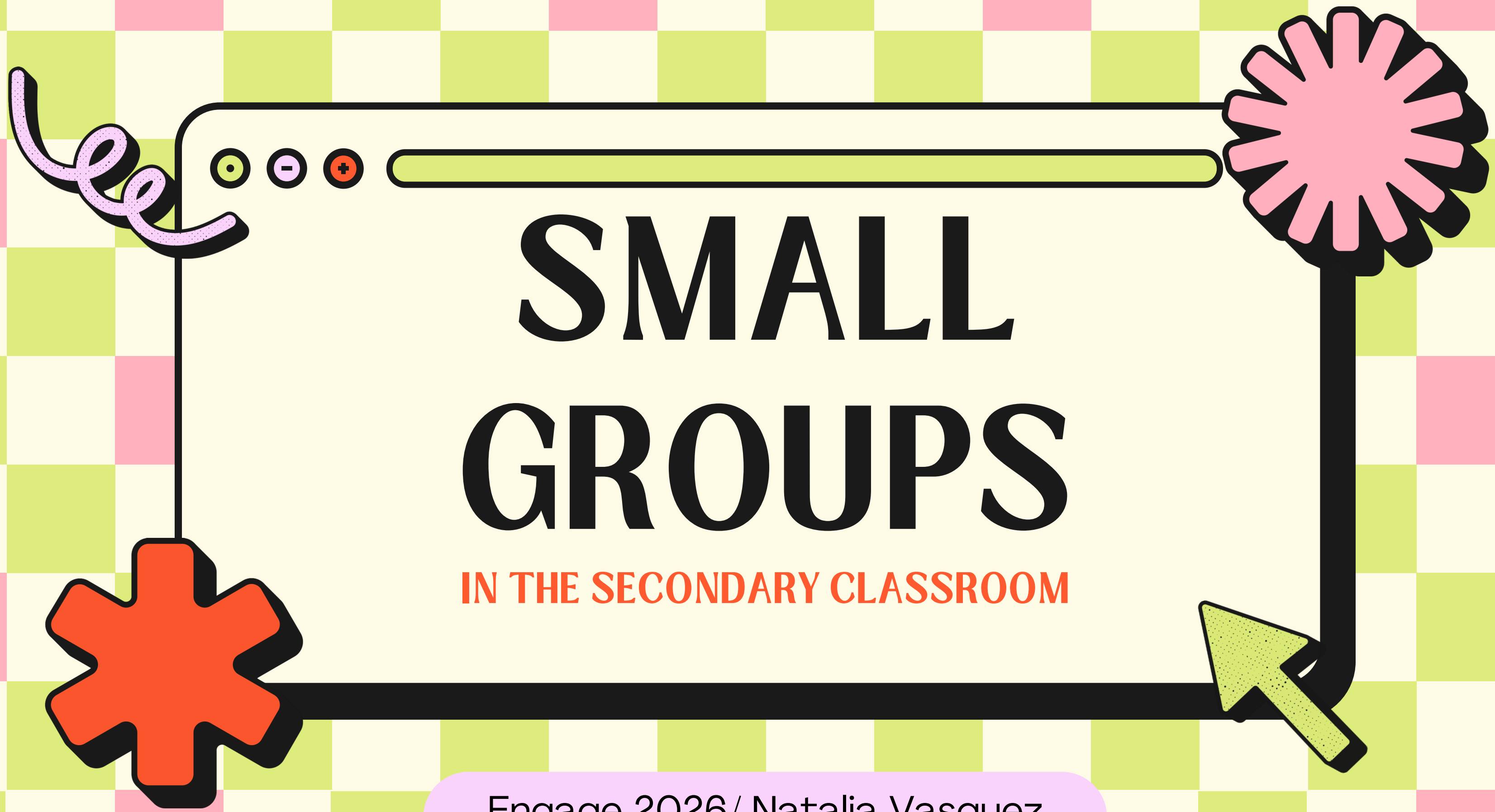


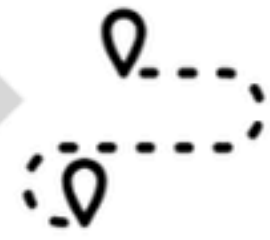


SMALL GROUPS

IN THE SECONDARY CLASSROOM

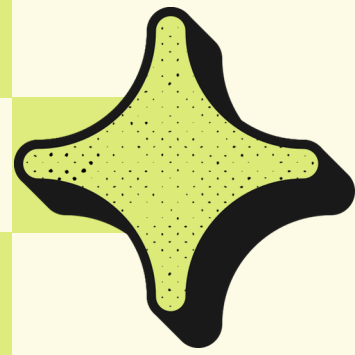
Engage 2026/ Natalia Vasquez

Northwest ISD
Professional Learning Expectations
A Culture of Learning

- P** PARTICIPATE POSITIVELY 
- L** LISTEN FOR AND SHARE DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES WITH RESPECT 
- N** NAVIGATE LEARNING WITH A GROWTH MINDSET 
- I** IDENTIFY HOW YOU WILL APPLY THIS LEARNING TO YOUR WORK 
- S** SET GOALS AND PLAN NEXT STEPS 
- D** DEMONSTRATE PROFESSIONALISM 

**TO RECEIVE CREDIT FOR THIS SESSION,
MAKE SURE YOU COMPLETE THE
SURVEY AT THE END**

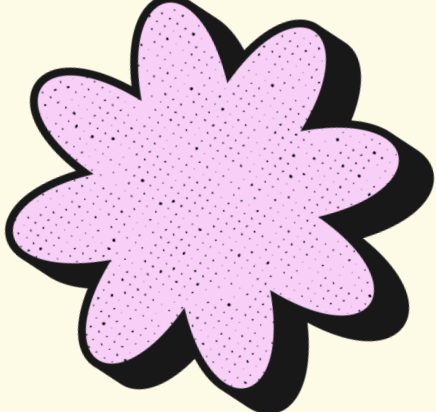




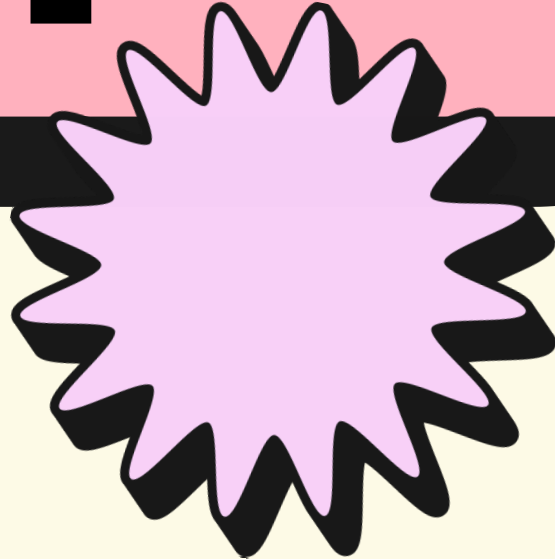
WELCOME!

- Here are some things I hope you will get from today:
 - How to assemble your small groups
 - Establishing routines to make small groups thrive
 - Structuring small group lessons
 - Weekly small group layout ideas

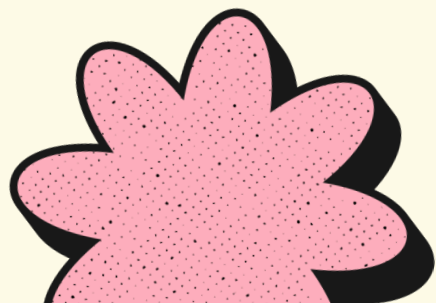




#SHAREOUT



HOW HAVE YOU
IMPLEMENTED SMALL
GROUPS IN THE PAST?



