

Quality Assurance Review

Team Chair
Module III

The Evidentiary Process

QAR Team Chair Modules I-IV

Module I

- Accreditation for the 21st Century: The AdvancED Process

Module II

- Leading and Managing the Visit

Module III

- **The Evidentiary Process**

Module IV

- Determining and Communicating Findings

Module 3 Goals

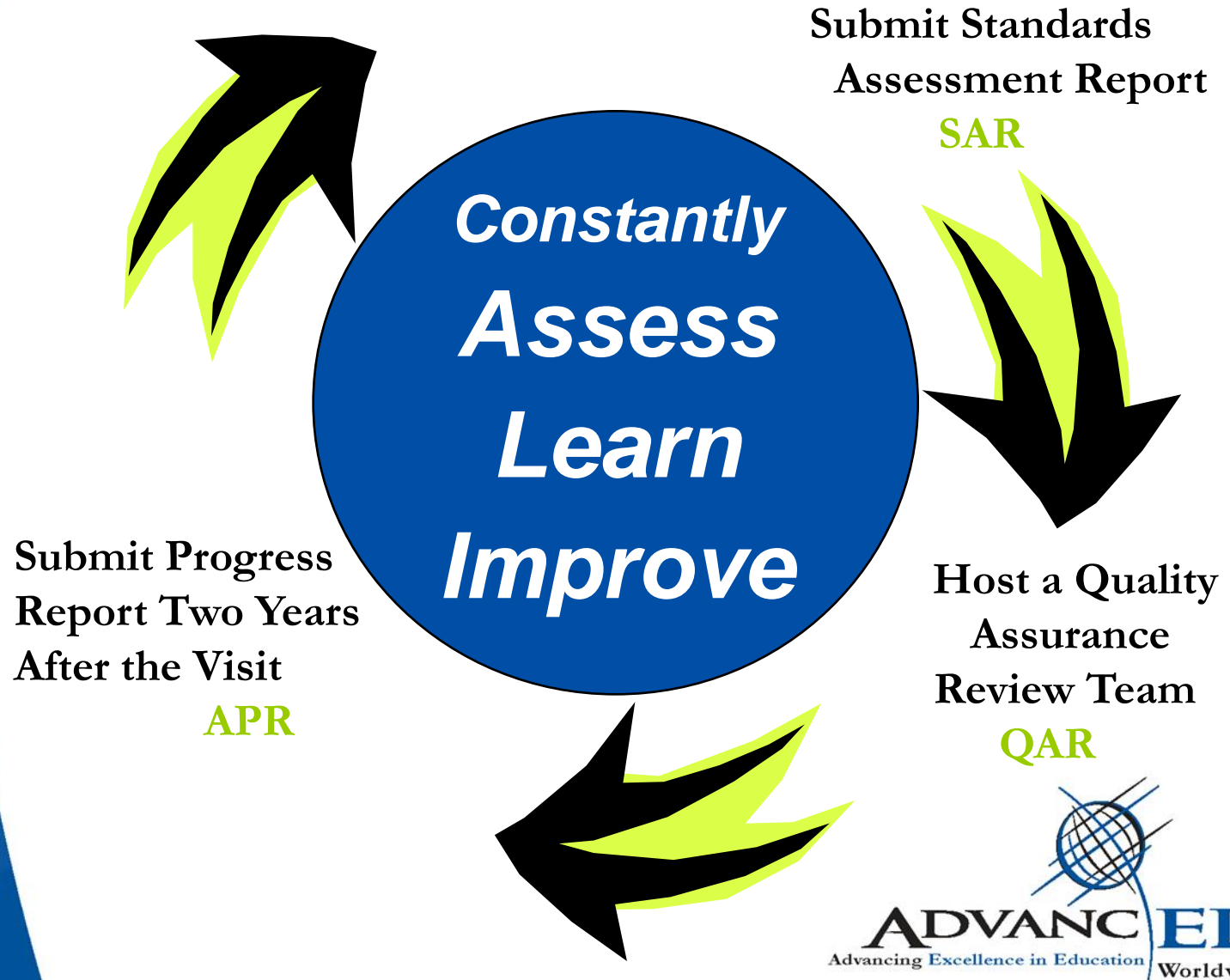
Participants will:

- **Develop knowledge and understanding of**
 - what constitutes evidence
 - the critical role evidence plays in the accreditation process
- **Develop skills to**
 - collect data (interviews, observation, artifacts)
 - transform data into information, and information into evidence
 - lead QAR team members in this effort

Activity: *Reflecting on QAR Visits*

1. Reflect for two minutes about:
 - The purpose of the QAR visit
 - The importance of evidence
2. Discuss your thoughts and ideas with a colleague

Accreditation Process




Evidence

Purpose of Evidence

The QAR team uses evidence to:

- Evaluate adherence to the AdvancED standards
- Provide high quality feedback
 - Narrative for each standard
 - Commendations
 - Recommendations
- Determine an accreditation recommendation

Definitions

- **Claim**
 - A declaration or assertion
 - “Our students are reading better!”
 - The issue is, “How do you know?”
- 
- **Data**
 - Numbers, words, sounds, or images that have not yet been arranged into meaningful patterns
 - **Information**
 - Data arranged into meaningful patterns through an analysis

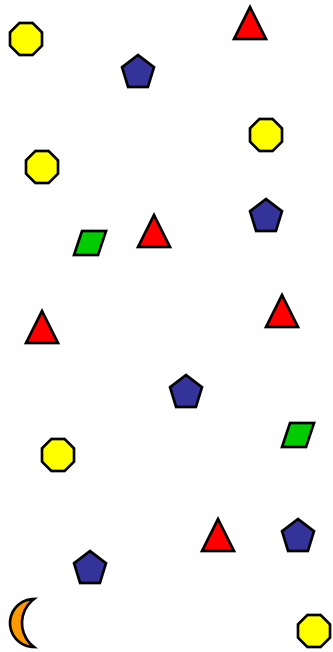
Definitions

- **Evidence**
 - Analysis and documentation of information for a particular purpose
 - Validates or refutes a claim
 - Is factual and uncontaminated by interpretation, opinion or personal preference
- **Evidence must be**
 - Fair: honest, free of bias
 - Reliable: consistent, representative
 - Valid: relevant, matched to standards

