



# Talking Story and Inquiry: Student-Led Interviews as Source Material

Kristin Fontichiaro,

University of Michigan School of Information

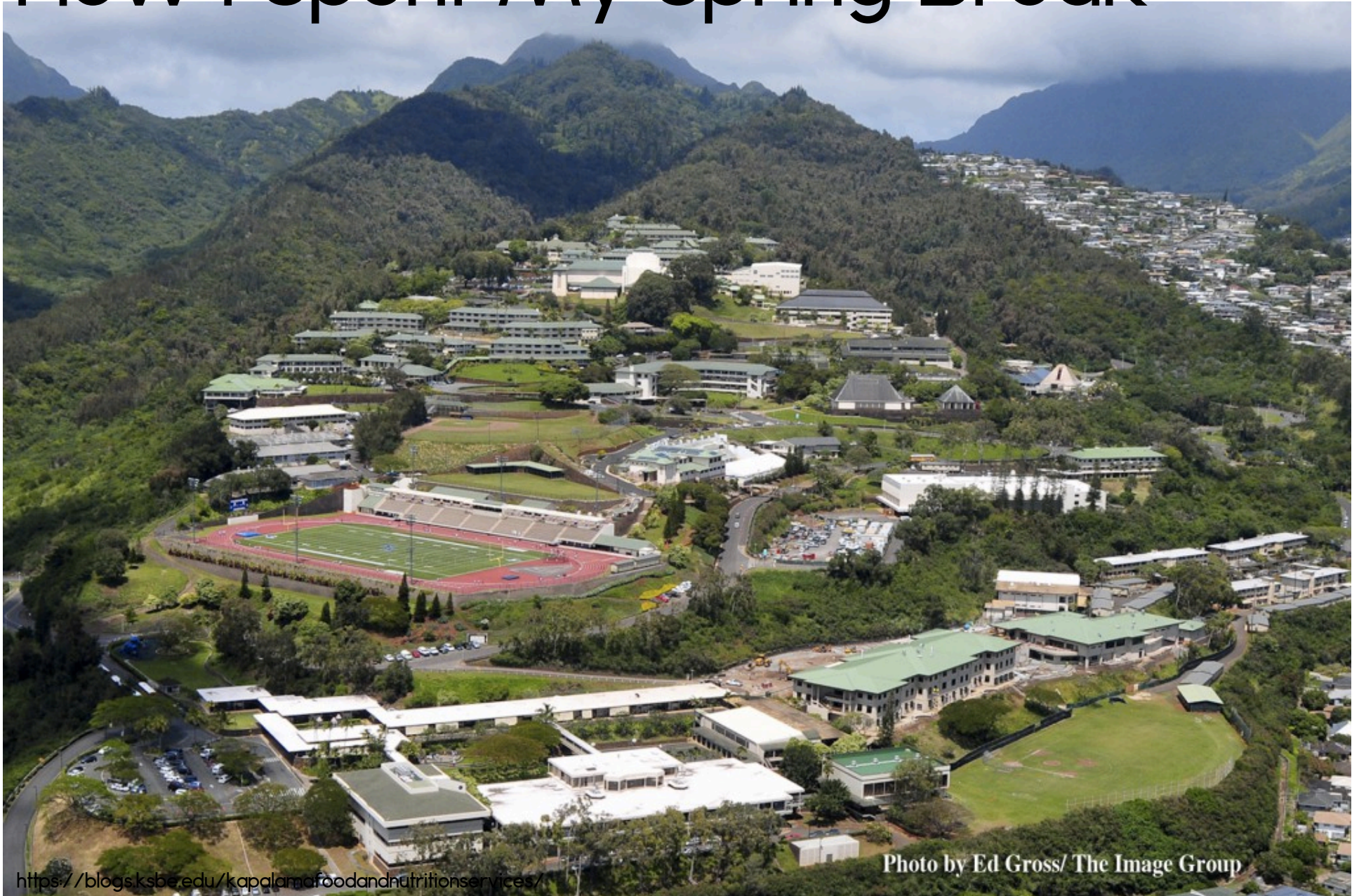
Hawai'i Association of School Librarians