VIDEO LESSON

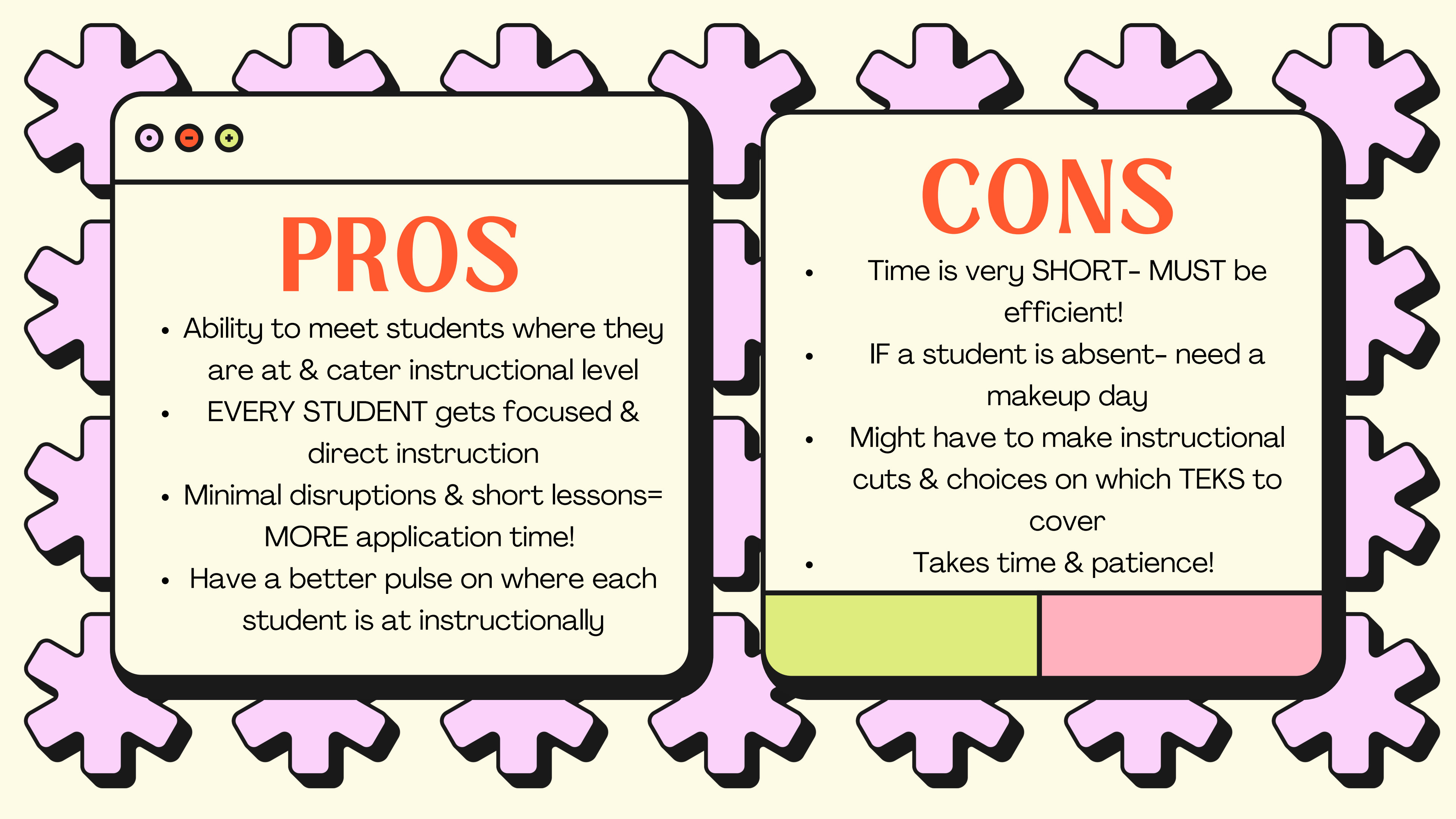
- Today you will get a taste of what it is like to be in my classroom as a student!
- When implementing small group instruction, I often film a short video lesson for students who are in their whole group lesson.

IND ACTIVITY

- Students have an activity that they participate in as another independent activity option.
- Today you will read through an article about sustainable small group strategies.

SMALL GROUP

- After some time, I will call you over for a small group session with me!
- In this group, you will get the feel for the timing and other instructional strategies that I implement in my small groups.



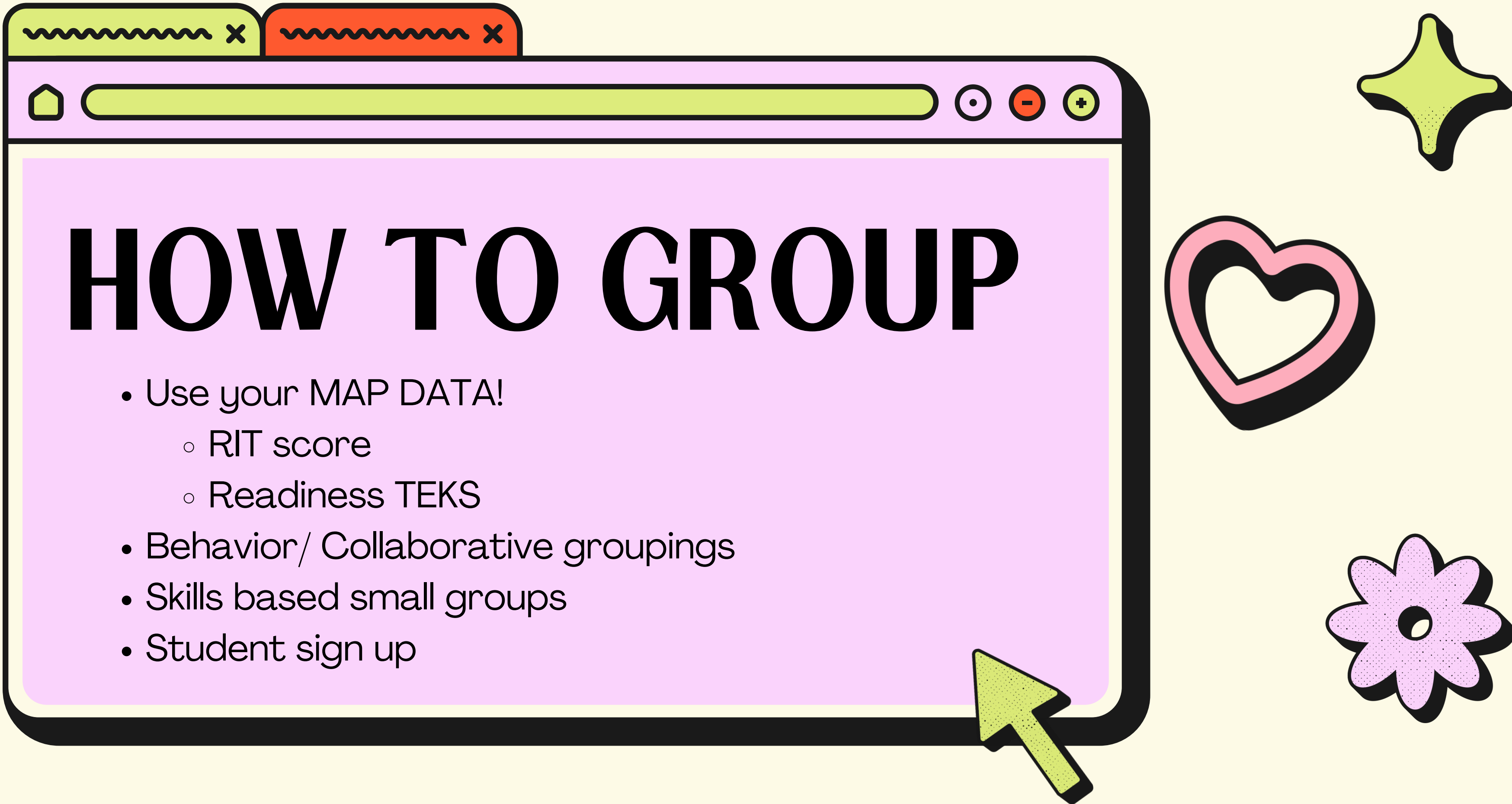
PROS

- Ability to meet students where they are at & cater instructional level
- EVERY STUDENT gets focused & direct instruction
- Minimal disruptions & short lessons= MORE application time!
- Have a better pulse on where each student is at instructionally

CONS

- Time is very SHORT- MUST be efficient!
- IF a student is absent- need a makeup day
- Might have to make instructional cuts & choices on which TEKS to cover
- Takes time & patience!