The Journey

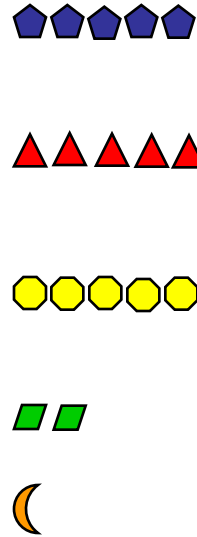
Data

Verb: Collecting



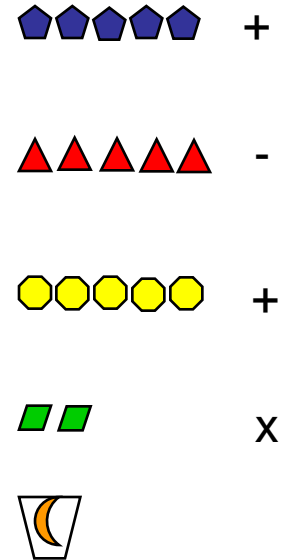
Information

Verb: Organizing



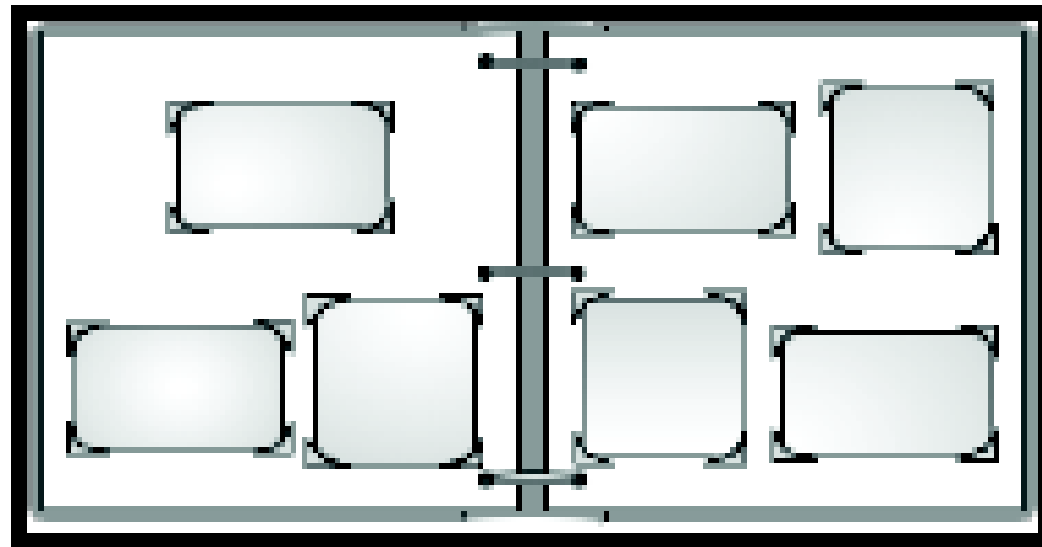
Evidence

Verb: Judging



Scrapbook of Evidence

The QAR team looks for multiple sources of evidence to assure adherence to the seven standards.



Data Sources: Focus on Demonstration vs. Documentation

- Observations
 - Practices
 - Environment
- Interviews
 - Groups
 - Individuals
- Artifacts
 - Assessments
 - Documents and Products

Practical Tips for Data Collection

- Use Post-it[®] notes to record bits of data
- Record one complete thought/data point on one note:
 - Write complete sentences
 - Include your initials
- If a data point supports more than one standard, make copies of the note

Observations

Observations

- **The purposes of observation:**
 - To validate that espoused claims are true
 - To discover evidence that might not be made available through other sources
 - To corroborate information obtained from interviews and artifacts
- **Tips for observation:**
 - Remain unobtrusive
 - Be attentive, deliberate, and focused at all times
 - Record what you see and hear

Process for Using Observation

1. Review the claims made in the Standards Assessment Report for each standard.
2. Throughout the day, collect data on what you see.
3. Organize the data by standard. If an observation does not align to one of the standards, place it on an untitled piece of chart paper.
4. Examine and discuss the information collected through observation.
5. Continue to collect, assign, and organize data.

All-Day Activity: *Observation*

1. Review our posted claims
2. Throughout the day, collect data on what you see
3. Record your data on Post-it® notes

Interviews

Interviews

The purposes of interviews:

- Provide depth and breadth to the description of the school and its work
- Serve as a rich source of qualitative data from which patterns and trends may emerge
- Allow opportunity to explore and dig deeper
- Verify and validate data from other sources

Interviews

- Anticipated audiences for QAR individual and group interviews:
 - Administrators
 - Faculty
 - Support Staff
 - Students
 - Parents and community members
- Both team members and school staff benefit from guided conversation around quality standards.

Activity: *Interview Priorities*

1. Review the interview matrix
2. Discuss what you want to know from each stakeholder group
3. Consider questions you might ask and how you might phrase them to different groups.
 - Use the interview guide as a “starter” document.
 - What other questions might be helpful?



Interview Expectations

1. Establish rapport and an atmosphere of respect
2. Explain purpose and format of the interview
3. Gather data
 - question, listen, probe
 - reflect, summarize, evaluate
4. Invite and respond to questions
5. Thank participants and conclude



Types of Interview Questions

- **Reflection**
 - Encourage review, consideration and explanation of actions and ideas
 - Trigger thinking and initiate dialogue
- **Clarity**
 - Provoke analysis, exploration, and deepen understanding
- **Improvement**
 - Stimulate progress, creativity, and problem-solving

Know How To Ask Questions

- **Probe**
 - question to reach clarity
 - explore ideas
- **Follow-up**
 - allow further conversation
 - express and enrich ideas
- **Seek examples, specifics, details**
 - strengthen information



Know How to Listen

- **Active listening**
 - communicates that what is being said is valued
 - demonstrates interest, understanding, and respect
 - illustrates desire to understand complete meaning (both words and feelings of interviewee)
- **Verbal behavior of active listeners**
 - summarize, ask clarifying questions, elaborate, probe, ask for examples
- **Non-verbal behavior of active listeners**
 - be aware of your body language

Activity: *Interview Simulation*

1. Identify the following “roles” in your group:
 - Interviewer (1-2), Observer (1), Respondents (2-4)
2. Prepare for the interview (5-6 minutes)
 - Review the scenario: interviewers prepare questions and procedures; respondents prepare their stories
3. Conduct Simulated Interview (5-6 minutes)
4. Debrief (observer report – use “Interview Checklist”)
 - What did you learn?
 - How would this interview provide data or information?
5. Repeat with second scenario / change roles!



