



# Portrait of a Student: Creation

## FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

The purpose of the task is for participants to build on their background knowledge to understand better their beliefs of what it means for a student to “flourish mathematically” and the learning environments within which this happens. The link gives more information about [Flourishing Mathematically](#). According to the author, Frances Su, “human flourishing refers to a wholeness - of being and doing, of realizing one’s potential and helping others do the same, of acting with honor and treating others with dignity, of living with integrity even in challenging circumstances” (Su, 2020). It is within this context that we have developed these tools, to help instructional leaders support their communities to flourish mathematically.

These definitions, however, and the information contained in the book should not be shared with participants until after participants have had the opportunity to complete the activity. Participants should be encouraged only to use their background knowledge and keep notes and/or sketches in their empathy journals. Allow time at the end for reflection.

**To be read to the participants. It is best to have the following prompts posted somewhere (e.g. present this [slideshow](#)). Make copies of the [portrait creation](#) for the participants (one per participant).**

*The task is about reflecting on your thoughts about students who flourish in a math class. Use your personal experiences and the experiences of students you know.*

- What does it mean for something to flourish, like a plant? [**Participants may bring up that it is green, healthy-looking, continuing to grow, producing flowers, etc. If it doesn’t come up from participants, ask them if the plant flourishes on its own? What is needed to help the plant flourish?**]
- Think about the physical environment of the math classroom where the flourishing math student is learning math. What does it mean for a student to flourish? What is needed to support all students to flourish? [**Give 5 minutes for participants to think about this prompt. This could be tied back to the flourishing plant, if necessary**].
- Hand out a page with one empty face (or direct them to their empathy journal) and ask participants to write and draw on each face. What are the characteristics of a student and/or environment of each student? [**Give 5-10 minutes for participants; have colored pencils and/or markers for those who like to draw**].

*Some things to consider [provide if needed]:*

Student/Teacher Interactions

Classroom physical environment

Student history in math classes

Math Skills as well as other skills needed in a math classroom

- Reflection: *You may choose to share your portraits with others and discuss in small groups what the term flourishing mathematically in a school setting means. Did you have any a-ha moments? What questions do you still have?*