HOW TO GROUP

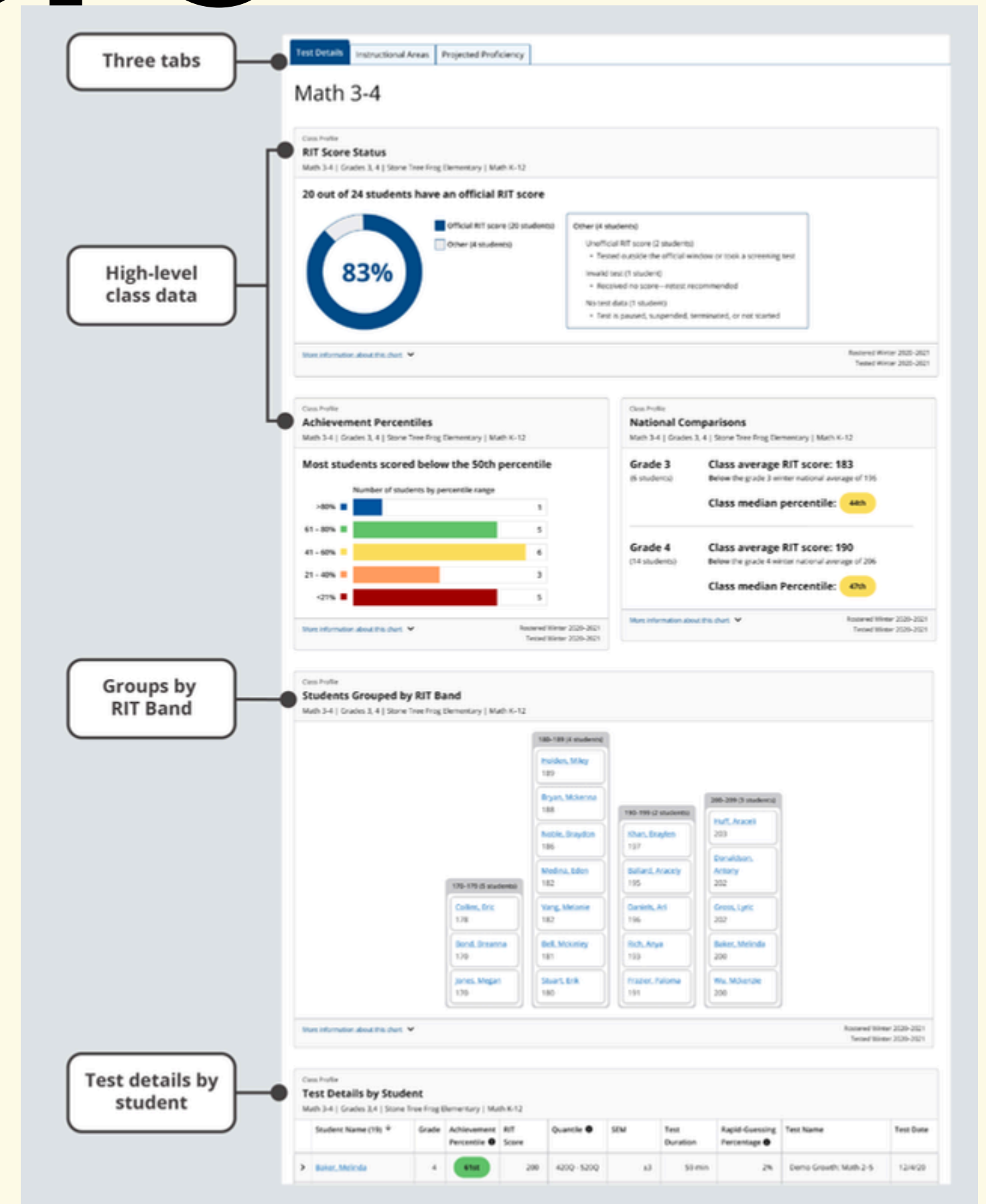
- Use your MAP DATA!
 - RIT score
 - Readiness TEKS
- Behavior/ Collaborative groupings
- Skills based small groups
- Student sign up

RIT BAND GROUPS

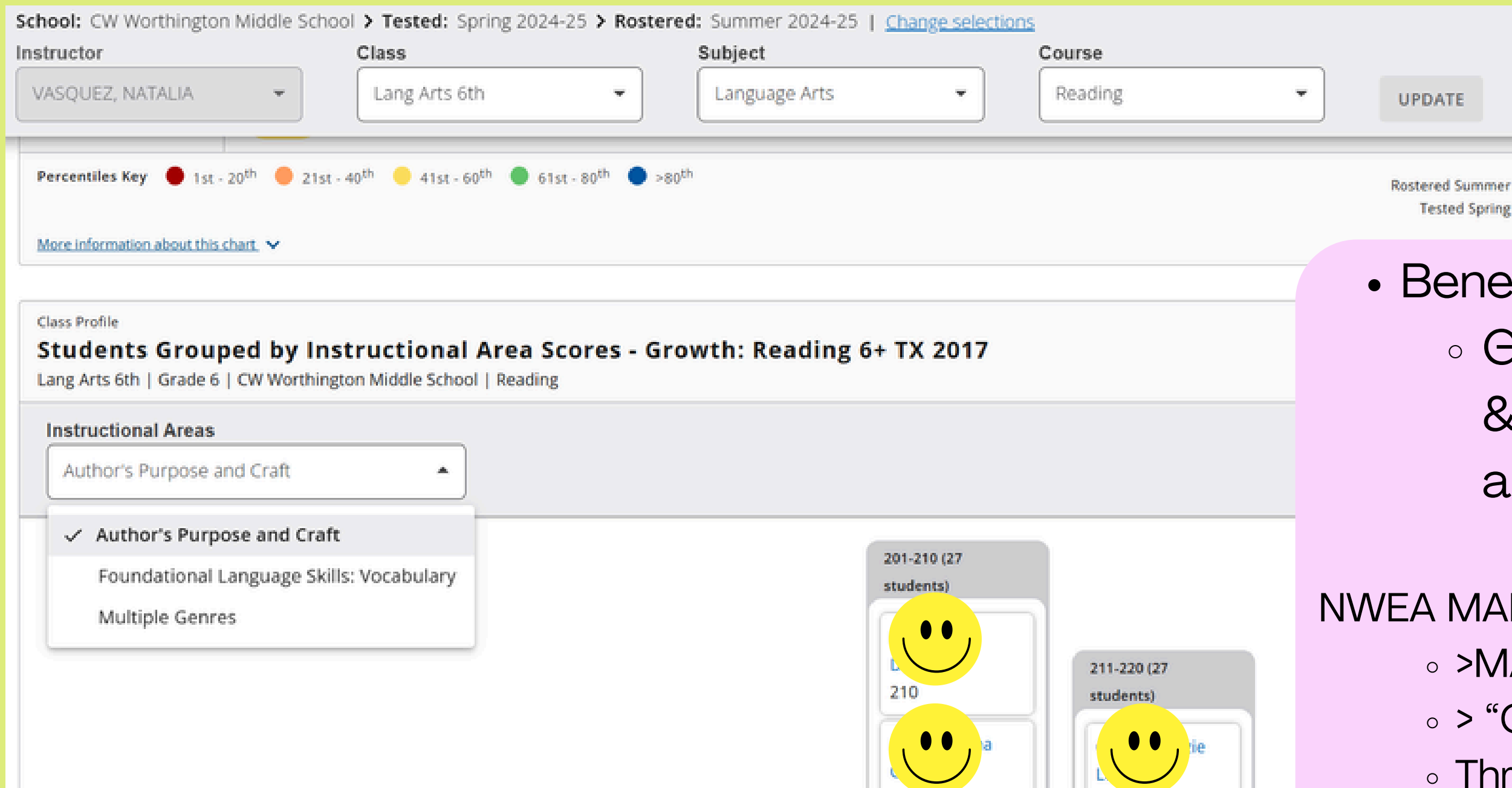
- Benefit of this type of grouping:
 - Students within the same RIT band *typically* have similar instructional needs.

