Using Along Data to Know and Support Each Student

At Along, we think of using data as a flashlight to illuminate, clarify and seek understanding. Use these 5 tips to shine a light on the insights you’re gathering and support your students.

Tip: Bring a learning mindset to looking at the data.

Be curious and reflective about data.

- Ask questions — of yourself and students — to understand the story.
- Surface bright spots and opportunities for growth.
- Gather insights from within Along as well as outside of the tool.
- Ask for and incorporate feedback regularly.
- Be open to making changes based on what you learn.

Remember: Sometimes students need time and opportunity to feel comfortable. Keep it low-stakes for yourself and your students. It can take time and persistence to cultivate relationships.

Resource: A data mindset is just as important for students as it is for educators. Consider ways to teach students how to Share Success Stories as well as Learn From Mistakes and Failures.
Tip: Familiarize yourself with the key data sources in Along.

Visit the Along homepage to see your reflection history.

Click on a reflection to:
- See which students have responded and which have not.
- Review all student responses for a specific reflection question.
- View your replies to specific students for that reflection question.
- Review notes you added while watching students’ reflections.

Go to the Students page to see all your students in one place.

Click on a column header to sort the data.
- Ask yourself: Who is responding frequently and who might need a reminder?

Click on a student name to see information for that individual.
- Ask yourself: What am I learning about this student that can inform my practice?

Resources: Want to learn more about the Students page? Check out the article "How do I use the Student Dashboard?" from the Along Help Center.
Tip: Include your students in the process.

Communicate

Share your observations and voice questions you have with students.

- Let students know you notice when they share and when they don’t—you want to hear from everyone.
- Reach out directly to students who haven't responded. Seek to understand why they are not responding. Build trust by supporting those students to feel seen and known.

Collaborate

Involve students in decisions to create buy-in and build trust. You might ask:

- What day of the week should I send new reflection questions?
- Why did one or more students not respond to a particular question?
- If students have suggestions for topics they’d like to reflect on next?

Celebrate

Building relationships takes time and effort. Show students how much you enjoy getting to know them and how much you appreciate them sharing with you.

Resource: Use this activity to find ways students can be involved in classroom decisions.
Tip: Make gathering insights a part of your Along routine.

Incorporating data into your regular routine allows you to return to the central question of equity. It’s a way to devise strategies to reach all learners, not just some.

- Dedicate time toward the process. Allot 15-20 minutes every couple of weeks.
- Use a common process to help you maximize your time.
- Keep your data in a central location, like a notebook or in a running document.
- Add a reminder to your Along calendar.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Along Routines</th>
<th>Example Routines Calendar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Record and share a new reflection question.</td>
<td>Monday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remind students to share their reflections.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review and respond to students’ reflections.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gather insights to support students.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Resource: Protocols are great for interpreting data. Use this 20-minute process designed to support Along educators to gather insights and plan support.
Tip: Be responsive to what you learn from the data.

There are so many ways to be responsive using the information you gather.

You might use the data to:

- Share an exciting observation with one, some or all students.
- Help you decide which reflection question to use next.
- Check in with one or more students.
- Revisit your Along routines to make adjustments or clarify expectations.
- Surface trends to provide support to students. You could support students by:
  - Sharing an observation and asking students to help you understand the information and decide what to do next.
  - Having a class discussion about a recent event or addressing a topic brought to light in student reflections.
  - Using a Classroom Activity from the resources in Along’s Library — like this one — to help students learn how to set and monitor goals.
  - Sending an additional reflection question, to provide support to a subset of students.

Resource: You can use this resource — Reflect On and Promote Psychological Safety—to help you create a safe space for all students to engage in the classroom.

For more educator resources like this one, visit along.org/resources.