March 7, 2015, 30 minutes

<http://bit.ly/fontblog>



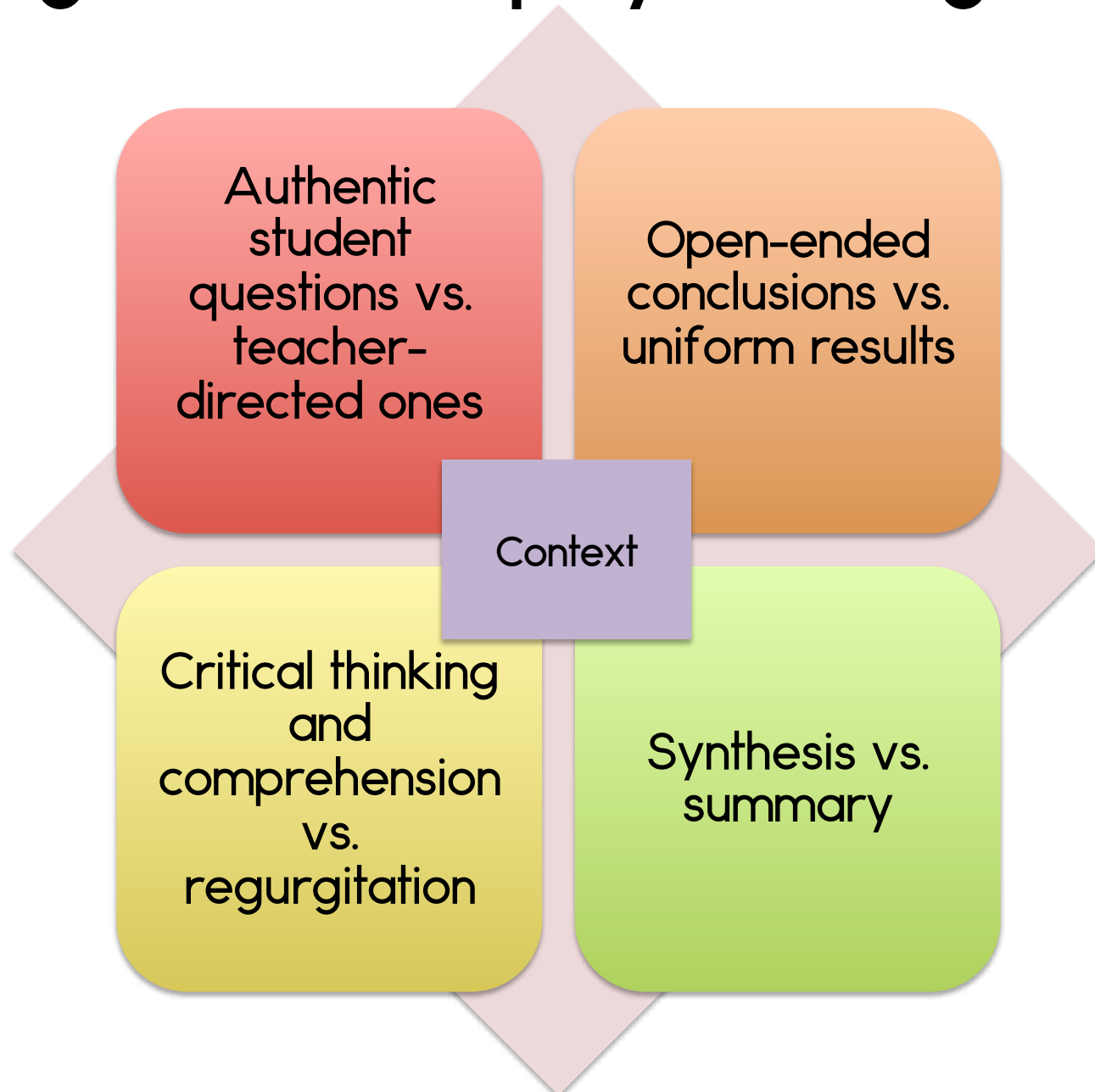
# How I Spent My Spring Break



<https://blogs.ksbe.edu/kapalamafoodandnutritionservices/>

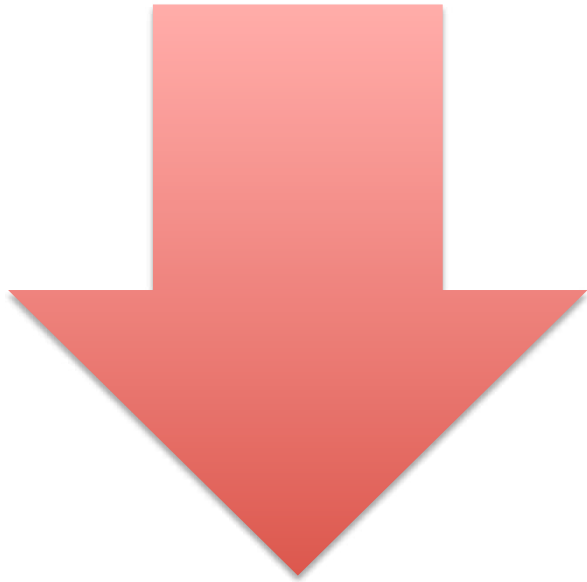
Photo by Ed Gross/ The Image Group

# Core Signals that Inquiry is Going On



The Goal: Successful Authentic  
Inquiry with Young Learners



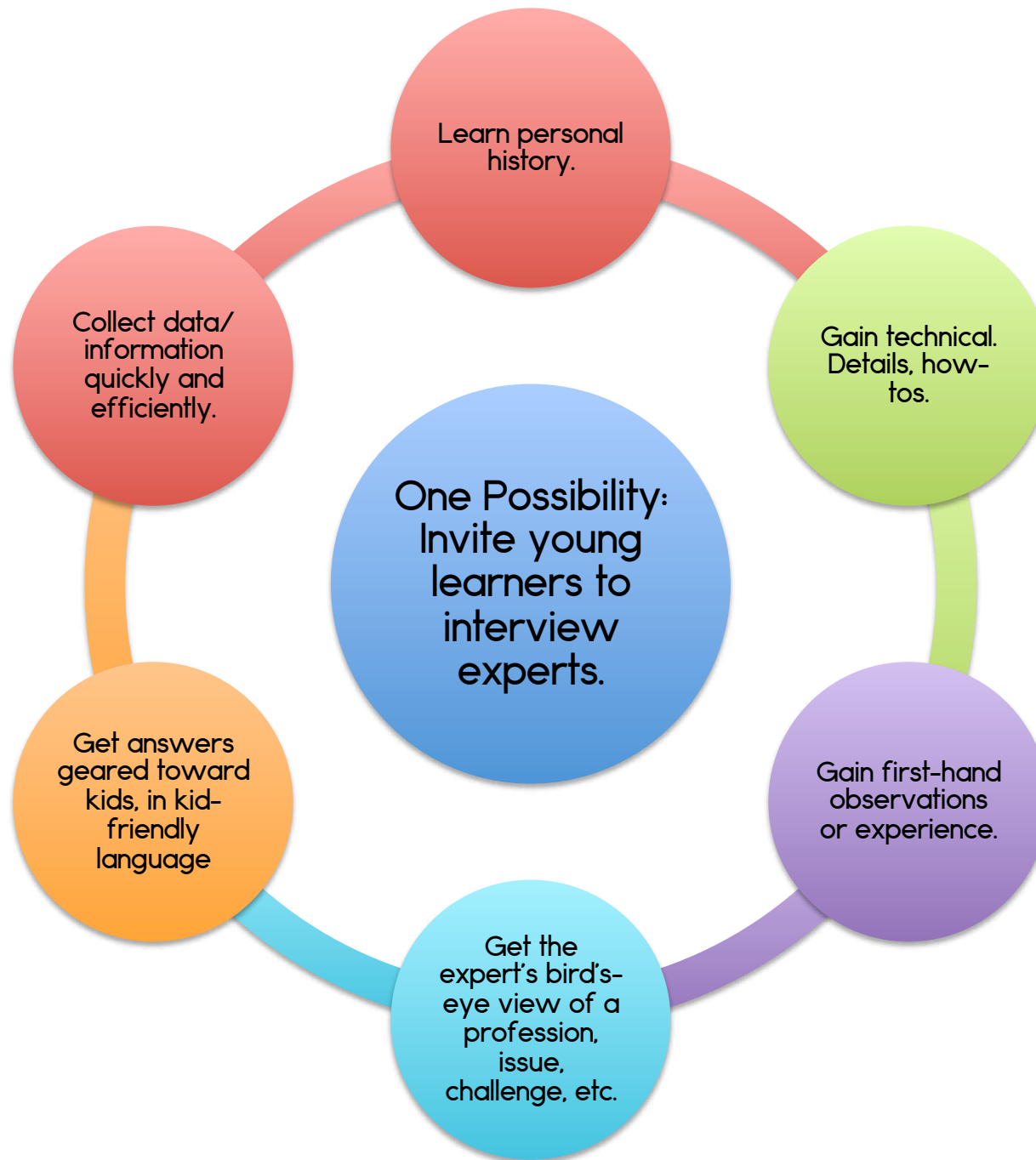


Lack of  
robust  
resources at  
a kid-  