NWEA MAP

- >MAP Growth
 - >Class Profile
 - Alter the drop downs at the top to isolate the class you would like to implement small groups in
 - Scroll down to find the section “students grouped by RIT band”
- Create groups of 4-6 students
 - Alter as needed for behavior & personalities



READINESS TEKS



- Benefit of this type of grouping:
 - Get into the specifics of strengths & weaknesses by instructional area. NOT ALWAYS the same!

NWEA MAP

- >MAP Growth dropdown
- > “Other Reports” >Class Profile
- Three tabs at the top: middle tab “instructional areas”
- Drop down to change instructional areas to see various potential changes in groupings.

READINESS TEKS

The screenshot shows the NWEA MAP Learning Continuum report interface. At the top, there are navigation links for "Map Growth Reports" and "Learning Continuum". Below this, a "Test" dropdown is set to "Growth: Reading 6+ TX 2017". To the right, a "Grade" dropdown is set to "3 grade(s) selected", with a list of grades from Kindergarten to English I. Further right, there are radio buttons for "Group By Standard" (selected) and "Group By Topic". Below these are tabs for score ranges: 151-160, 161-170, 171-180, 181-190, 191-200, 201-210, and 211-220. The "201-210" tab is active, showing a purple header "RIT 201-210" and a list of skills: "Foundational Language Skills: Vocabulary", "Multiple Genres", and "Author's Purpose and Craft". Below this, a section titled "Foundational Language Skills: Vocabulary" is expanded, showing a sub-section "Context Clues and Reference" with a detailed description of standard 5.3.A: "use print or digital resources to determine meaning, syllabication, pronunciation, and word origin".

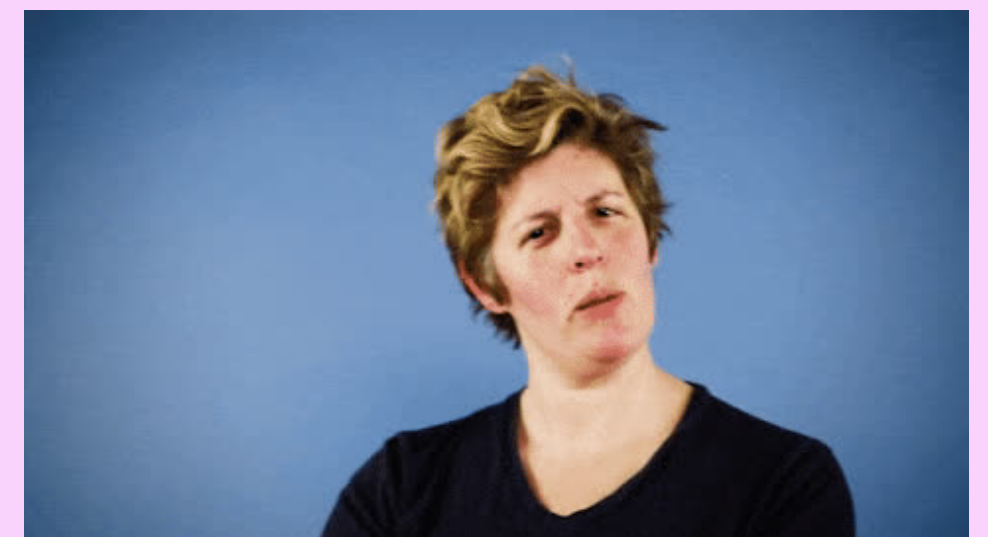
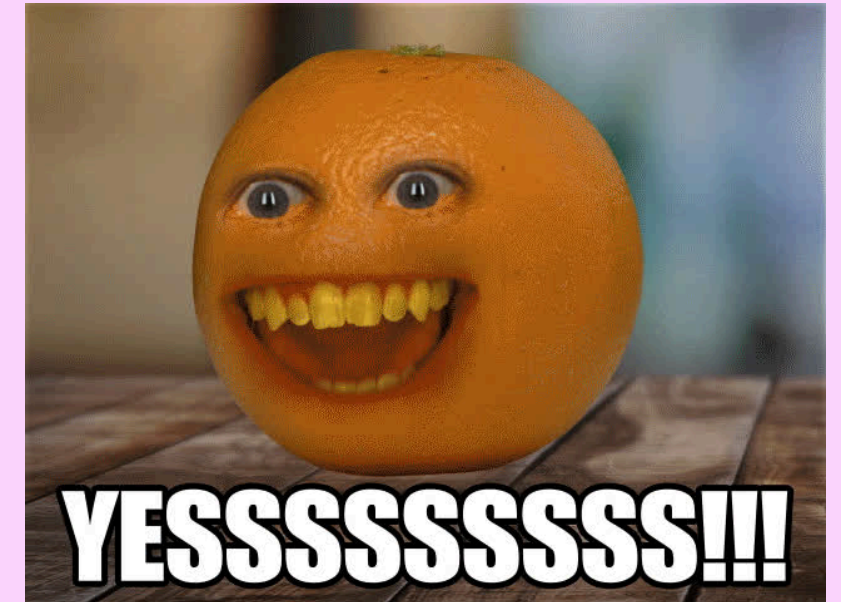
- Can take this a step further by using the “Learning Continuum” report to help you develop small group material.

