Instructions:
1. Form groups of 2-4 people.
2. Read the scenarios.
3. Using the Elements of Effective Instruction Framework, choose 1-2 scenarios to discuss:
   - What is present from each Element? Where are the strengths?
   - What do they need more of? How might they strengthen some Elements?

Scenario 1 - Dystopian Novels
Students were given a choice of 4 dystopian novels at different reading levels for their main text. They work in literature circles for about \( \frac{2}{3} \) of the class block, reviewing the reading and guiding their own discussion of the pages they read. They have assigned roles for the groups—discussion facilitator, idea connector, evidence collector, word wizard, time keeper. The last \( \frac{1}{3} \) of class is used for group to share updates and ah-ha’s full class. Students listen to each other and sometimes ask questions.

Scenario 2 - Volume
Early on in a unit about volume, the teacher groups students into teams of 3-4 and she gives them containers of different sizes and shapes and a measured container of water. She asks them to tinker with the materials and chart all the questions they can think of about volume. Although some groups share the work evenly among members, in other groups a few students seem to be much more actively involved than others. Two students even have their heads down.

Scenario 3 - Circle Discussion
The teacher is facilitating a whole class discussion. Students are sitting in a circle with the teacher and answering questions she asks. As a student finishes answering, the teacher often asks him or her a follow up question. When she doesn’t do that, she will ask another student in the circle a follow up question or will ask the next question of the whole class and wait for volunteers. If no one volunteers, she will call on a specific student.

Scenario 4 - Choose and Move on When Ready
There are 22 students in this 80-minute class that meets every other day throughout the school year. Today—as in most days—students are working on individualized plans. Most of the students are completing the requirements for the unit on the Weather Systems, though three students are at least one unit ahead and four students are still working on the previous unit. When students begin a new unit in this class, they typically pick a number of learning and practice activities from a playlist that is accessible via Google Docs. The teacher has compiled a variety of activities and organized them into categories that in some cases represent skills and in other cases represent concepts. Students mix and match activities and must successfully complete a minimum number of teacher pre-determined activities for each unit before attempting the unit’s summative assessment.
While students are able to choose the knowledge-building and skill-building activities (which offer a variety of learning modes from videos, to podcasts, to hands-on activities, to online modules), the level of cognitive demand is inconsistent across the options and students rarely get to more complex learning. Summative assessments are scored using rubrics with a 0-4 scale, and while students have the option to redo work, very few students who receive an initial score of 3 seek to refine and resubmit their work in order to attempt to earn a 4.

**Scenario 5 - Prairie Days**

Each of the 75 students from all three third grade classrooms in Our Town Elementary School looks forward to Prairie Day, the culminating weeklong fair where students dress up, assume roles seriously, and work to recreate what life in their town 150 years ago might have been like. Students from every other grade in the school have a chance to walk through the village students created. In fact, the village is a permanent exhibit that gets progressively larger and more intricate after each year. Visitors to the Prairie Day Village can bob for apples, punch tin, churn butter, help build a log cabin, and have a chance to hear a few students talk about their activity.

The teachers have worked together over the years aligning signature Prairie Day activities to the ever-expanding list of standards in order to keep a long-cherished experience for students mostly intact. They have used the data collected to make different decisions about how the learning environment is adjusted and the amount of student choice. What they haven’t been able to eliminate are the inconsistencies in products submitted by students. There is a clear divide between the Haves and the Have Nots and between authentic student work and heavily parent-influenced work.