friendly level

Unresolved tension in the profession

Ambitious  
questions

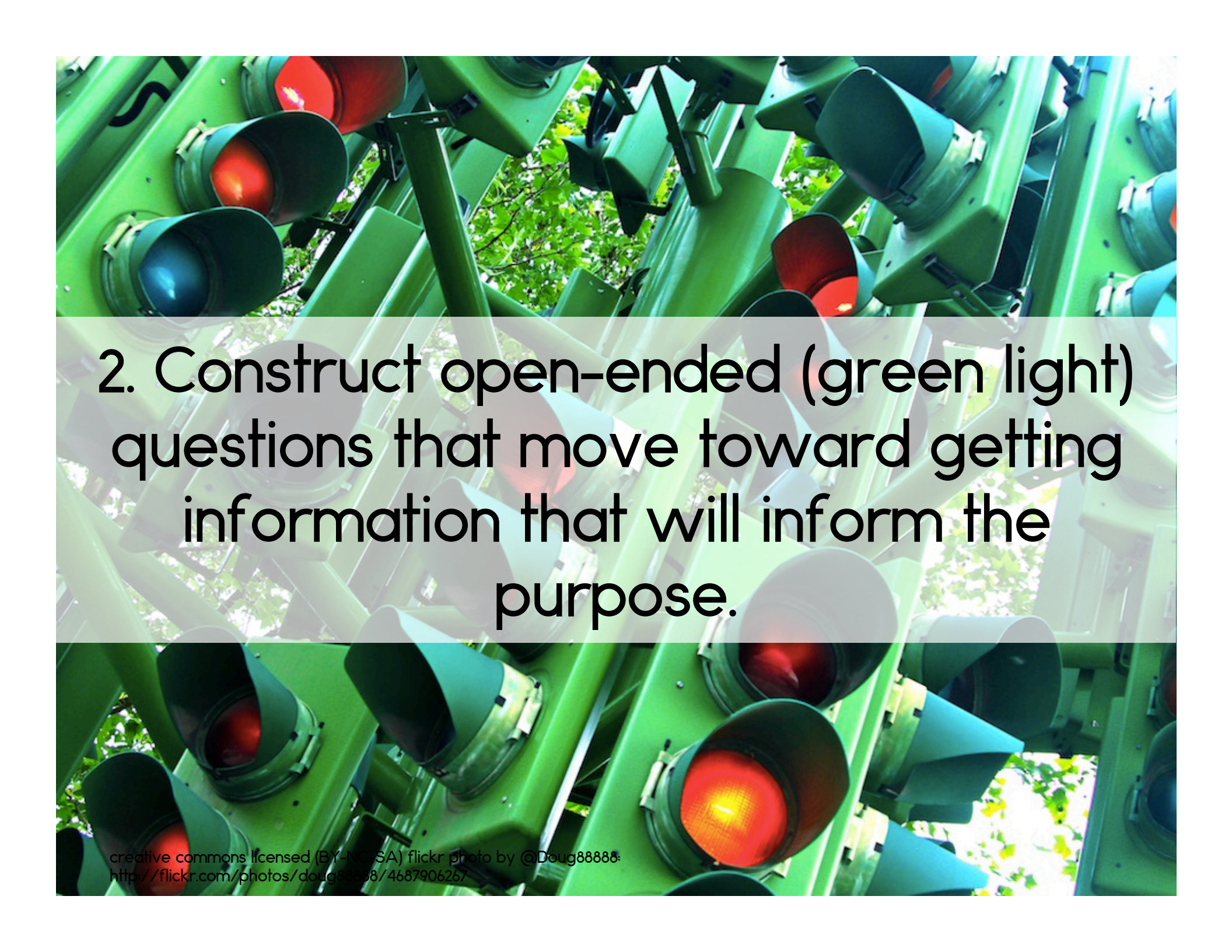




1. Help students stay centered on the purpose of the interview.







2. Construct open-ended (green light) questions that move toward getting information that will inform the purpose.

# Red Light Questions

(Levitov; Truesdell; Fontichiaro & Johnson, et al)

- STOP research from going further
- Require a single factual answer