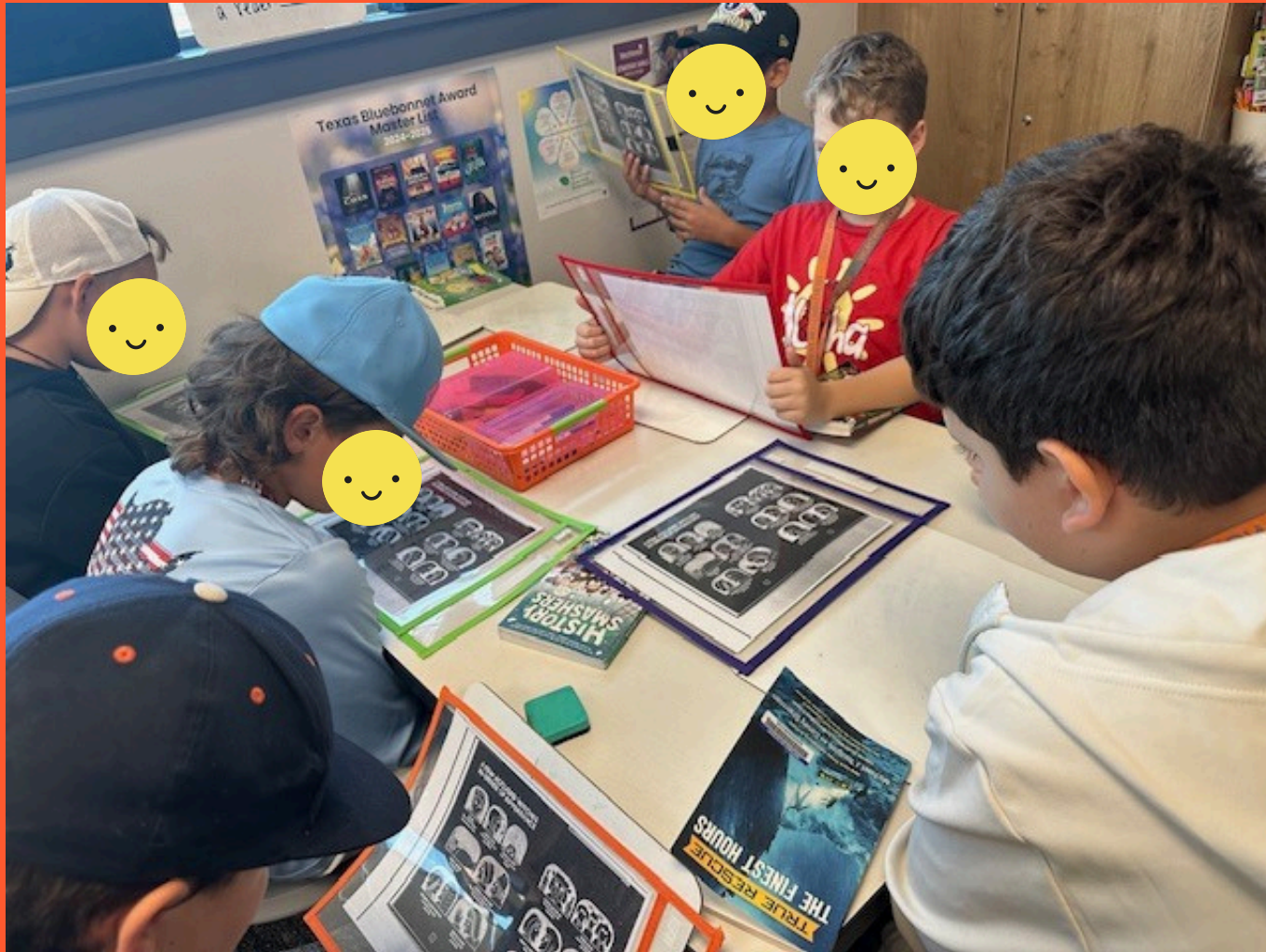
NWEA MAP

- >MAP Growth dropdown
- > “Other Reports” >Learning Continuum
- Select your test: ex- Growth: Reading 6+
- In grey bar at the top: group by standard (this changes the language below to the be TEKS based references)
- Drop down to select grade (can select multiple)
- Change the instructional area by clicking it

BEHAVIOR/PERSONALITY

- Benefit of this type of grouping:
 - Allows for variation in discussion and promotes class collaboration with opportunities for students to help each other across instructional levels.
- Examples:
 - The “know it all” kid
 - THAT kid (maybe behavior problem)
 - The SUPER shy kid who give you LITERALLY NOTHING (Gez-Z stare)
 - THE BROS (definitely a behavior problem)
 - That one popular girl
 - The kid that is confused all the time and rarely knows what we are talking about but STILL raises their hand to answer every question





- Benefit of this type of grouping:
 - Can specifically address weaknesses in class data, teach a specific skill in a focused way, or check in on progress over a larger project.
- Examples:
 - Writing based small groups:
 - Introductions
 - Body Paragraphs
 - Closings
 - Using a rubric to make revisions
 - Editing skills
 - Large project skills
 - How to use library research databases
 - Writing a references page
 - Evaluating notes for comprehensive ideas
 - Plagiarism
 - Grammar
 - Test taking strategies for editing & revision
 - Application, Application, Application!

SKILLS BASED

STUDENT SIGN UP

- Benefit of this type of grouping:
 - Student choice allows for immediate buy in! Can still target specific areas, but allows students to voice what they need!
- Examples:
 - This format is great to use during “slow” seasons in the classroom (ex: post STAAR)
 - I create a sign up sheet for each class period.
 - The date is typically one day a week for the next three weeks or it can be three consecutive dates of the following week.
 - Students put their name down for a spot, with room for alternates if they change their mind.

Small Group Sign Ups				
Topic				1:1 writing conference
Day				TBD
I would like a spot to review this!	1.	1.	1.	1.
	2.	2.	2.	2.
	3.	3.	3.	3.
	4.	4.	4.	4.
	5.	5.	5.	5.
	6.	6.	6.	6.
	*	*	*	*
	*	*	*	*



ESTABLISHING ROUTINES

Routines are the foundation of effective small groups in the secondary classroom. Some common routines to establish are:

- ✿ Expectations/Procedures while in small group
- ✿ Expectations/Procedures if not in a small group
 - ✿ How to ask for help
 - ✿ What is the required work due?

SMALL GROUP EXPECTATIONS:

Q: How do students know it's their day for small group?

- Daily Agenda: "Today is a small group day!"
- Slides indicate whose turn it is in small groups.
- On the board I write what small group participants need to bring to the table.
- Once in small group students know to grab a whiteboard, marker, and eraser.

SMALL GROUPS
2ND PERIOD

GROUP 1

- CALEB
- SHALOM
- JASON
- FATIMA
- KY'AIRE

GROUP 2

- A'LONZO
- JAI
- LUKE
- MADELYN
- AMAYA
- KENDALL

NOT IN A GROUP TODAY?

