National Core Arts Standards)

Dance: Grade 1: Choose movements that express an idea or emotion or follow a musical phrase.

Teacher Goal and Reflections

Teachers' Goals: I want to feel confident leading students in more movement activities related to vocabulary that add engagement. I want to have more structure in leading students in movement activities and student-centered storytelling. I want my students to have fun!

Teachers' Reflections:

This was a great way to learn and help with vocabulary. It was especially useful with my low vocabulary student. This helped the students with their understanding of the layers of the rainforest and animals. Using movement enhanced the vocabulary and allowed us to slow down and go deeper into the text. One student who usually interrupts everything was so on task! I am amazed that you can actually use dance to enhance the lesson, not just with literature but informational text as well.

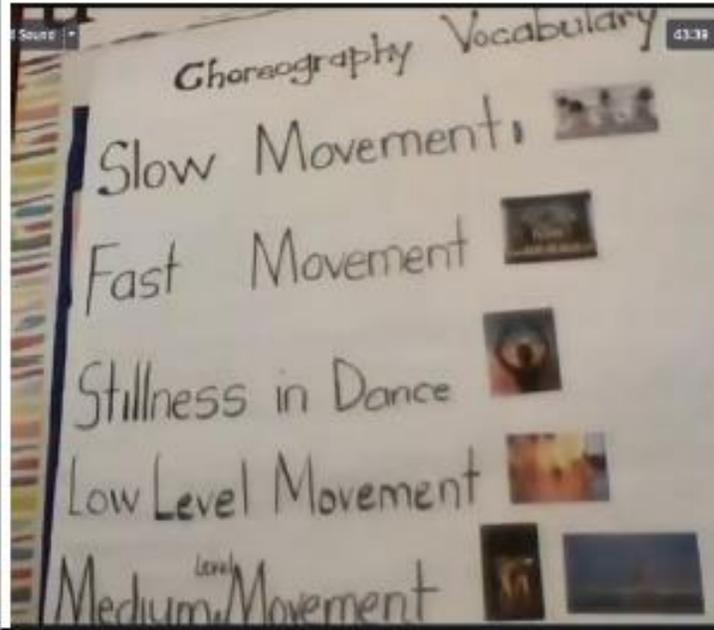
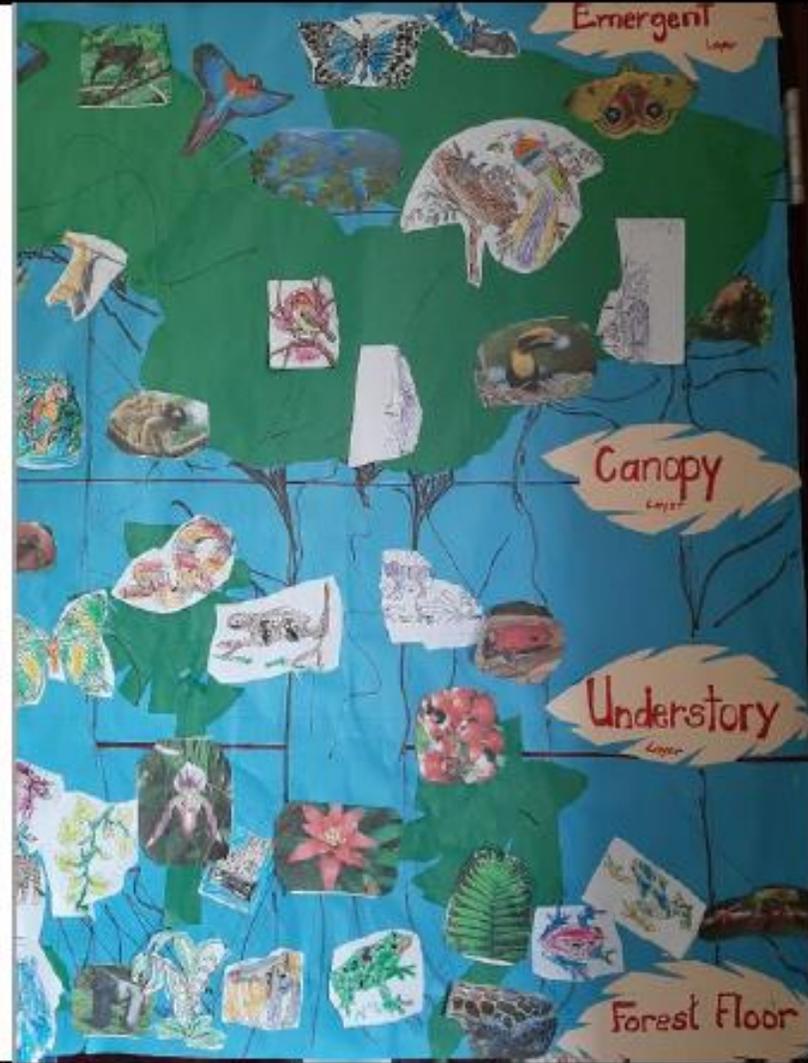
Teaching Artist Reflection:

It was great to see the confidence in the teachers grow week to week in being able to lead the movement themselves. I think the repetition from each session helped build that confidence. It was nice to hear that the student was on task and wanting to participate in the final session. We proved that students can be engaged and moving while teaching remotely and how effective doing movement remotely can be.