- Often start with **who, what, where, when, how many**
  - Who was your mom?
  - What did your family say when you joined the Army?
  - Where did you get married?
  - When did you graduate from high school?
  - How many people came to your bar mitzvah?
- Red light questions aren't banned, but they should be partnered with green light questions as follow-ups so you end up with rich interview data.

# Green Light Questions

(Levitov; Truesdell; Fontichiaro & Johnson, et al)

- May require collection and synthesis of information
- May have words in them like **why** or **how**
  - Why did you decide to become a nurse?
  - How do you feel about your time in the military?



Alternative: Prompt them to step back into a specific incident to avoid generalizations.

- “Tell me about the last time you ...”
- “Think back to the day you ...”

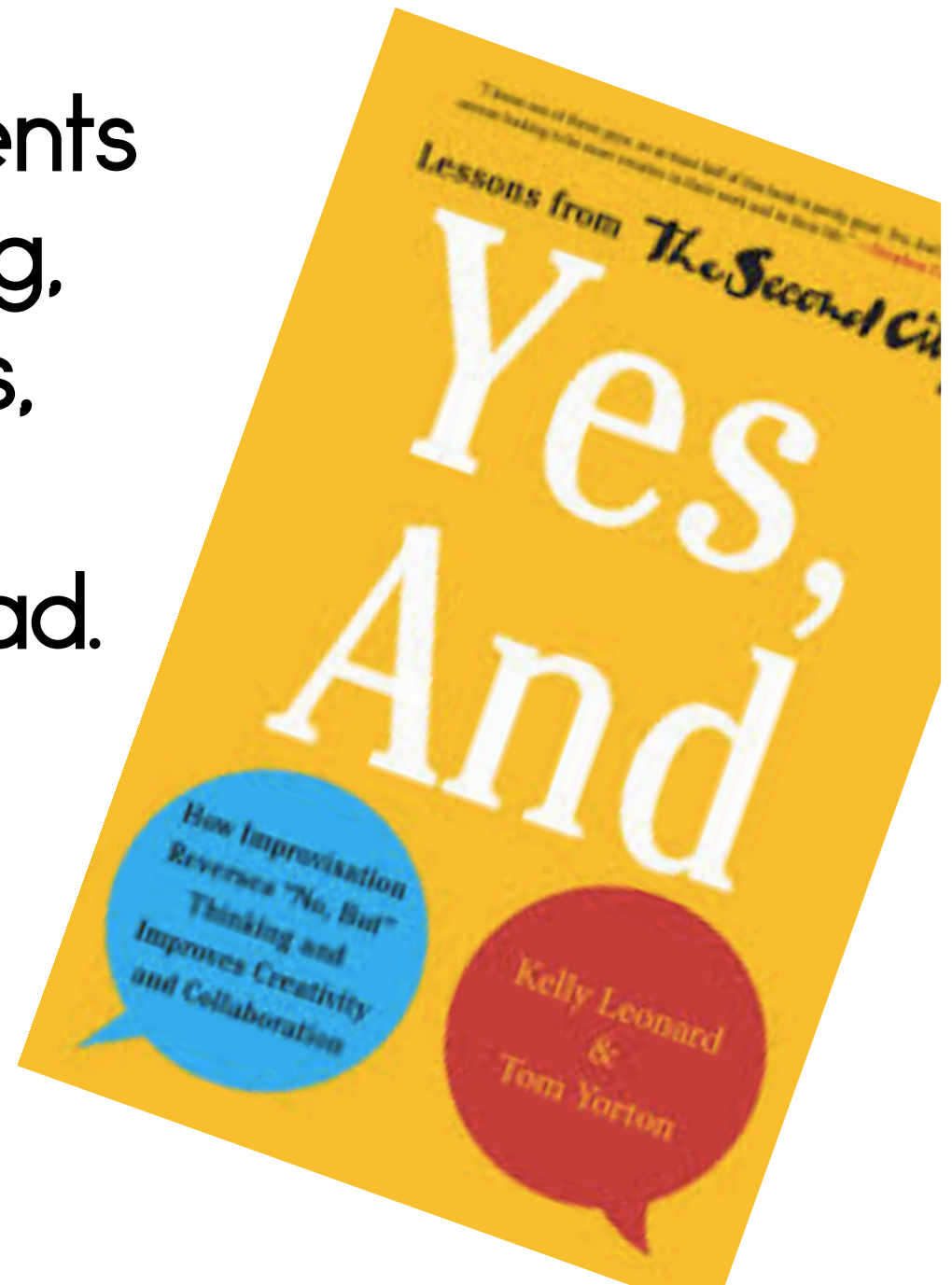
(Beyer & Holtzblatt 1998)