1. WATCH THE LESSON VIDEO
2. COMPLETE THE DIGITAL JOURNAL SLIDE 7
3. WEEKLY READING + NOTES
4. WORK ON VOCAB SLIDES

WHOLE GROUP EXPECTATIONS

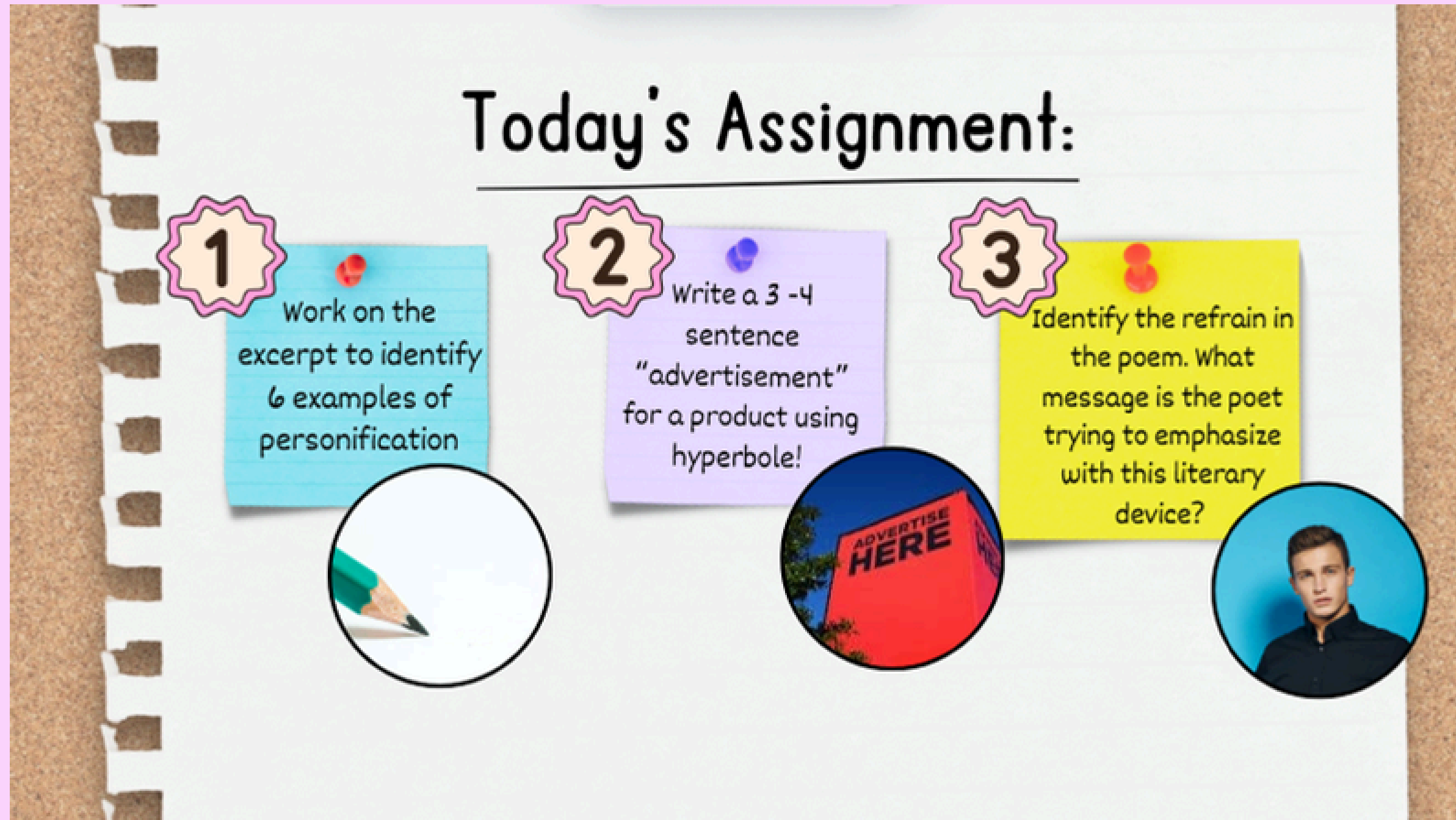


Example of a menu board that stays up on the screen while small groups are being conducted.

Q: What are the other students not in small group doing?

- Prior to starting small groups we have a day where we practice independent whole group behavior.
- Independent student skills are extremely important:
 - Menu boards
 - Self paced video lessons
 - Checklists

WHOLE GROUP EXPECTATIONS

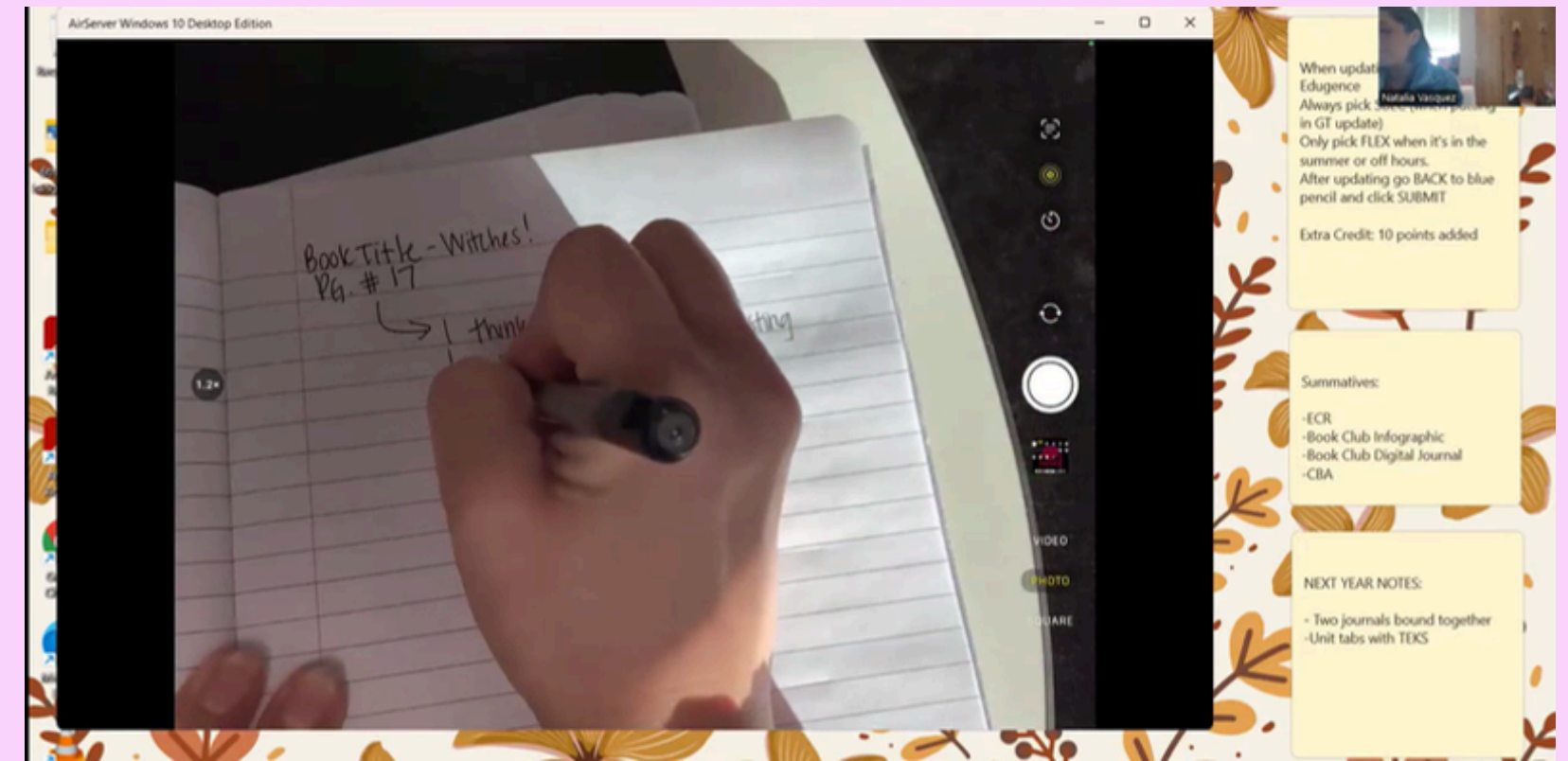
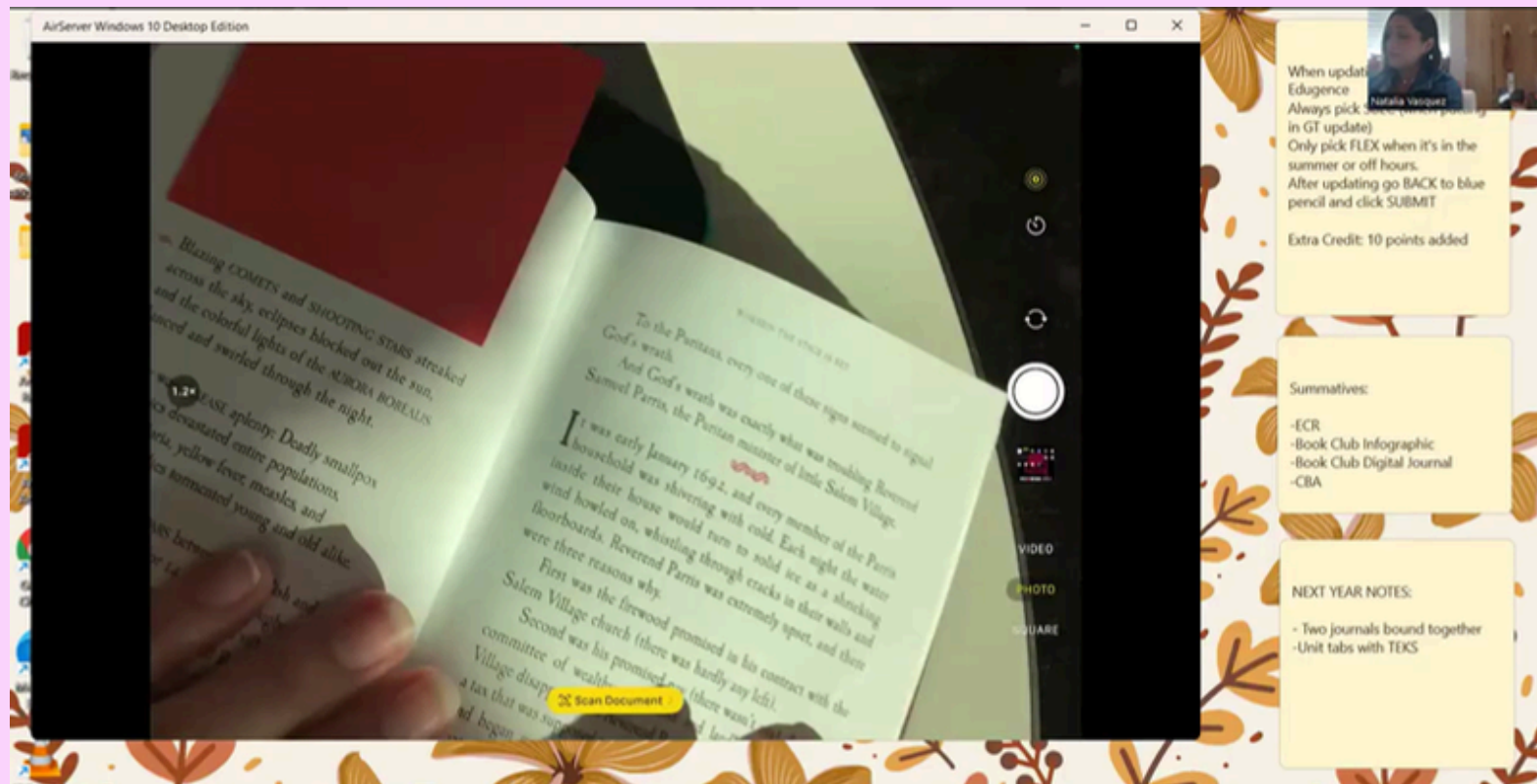


