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Week 6 review · Mon Sep 28 & Wed Sep 30, 2026

# Putting theory to work

SPEA-V221 Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector · Ji Ma · O'Neill School, Indiana University

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## Week 6 at a glance

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### Mon Sep 28 · From visit to evidence

Three kinds of evidence, three tests before a note becomes a claim, the four-move “why a nonprofit” argument, and the clinic on your own visit notes.

### Wed Sep 30 · A theory of change

A Grameen video and discussion, then a hypothetical adaptation; the team studio that completes B1.

- **Readings.** None new. Reread Child, “An Overview of Nonprofit Sector Theories,” **pp. 21–25**, with your visit notes beside it.
- **Due. A2 and B1: Sun Oct 4.** For a later visit, submit A2 booking evidence by then.
- **Built this week.** Plank 2, the mission and theory of change, on Wednesday’s studio sheet; and the first draft of the A4 report’s second section, on Monday’s sheet 2.

[v221.jima.me/week/w06](http://v221.jima.me/week/w06) · the B1 spec

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Week 6, Session 1

# From visit to evidence

Ji Ma · O'Neill School, Indiana University

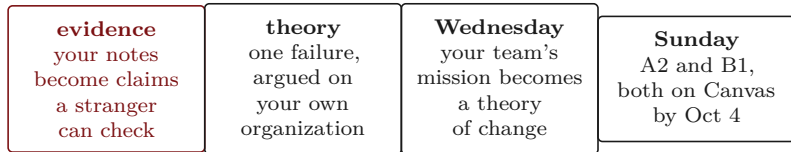
Monday, September 28, 2026

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## This week's big question

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Can you turn theory into something  
a real organization could use?



No new reading this week. Reread Child, pp. 21–25, with your notes beside it. The theory you argue today is the analytical spine of the A4 report.

Child, ch. 2, pp. 21–25 · [v221.jima.me/week/w06](http://v221.jima.me/week/w06)

# What being there adds

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## The filing tells you the money

revenue lines, expense lines, officer pay, a tax year. Reported for a specific tax year; not a record of today's work.

## The room tells you the work

who walks in, who answers the phone, how staff talk about the funder, what the waiting list looks like, which program the website forgot.

- Two rubric rows depend on today: **6 points** for a correct application of failure theory and social capital, and **3 points** for grounding in the visit, “what being there added.”

*Use the visit to support a **claim the filing cannot answer.***

[v221.jima.me/assignments/site-visits#a4](https://v221.jima.me/assignments/site-visits#a4), the rubric table

# Three kinds of evidence

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## A document

a line on the website,  
a part and line of the  
990, a page of an annual report. Cite it  
the way you cited  
Part VIII last week:  
**where, exactly.**

## A person

something the director  
or a volunteer told  
you. Record who, in  
what role, on what  
date. It is evidence of  
what they *said*.

## An observation

what you saw or  
counted, where and  
when. Date it; one  
visit cannot establish  
last year's activity or  
budget.

*Support each report claim with a document, a person, or a recorded observation.*

Rule 3 of the four AI rules: a primary source is the website, the filing, or a person you spoke with.  
[v221.jima.me/assignments/ai-process-log](https://v221.jima.me/assignments/ai-process-log)

# What the room shows that no filing can

*Possible observations for A4; use what you actually saw.*

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## **The door**

who is waiting, at what hour, and whether anyone is turned away.

## **The funder**

how staff talk about the grant, the contract, the donor. Warmly, warily, or not at all.

## **The people**

paid or volunteer, how long they have been there, who trained them.

## **The gap**

the program the website does not mention, or the one it mentions that has quietly stopped.

*Record what you saw, where, and when, while the details are fresh.*

[v221.jima.me/assignments/site-visits#a4](https://v221.jima.me/assignments/site-visits#a4), section 4: what the room told you

## Three tests before a note becomes a claim

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- **Could a stranger find it?** A URL, a part and line and page, a named person and a date. “Their website” fails; “the How We Serve section, read Sep 25” passes.
- **Is it dated?** Filings run a year or more behind. A figure from FY2023 and a sentence from last Tuesday are both evidence, of different years.
- **Does the source say that?** Not something near it. “Meals six days a week” is not the same claim as “there was a meal on the day I went.”