3. Organize list of questions by theme so kids can find their way quickly back to their questions as new thinking emerges.

4. Practice.  
Encourage students  
to go off-roading,  
probe for details,  
follow the  
interviewee's lead.

Said differently:  
Practice  
“Yes, And.”





## 5. Ask to see artifacts.



6. Take paper notes and make an audio recording as a back-up. No laptop screens!  
(Beyer & Holtzblatt 1998)



Not just for elementary kids!



# StoryCorps.org/great-questions

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## GREAT QUESTIONS FOR ANYONE

- Who has been the most important person in your life? Can you tell me about him or her?
- What was the happiest moment of your life? The saddest?
- Who has been the biggest influence on your life? What lessons did that person teach you?
- Who has been the kindest to you in your life?
- What are the most important lessons you've learned in life?
- What is your earliest memory?
- What is your favorite memory of me?
- Are there any funny stories your family tells about you that come to mind?
- Are there any funny stories or memories or characters from your life that you want to tell me about?
- What are you proudest of?
- When in life have you felt most alone?
- If you could hold on to one memory from your life forever, what would that be?
- How has your life been different than what you'd imagined?

# Veterans History Project (LC)



## How to Participate in the Project

A participant may be a veteran, an interviewer, or person donating a veteran's collection ([learn more about what we collect](#)). Students in the 10th grade and above may also participate and there are special resources for [educators and students](#).

### Take These Four Easy Steps...

1. [Print the Veterans History Project Field Kit](#) (required forms)
2. [Prepare for the interview](#)
3. [Conduct the interview](#)
4. [Send your collection to the Library of Congress](#) (Keep a copy for yourself!)

### Participant Resources

- [About Partners](#)
- [Fieldkit Companion Video](#)
- [Eagle Scout Leadership Project](#)
- [Hosting community events](#)
- [List of Founding Partners](#)

**Please note:** As of August 13, 2013, Veterans History Project no longer accepts online registrations. Please submit your collection materials and required forms according to the guidelines found in our *Veterans History Project Field Kit*.

# Your Turn

- Choose an interview question or make up one of your own.
  - Tell me about the last time you ordered books.
  - What was one of your best memories of living in Hawai'i? Tell me more about it.
  - What was 9/11 like for you?
- Plan at least one open-ended follow-up.
- Pick a partner. Take turns interviewing each other (2 min per interview)



What did you learn?

"Waipio" by paul bica on Flickr. CC-BY-2.0. <http://flickr.com/photos/dexxus/5652914929>

# Questions?

Kristin Fontichiaro  
font@umich.edu  
@activelearning  
Slides: <http://bit.ly/fontblog>