Example of a checklist for accountability.

WHOLE GROUP EXPECTATIONS



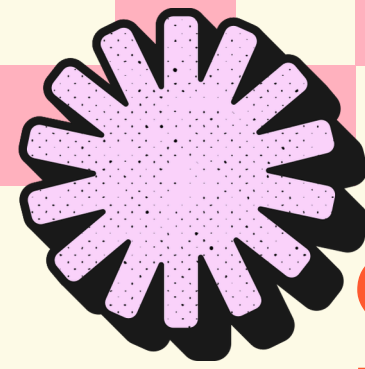
I record my video lessons on Zoom. Students can rewind and rewatch as many times as needed. Each video is a mini-lesson about 10-12 minutes. It includes modeling, and ends with a clear objective of what the finished assignment should look like and when it is due.



HOW CAN STUDENTS ASK FOR HELP?



- Inevitably students will need assistance with the whole group lesson.
 - Encourage INDEPENDENT problem solving first! Video lessons are fantastic for this! Rewind & Rewatch!
 - STRUGGLE TIME: Make an attempt! Start the work- and I will check it when I walk around!
- Sticky note or Parking Lot
 - Students know that they can write a question on a sticky note and place it in a pre-determined spot.
 - Another option is a parking lot for questions on the board.
 - Students questions are attended to as I walk around during the class period.
 - BANNED: “I don’t know” “I need help”



STRUCTURING YOUR SMALL GROUP LESSONS

Small group lessons can take any structure you want!

Here are some things that have been working for me:

- Mini-lesson format
- 10-12 minutes in total
- Collaboration opportunities (offer short bursts of check-ins on the class).



SMALL GROUP STRUCTURE

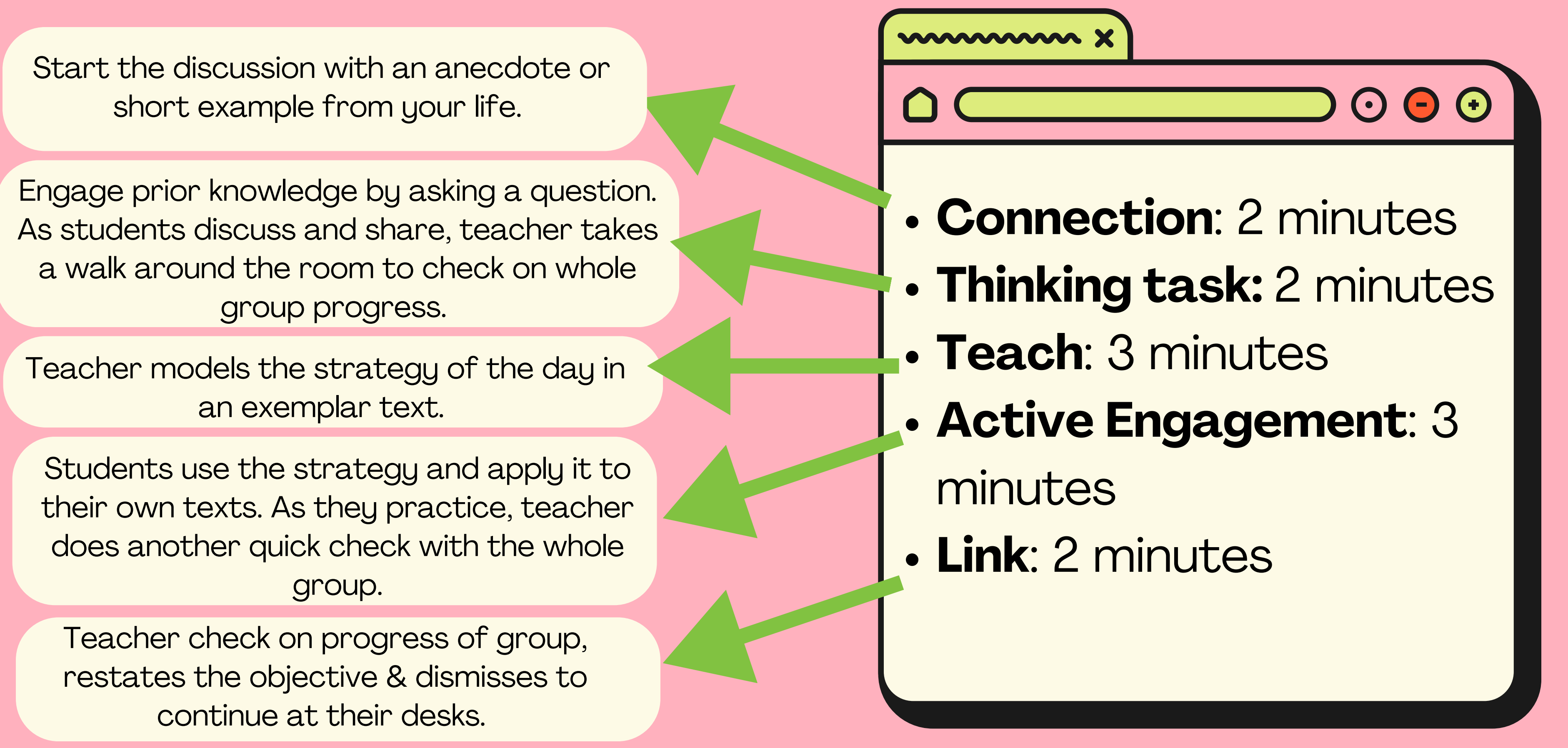
Start the discussion with an anecdote or short example from your life.