Images of Teachers leading



Examples of Student Work



Rainforest

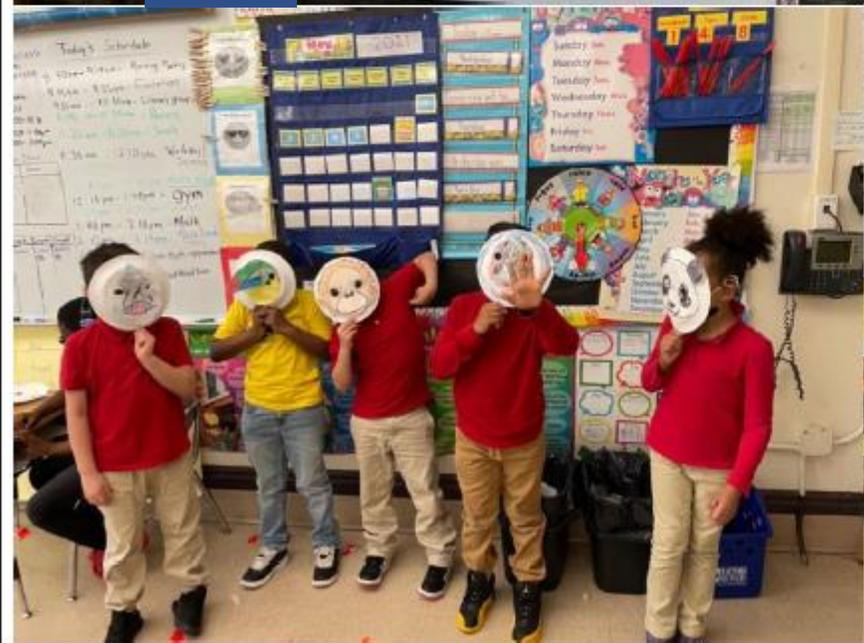
What We Know	What We Want to Know	What We Learned
It was a bit there's a lot of lot of animals	old species animals that are extinct	There are four layers in the rainforest.
there's toucans cool butterflies	fruits that grow in the trees	the emergent canopy, understory and the forest floor.
bugs & alligators and warm and elphants	Can you have a pet tiger	The sloth is slow and don't eat a lot of food.

Name: Juan H. I.

Rainforest

What We Know	What We Want to Know	What We Learned
Know Lots of trees animals	extinct fruit	Layers of the trees Emergent Canopy
bugs there's a lot butterflies	animals? eat	Understory Forest floor
toucan	tiger for a pet	

Name: Israh



YWCA Hartford Region is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all. For over 150 years, YWCA Hartford Region has served women and families in greater Hartford creating a legacy that places it at the forefront of movements for social justice and continuously working to strengthen communities.

