Conversation with Peter Liljedahl and the BTC Team
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What are some tips for getting started with BTC?
- Jared Sliger: Make sure to read chapter 15. Start with toolkit one. Don't try to implement the whole book at once. Don't try to do too much too soon.
- April Strom: Don't be overwhelmed. Pause and allow space to work through some details.
- Chase Orton: Embrace imperfection. You're going to improve. Have courage to keep going. Find people who will help you grow and give you encouragement. We grow when we talk about our practice, not our kids.
- Kim Rimbey: Just do it. Dive in. Give yourself grace. There's a great likelihood it won't look like it looks in your head. Lean into your community.
- Peter Liljedahl: Every thinking classroom he goes into looks different. BTC is not a recipe. It's a framework. It's a set of tools. They are tools that have emerged out of research but maybe not research that has emerged out of your classroom. There might be some particular things about your room that don't necessarily work exactly how the book says. Context matters a lot. You have to adapt and make it work for you. Once you've adapted a tool, then think about it. Has the adaptation served its purpose and it's time to move again? It's not a dance to which Peter knows the choreography. BTC is a problem to solve.

What do you do if your district says you have to teach with fidelity?
- Peter Liljedahl: There are two types of barriers we work under - real and perceived. The perceived barriers are, by far, greater than the real barriers. Interrogate your barriers. Find out if they're real or perceived. If it is a real barrier, stop talking to admin about what they want you to do. Ask them what they want you to achieve. Shift the conversation, because now you're in a position to talk about other ways to achieve it.

What does the teacher do who is more experienced in their implementation of BTC?
- Peter Liljedahl: Get out of toolkit one. Get into the other practices. Toolkit one is about disrupting the norms. It's about overwhelming the system so kids can start to think. The other toolkits get kids learning. Don't wait to master toolkit one. It doesn't have to be perfect. Just feel confident with it. It has to be working well enough that you don't have to spend pedagogical energy on it and you can focus on something else. Perfection is not the criteria for moving forward. The criteria for moving forward is that you have cognitive, pedagogical space to think about the next practice. It's never perfect. We never learn anything from perfect. "The worst thing that can happen today is that it goes perfect."
- Kim Rimbey: 95% of the tasks you bring to your classroom should come from your curriculum. You don't have to take time to write your own tasks. Use the resources you have to move the work forward.
- Chase Orton: Nothing is worse on a journey than creating the belief that we know everything and have nothing new to learn. Stay unfinished in your own practice and in

your thinking about your own practice. We have a lack of mentorship, so actively reach out to teachers who are early in their careers.
- <u>April Strom</u>: Prepare an elevator pitch ready for those who want you to justify the changes you're making to instruction. Don't forget to think very carefully through the mathematics. Don't be hyper focused on the practices.
- <u>Jared Sliger</u>: Find your strength in this process. Lean into them. Students will feed off your excitement.

Last thoughts
- <u>Peter Liljedahl</u>: Storytelling is value added. Weaving in real world is value added.That's true of everything you have in your history. BTC does not invalidate all of your experience. All of that teacherly craft that you've built up over the years is totally still relevant. It's just about how we use them and when we use them. It's value added. It's not this or that. It's that through this.