Engage prior knowledge by asking a question. As students discuss and share, teacher takes a walk around the room to check on whole group progress.

Teacher models the strategy of the day in an exemplar text.

Students use the strategy and apply it to their own texts. As they practice, teacher does another quick check with the whole group.

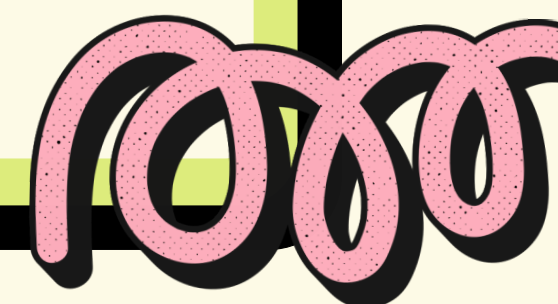
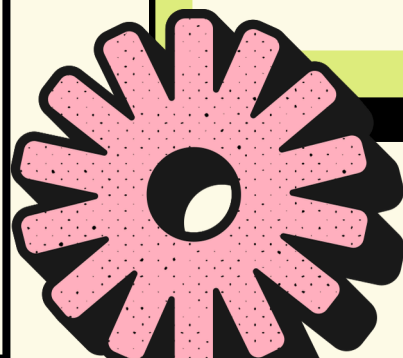
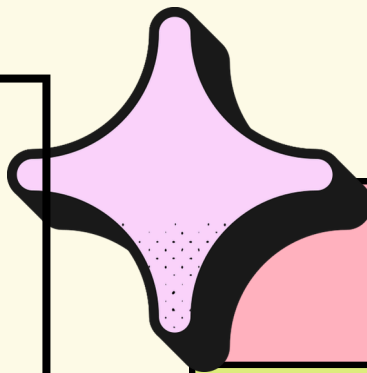
Teacher check on progress of group, restates the objective & dismisses to continue at their desks.

- 
- The diagram illustrates a small group structure. On the right, a large yellow rounded rectangle contains a list of five activities with their durations. Five green arrows point from each activity to a corresponding text box on the left. The text boxes are also yellow rounded rectangles. The background is a solid pink color.
- **Connection:** 2 minutes
 - **Thinking task:** 2 minutes
 - **Teach:** 3 minutes
 - **Active Engagement:** 3 minutes
 - **Link:** 2 minutes

PROS

CONS

One group a day	Two days a week layout	Three days a week layout
One 12-15 minute group per day Creates consistency & daily routines More time for whole group	3 groups a day or 2 larger groups T/W Allows more whole group instructional time	See two small groups a day T/W/TH whole group lessons anchor the week.
Grading difficulties Absences	Time management HIGLY EFFICIENT Larger groups	Less whole group instruction More prep for whole group ind. activities



WEEKLY SMALL GROUP LAYOUT

CONTACT INFO

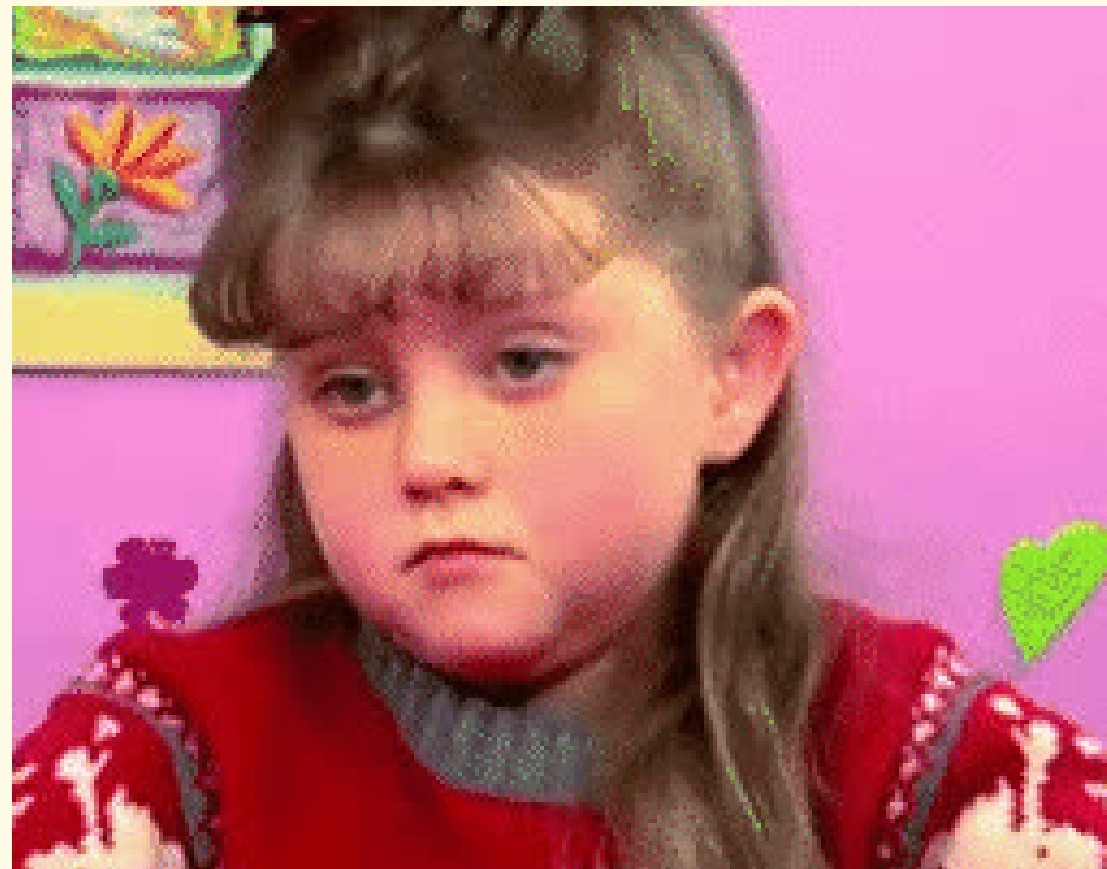
Natalia Vasquez

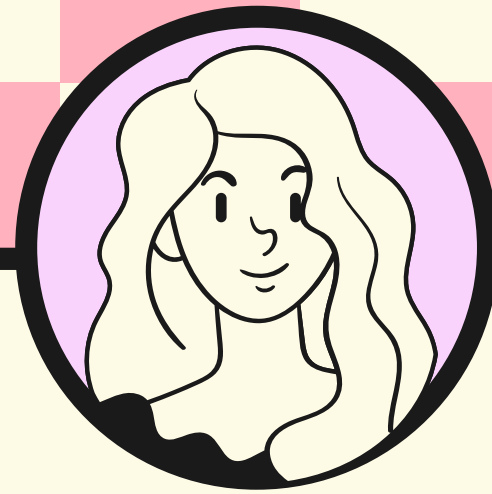
6th Grade English

Worthington Middle School

Natalia.Vasquez2@nisdtx.org

QUESTIONS?





**TAKE SOME TIME TO
CREATE A SMALL GROUP
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN!**



Optional





WANT ATTENDANCE CREDIT?

To receive attendance credit for all sessions, you **must fill** out the feedback form after each session. You can get to the feedback form by using the tinyurl below or scanning the QR code. Please do so within 30 minutes of the session ending. You will receive a copy of your response, so you can make sure you did your survey and to check attendance. **Save this for your records!**

<https://tinyurl.com/ENGAGE26FB>

SCAN HERE >