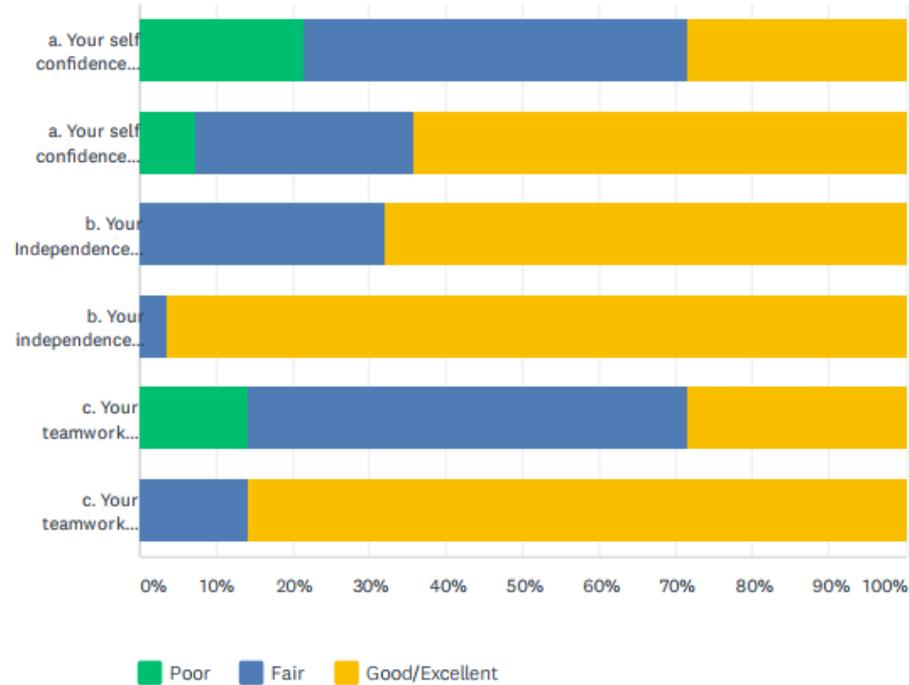
- **Early Learning and Childcare Centers** offers convenient, affordable, quality childcare for infants, toddlers and preschoolers. Our high-quality teachers help foster a love of learning with activities that stimulate physical, mental, social, and emotional development. Programs are located in Hartford, East Hartford, South Windsor and West Hartford.
- **YW Kidslink** offers safe, fun and convenient before and after school care for children in kindergarten through 5th grade. We have **YW Kidslink** programs in Bolton, Rocky Hill and West Hartford.
- **Young Women's Leadership Corps (YWLC)** is a free afterschool program that aims to empower young women to identify and achieve educational and personal goals. Young women develop personal leadership skills, increase their financial capabilities and prepare for post-secondary education while exploring career options. **YWLC** programs are located in Bloomfield, East Hartford, Hartford, and Windsor.
- **YW Career Women** launched in 2013 to provide support, information and advocacy for women with families completing a college degree that will lead to a job with financial security. **YW Career Women** works with students at Capital Community College and Manchester Community College to balance education, family and a career while overcoming obstacles.
- **Soromundi Commons** is an innovative supportive housing facility that offers an emergency shelter for women and permanent affordable apartments for women and men who have experienced homelessness. This nationally-recognized model offers a continuum of services on-site, including case management, employment support, healthcare, and a community learning center. YWCA Hartford Regions Community
- **Community Engagement and Advocacy** Engagement and Advocacy Department advocates for policy change across a broad range of economic, health, safety, and racial justice issues. Our gender-based advocacy efforts are rooted in addressing the systemic and structural barriers to equity, opportunity, and security for women, girls, people of color, and other marginalized communities.

“Use what you have.”



Q4 How would you rate the following?

Answered: 28 Skipped: 0



	POOR	FAIR	GOOD/EXCELLENT	TOTAL
a. Your self confidence BEFORE participating in YWLC	21% 6	50% 14	29% 8	28
a. Your self confidence AFTER participating in YWLC	7% 2	29% 8	64% 18	28
b. Your Independence BEFORE participating in YWLC	0% 0	32% 9	68% 19	28
b. Your independence AFTER participating in YWLC	0% 0	4% 1	96% 27	28
c. Your teamwork abilities BEFORE participating in YWLC	14% 4	57% 16	29% 8	28
c. Your teamwork abilities AFTER participating in YWLC	0% 0	14% 4	86% 24	28

FINDINGS

A substantial majority of 2021 YWLC respondents rated their skills as *Good or Excellent* AFTER participating in YWLC, and there were substantial changes** for those respondents when they compared their own skills before an after participating (**results are reported for 8 participants from Bloomfield High School, 3 from Windsor High School, 10 from the Saturday program and 28 from the Summer Program**).

Table 1: Girls' assessment of changes in their skills AFTER participating in YWLC

% of participants who rated their skills as <i>Good or Excellent</i>		Before	After	CHANGE
a.	Self Confidence	31%	75%	44
b.	Conversation skills	35%	75%	40
c.	Preparation for the workforce/career awareness	49%	76%	27
d.	Interpersonal Skills	60%	83%	23
e.	Teamwork abilities	46%	90%	44
f.	Independence	68%	96%	28

A total of 40% or more of participating girls rated their networking, financial literacy awareness and interviewing competencies as *Proficient or Expert* AFTER participating. Almost all respondents rated themselves as at least *Advanced Beginners* in these areas (see bullet points below table 2). There were large changes** in the proportion of girls who rated themselves as *Proficient or Expert* in each area.

Table 2: Girls' assessment of their own competencies AFTER participating in YWLC

% of participants who rated themselves as <i>Proficient or Expert in the following competencies</i>		Before	After	CHANGE
a	Making professional and community connections (networking)	7%	46%	39
b	Financial literacy awareness	17%	52%	35
c	Interviewing Skills	20%	42%	22



Where Do We Go From Here?

Breakout rooms!

To discuss:

Based on today's discussion, what practical action(s) can you take to move toward more evaluative thinking at your organization?



Wrap Up and Questions

- Identify one action based on today's discussion.
- Commit to it - write yourself a note, send yourself an email, add it to your to do list.

1. Learning is good.
2. Focus on the Ws.
3. Pick a destination.
4. Use what you have.
5. Find and feed your (future) experts.

Options for More Discussion

1. Stick around
2. Email me: Elena Ragusa, elena@driveevaluation.com
3. Come to our next session (October 13)

Contact our experts:

- Rie Poirier-Campbell, RPoirier@HartfordPerforms.org
- Uneder Ruth, uneder@ywc Hartford.org