

Making Learning Visible and Looking at Student Work: What's the Relationship?

Educators interested in *Making Learning Visible* will find strong connections to an approach to collaborative inquiry called *Looking at Student Work (LASW)*. We see at least five common elements between the two approaches. Both *MLV* and *LASW*:

- Celebrate and honor students and their work through careful looking and listening
- Deepen understanding about teaching and learning through direct engagement with student work
- Stem from a vision of teaching as inquiry
- Are based on a view of teachers as co-constructors of knowledge
- Emphasize interpretation and reflection as both retrospective and future-oriented processes (toward the creation of additional opportunities for learning)

MLV builds on *LASW* practices in the following ways:

- *MLV* focuses attention on the role of the group as a powerful part of the individual's learning environment.
- Documentation in an *MLV* perspective includes not only work or products generated by students, but also other artifacts of the learning process, such as students' words, photographs, pictures, and video, as well as teachers' interpretation and analysis.
- *MLV* sees documentation as a powerful tool for helping to understand, make visible, and nurture individual and group learning, as well as for thinking more broadly about teaching and learning.
- In *MLV*, students' learning processes and products are often made visible to the entire community (students, teachers, parents, and others). When students' learning is documented in this way, children and adults can revisit and interpret these learning experiences and reflect on how to develop these experiences further.
- Documentation in an *MLV* perspective serves as a memory of what goes on in the classroom, offering students an opportunity for reflection, peer-assessment, and self-assessment.