

## 5. Rocks, pebbles and sand as visual representations

**Aim:** This activity allows members of the group to explore and share how they feel about the use of their time in regards to the things they need to know and do as part of their practice. It is best done with another person or in a small group.

1. To provide a starting point for the activity, consider “Rocks, pebbles and sand” metaphor as visual symbolic representations for prioritising the things we know and do in our practice.

***Rocks** are a visual representation for the important things you feel are an absolute **MUST** in your practice. They represent the required things we **know** and **do** that are so important, that everything will fall apart or be destroyed if they do not happen. Rocks are large, difficult to move and the hard edge lines imply rigidity and thus, a must.*

***Pebbles** are a visual representation of the other things that matter in your practice. They represent the things we **know** and **do** that are important for the ongoing running of your practice. Pebbles are smaller than rocks they are round and smooth. They are easier to move than the rocks.*

***Sand** is a visual representation for the small stuff in your practice. They represent the things we **know** and **do** that are not as important for the ongoing running of your practice. The sand's small particles are light and easy to move. However if there is a lot of sand the combined particles will weigh a lot. Sand can also get in the way, covering, the rocks and pebbles.*

Metaphor adapted from Covey, Merrill and Merrill (1994, pp. 88-89).

### Instructions

- Each of the “Container of time” images on the “Visual representations” page has a different combination of rocks, pebbles and sand.
- Each group member considers how **they feel** about the use of *time* in relationship to the required knowledge and the things that need to be done as part of their practice.
- Then select one of the images which best reflects how **they feel**.

### Group and individual reflection

2. Each group member explains to the group their choice and links the reasons to their selected image. If working alone write responses into a reflective journal.

Note to Critical friend: It is important to be flexible as each image can have a number of interpretations and thus the discussion can go in many directions. For example the group may focus on what they believe to be imperative to a teacher's practice. The time they are given to complete tasks or the importance attributed to teachers' knowledge to name a few. Clarify and summarise the theme of the group's discussion before moving onto Question 3.

3. Choose one or more images or introduce a new combination of rocks, pebbles and sand to represent the group's ideal solution to the theme. Use the new image to explain what needs to change in order to achieve the new combination.

### Further reflection and/or Discussion

Use the “Rocks, pebbles and sand data collection sheet” to prioritise and/or the “Container of time” drawing activity to reflect upon the group members conceptualisation of time.



# Visual representations