Artifacts

Artifacts

**Collections of physical data,
including records, organizational
documents, educational materials,
and communications**

Artifact Examples

- **Assessment results**
 - Samples include achievement data, performance data, exit data, participation data, perception data, state report card
- **Documents and products**
 - Samples include communications, agendas, materials, records, archival information, newsletters, improvement plans, profiles

Essential Artifacts

Artifacts the QAR team should review

- **The Standards Assessment Report**
 - Prepared by the school prior to the visit
 - Documents cited in the SAR
- **The School Improvement Plan**
- **The School's Vision and Mission**
- **Student Achievement Data**
 - Short-cycle (formative) data used to guide changes in instructional processes, operations, etc.
 - Long-term (trend) data that demonstrates growth and improvement

Standards Assessment Report

- Demographics
- Information on Each of the Standards
 - Indicators Section
 - Uses a rubric to assess each indicator
Not Evident, Emerging, Operational, Highly Functional
 - Focus Questions Section
 - Demonstrates interdependency of standards
 - Provides opportunity to share evidence
 - Overall Standard Assessment - Descriptive Rubric
- Conclusion with General Focus Questions
- Peer-to-Peer Practice

Activity: *Analyzing the SAR*

- As a group, analyze the SAR provided
 - What data does it contain?
 - What standard or standards does the data inform?
 - What questions might you ask and to whom?
 - What documents would you expect to see (or ask for)?



Growth-related Artifacts

Questions to consider

- What are data sources that demonstrate long-term improvement?
- Does the school have a comprehensive assessment system that reflects growth in a variety of areas?
- Are the artifacts relevant to the standards?
- Are the artifacts valid, reliable, and accurate?

Organizing and Transforming Data to Information to Evidence

Organizing Data

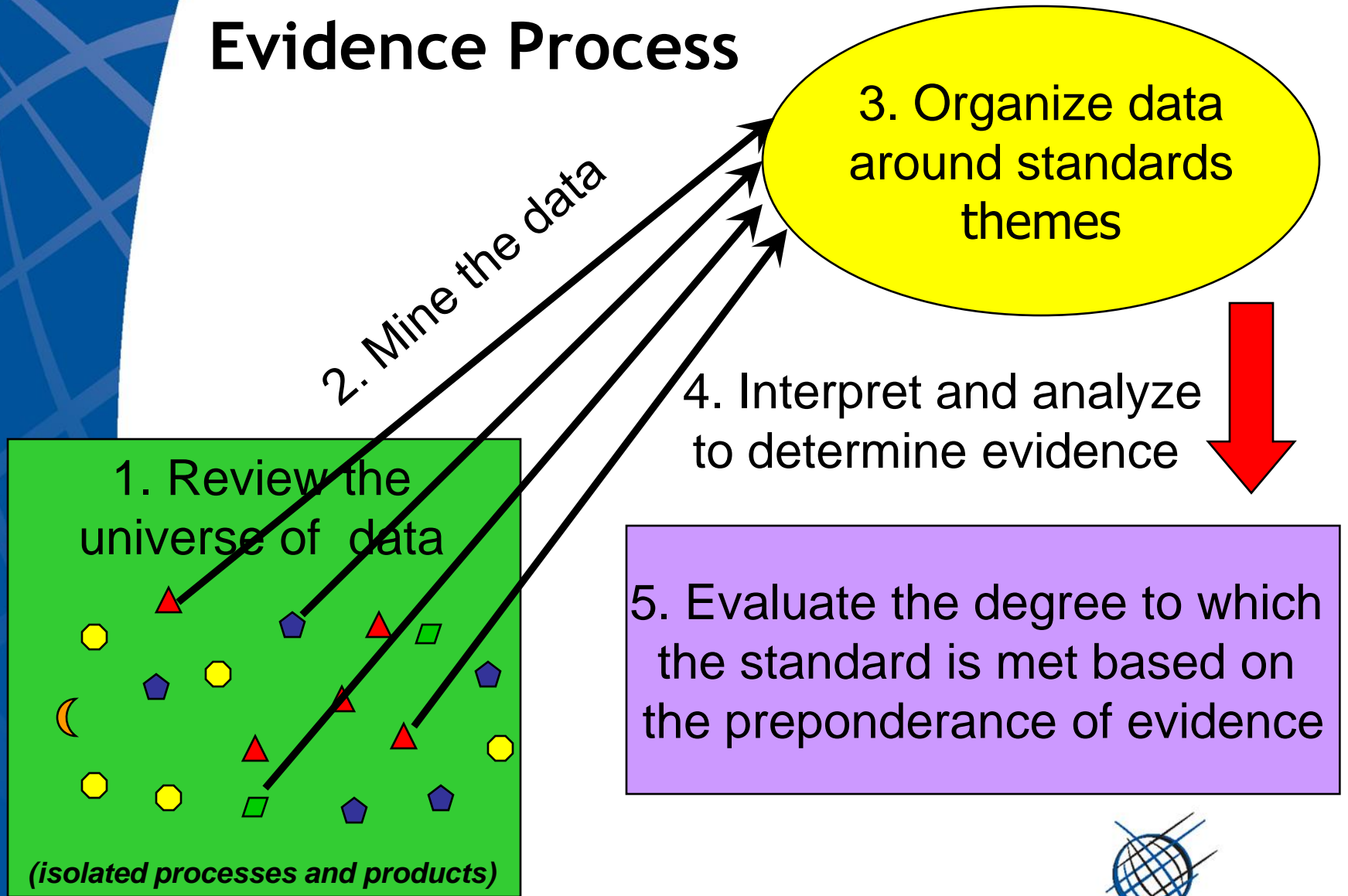
- **Multiple organization structures**
 - **By standard**
 - **Within each standard (grouping process)**
- **Look for multiple sources of data from**
 - **Observations**
 - **Interviews**
 - **Artifacts**

