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<th>METHOD</th>
<th>STRENGTHS</th>
<th>THINGS TO CONSIDER</th>
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| Response cards  | • Are a flexible way of engaging with the public  
• Can be used as part of a display and other people can be encouraged to read them - it can be made “fun” and interactive to catch attention  
• Need minimal administration as people can complete the card or write in a comments book themselves  
• Can encourage people to write, draw or record their comments in their own way and take into account different levels of ability  
• Can target people engaged in particular activities depending upon where the response cards or comment books are placed | • Posing questions in a comments book or on a card will improve the quality of the comments  
• Provide good quality pens and paper to indicate to people that their comments are being taken seriously  
• Place comments cards so that everyone can see them and are encouraged to share their views |
| Questionnaires  | • Are good for large-scale collection of evidence where broad information is required rather than in-depth exploration  
• Are flexible and can be used in a variety of formats - on-site, by email or post  
• Can include closed or multiple-choice questions as well as open-ended ones  
• Can be used flexibly - they can be self-completion or administered by deliverers who can help explain questions that may not be straightforward for some people  
• Collect demographic information for comparison across age / gender  
• Have the potential to collect information from participants over time | • Questions need careful phrasing to reflect age, language and ability levels of your targeted public group  
• The ‘look’ of the questionnaire is important and good design is crucial  
• Be aware of questionnaire ‘overload’ - is this method suitable for the public you are trying to reach?  
• It can be difficult to control who completes self-completion questionnaires  
• Make them manageable so that users are not put off by (perceived) length or difficulty of questions  
• It is essential to develop skills in using spreadsheets to analyse information especially for large-scale collection of questionnaires |
| Interviews      | • Can take place face to face or on the telephone  
• Conducted by peers  
• Used one to one, can provide good information about learning, attitudes, feelings, opinions and behaviour  
• Have the potential to collect information from participants over time about their experience | • Find ways of setting participants at ease - they need to feel comfortable about sharing their experiences with the interviewer  
• If language is an issue use a translator or peer interviews where one person could translate for the other  
• Plan how you will analyse the data in advance – an interview may produce a large amount of evidence that may be time-consuming to analyse unless the interview is structured (then answers may be more predictable) |
| Graffiti Walls  | • Are interactive as comments can be made to look attractive as part of a display - people can read others’ comments and may be encouraged to add their own  
• POST IT notes can be used as a colourful / cheap way of getting people to share their comments | • Comments need to be fixed strongly to the wall or they might be lost  
• Provide a posting box for people wanting to keep their comments anonymous |
| Drawings        | • Are useful when writing skills are limited and may be more “fun” or engaging  
• Can be used in combination with written comments to aid analysis | • These are challenging to interpret without questioning and mediation |
| Observation     | • Observation can work well if participants “talk out loud” about their experiences | • May need to be combined with interviews or questionnaires |

Based on the Research Methods, Inspiring Learning For All, MLA [http://inspiringlearningforall.gov.uk/export/sites/inspiringlearning/resources/repository/Methods_-_strengths_and_we.pdf](http://inspiringlearningforall.gov.uk/export/sites/inspiringlearning/resources/repository/Methods_-_strengths_and_we.pdf)
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<th>Method</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
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| **Video**                     | • Is an appealing alternative to traditional comments cards - may be more fun and engaging for some users than writing comments  
• Is potentially a powerful tool for gathering evidence for advocacy purposes | • Analysis of video may be time-consuming with too much material e.g. from a discussion  
• Needs to be edited properly  
• Not easy to set this up unless integrated into the design of a space |
| **Role play/acting**          | • It may stimulate people's memories by asking them to re-live it             | • Some participants may be reluctant to act out their experiences so you need to introduce the idea of role-play carefully  
• Requires a skilled moderator |
| **Focus Groups**              | • Can elicit in-depth information from participants about their views and experiences  
• May encourage people to share their attitudes, beliefs and experiences more openly through group interaction  
• Are a good way of collecting and reinforcing evidence of learning from groups participating in the activity/project  
• Enable you to collect different perspectives of the same experience or at different time periods if focus groups are carried out at different stages | • The facilitator needs to be skilled in leading the discussion and keeping the group focused. He/she needs to ensure that everybody feels comfortable about sharing their experiences and opinions equally  
• Make practical arrangements clear for all involved including location, maps, furniture and refreshments  
• You may need to pay for participants attending a focus group or provide an incentive  
• It may not be easy to extract the individual's experiences from the group's  
• You will need to take notes (which may require a second moderator) or record the discussion |
| **Photographs/Images**        | • Can act as a memory aid to people  
• Can be used by people to convey their experiences creatively  
• Can be used with speech bubbles in a display to convey experiences to others | • May be difficult to analyse if the context for the photograph is unknown |
| **Artwork/Sculpture**         | • Can be used in conjunction with other methods e.g. interviews and focus groups to obtain the context and help articulate the learning | • May be difficult to interpret and analyse if the context is not known |
| **Letters/Email**             | • Letters and emails can show evidence of outcomes                           | • Unpredictable and ad hoc source of outcomes  
• Analysis may be time-consuming |
| **Case studies/Vignettes**    | • Could be used as a stimulus to present different experiences to people in interviews or focus groups  
• Explore people's perceptions, beliefs and experiences in relation to a specific situation  
• Get people talking and to present a broader view | • Vignettes need to be chosen carefully so that people can relate to the experience  
• Not used in isolation as it may only give views about the experience contained within it rather than a reflection of their own experiences |

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