



An Introduction to ***Plus, Minus, and Interesting***

Plus, Minus, and Interesting (PMI) is a critical thinking strategy which helps students consider different aspects of a situation, problem, or issue. Students use the PMI framework to identify positive and negative factors, and to highlight ideas of personal interest.

ACTIVITY (time required: 30-40 minutes)

1. Ask students, “Why is it important to think about all sides of an issue or idea?”
2. Explain that identifying the positive and negative factors involved in an issue can help clarify thinking about an idea, and that noting the interesting aspects of an issue can open additional possibilities or raise further questions about the topic.
3. Pose the question: Should all Fairfax County Schools be year-round schools? Ask students to raise their hands to vote on the issue and record the numbers of responses on the board.
4. Share a large version of the PMI chart, and record students’ view of what would be positive (plus), negative (minus), and interesting about year-round school. Ask students to explain their thinking during the class discussion.
5. Discuss the value of the process. Take another “vote” on the issue of year-round schooling and compare the new numbers with the original numbers. Did anyone change his or her opinion after looking at all sides of the issue? Were points raised that were not initially considered?
6. Provide students with an opportunity to complete their own PMI charts about using the PMI thinking strategy. (What are the benefits and drawbacks of using PMI? What makes PMI interesting?)
7. PMI can be used as a prewriting activity to help student reflect on their learning.



PMI Graphic Organizer

Plus	Minus	Interesting