Activity: *Organizing Data*

1. Using the *Organizing Data* worksheet
 - Determine which (if any) standard(s) each data point might inform
 - Indicate the most likely source of the data point using
 - “O” for observation
 - “I” for interview
 - “A” for artifact
2. Based on your analysis of the data points, what conclusions can you draw?



Evidence Process



Transforming Data to Evidence

- **Data**
 - Facts gathered from observations, interviews, and artifacts
- **Information**
 - Data organized to align with standards and indicators
 - Appropriate and relevant data
 - Multiple pieces of data that form patterns and themes
- **Evidence**
 - Sufficient information exists to form a body of evidence
 - The body of evidence supports a judgment about the standard

Using Evidence

- **Make Meaning of Evidence**
 - Look for patterns, themes, trends
 - Check for consistency between multiple sources
 - Pay special attention to evidence that “cuts across” multiple standards
- **Separate Emotion from Evidence**
 - **Emotion:** Reflects personalities, personal beliefs, and agendas
 - **Evidence:** Substantiated information that verifies a claim
- **Determine**
 - Do we have enough evidence to make a decision about the standard?

The Evidentiary Process in Action

1. Assign QAR team members to specific standards
2. Post 7 pieces of chart paper around the room, one for each standard
3. As team members discover applicable data, they should record it on a Post-it®
4. Provide time for team members to place the Post-it® on the standard it informs
5. Members may need to make copies if the data informs multiple standards

The Evidentiary Process in Action

6. Throughout the visit, collect, review and categorize the notes (data) into information
7. In each team deliberation session, team members should:
 - review information: “What do we know for sure?”
 - note where additional information is needed: “What do we need to know more about?”
 - look for information that addresses multiple standards (systemic)
8. Individual standard teams will use the information on their charts to reach and support decisions

All-Day Observation Activity

1. Examine the data for the claim assigned
2. **Organize the data into information**
3. Analyze the information and determine if there is a body of evidence to support or refute the claim
4. **As a table group, reach consensus on the degree to which the claim is supported**
5. Be prepared to share and explain your decision

Review

- **Definitions of evidence and related terms**
- **The processes for gathering evidence**
 - **Observations**
 - **Interviews**
 - **Artifacts**
- **Working with the team**
 - **Collecting data**
 - **Organizing data into information**
 - **Arriving at evidence**

Bridge to Module 4

- The body of evidence guides the team in reaching valid and meaningful decisions
- Evidence will be used to...
 - Evaluate adherence to standards and make suggestions
 - Develop narratives, commendations and recommendations
 - Determine an accreditation recommendation

Activity: *Reflection*

- How might you guide and assist the team in collecting and organizing data into valid and reliable evidence?
- Share your ideas with your table group.

Thank You!
We appreciate
your interest
and
participation.

www.advanc-ed.org

Quality Assurance Review Team Chair: Module 3
The Evidentiary Process

