Four "A"s Text Protocol

Adapted from Judith Gray, Seattle, Washington 2005.

Purpose
To explore a text deeply in light of one's own values and intentions

Roles
Facilitator/timekeeper (who also participates); participants

Time
Five minutes total for each participant, plus 10 minutes for the final 2 steps.

Process

1. The group reads the text silently, highlighting it and writing notes in the margin or on sticky notes in answer to the following 4 questions (you can also add your own "A"s).
   - What **Assumptions** does the author of the text hold?
   - What do you **Agree** with in the text?
   - What do you want to **Argue** with in the text?
   - What parts of the text do you want to **Aspire** to (or **Act** upon)?

2. In a round, have each person identify one assumption in the text, citing the text (with page numbers, if appropriate) as evidence.

3. Either continue in rounds or facilitate a conversation in which the group talks about the text in light of each of the remaining "A"s, taking them one at a time. What do people want to agree with, argue with, and aspire to (or act upon) in the text? Try to move seamlessly from one "A" to the next, giving each "A" enough time for full exploration.

4. End the session with an open discussion framed around a question such as: What does this mean for our work with students?

5. Debrief the text experience.