*Apply the same source checks to your own notes that you applied to AI output.*

The first AI fact-check, Week 3 · the meal schedule is Community Kitchen’s own, [monroecommunitykitchen.com](https://monroecommunitykitchen.com), read 2026-09-09

# Turn a note into a claim

one real organization, three kinds of note

## A worked example

*Community Kitchen: illustrative notes, checked against sources*

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| The note, as taken                 | The claim, with its source                                                                  | Kind, and verdict                                       |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| “they feed anyone, no questions”   | served “to anyone in need. No fees or eligibility requirements”: the website, How We Serve  | document; <b>checkable</b>                              |
| “it all seems to run on donations” | fees \$0 of \$2,142,526 revenue: Form 990, FY2023, Part VIII lines 2g and 12, plus the page | document; <b>checkable</b> with the page                |
| “the director told me ...”         | what the director said: name, role, and the date of the visit                               | person; checkable as <b>what was said</b> , not as fact |

*Turn shorthand notes into precise claims with sources.*

# The money, and the question it leaves open

*Community Kitchen, FY2023*

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## At the front door

nobody is charged, by policy: “no fees or eligibility requirements.” You cannot charge the hungry. **Market failure.**

## Inside line 1h

the roll-up bundles gifts, donated food (1g), and government grants (1e). Mostly government: interdependence. Mostly gifts and food: voluntary action came first.

## The visit's question

where does the food come from, and what happens when demand spikes? Ask it. Write down who answered.

*Check line 1e and ask about funding at the visit before choosing a theory.*

EIN Employer Identification Number

ProPublica, EIN 31-1101408, FY2023: contributions and grants \$2,076,971 of \$2,142,526 total, read 2026-09-09 · Child pp. 21–25 and 27–28

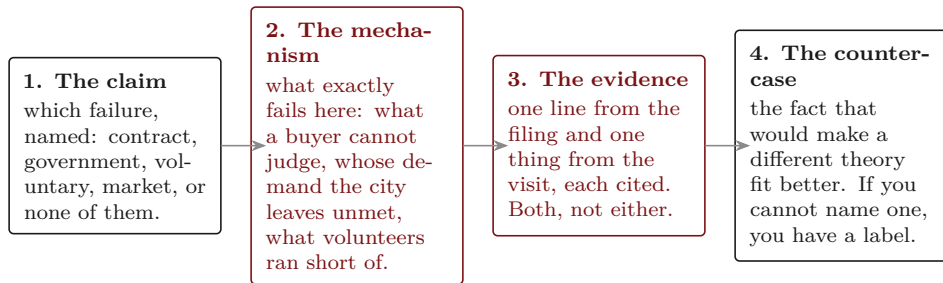
**The theory is an argument, not a label**

the six-point rubric row, and how to earn it

# The shape of a “why a nonprofit” argument

*Claim, mechanism, evidence, counter-case*

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*Explain why low fee revenue supports a market-failure argument; a percentage alone is not enough.*

EIN Employer Identification Number

The A4 rubric, row 2 · Hoosier Hills Food Bank, EIN 31-1051402, FY2023 program service revenue \$126,738 of \$7,594,291, the Week 5 worked example

## Social capital, observed

*Apply the Week 5 concepts to your visit.*

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- **Who does the work, and do they know each other?** Volunteers who greet each other by name are a secondary association inside the organization; a donor mailing list is tertiary.
- **Whom does it connect across a difference?** Donors to clients, students to residents, one congregation to another: **bridging**. Members to members like them: **bonding**. Both are real; name which, and name both ends.
- **Who chairs, who keeps the minutes, and where did they learn to?** Tocqueville's school of democracy is visible in the room, or it is not.

*Name the people connected and the difference their ties cross.*

Putnam 1995, p. 71 (secondary and tertiary); the 2000 book, ch. 1 (bonding and bridging); Child pp. 32–33 (schools of democracy). All taught in Week 5.

# Bring your own

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## BRING YOUR OWN

**Where you grew up, how would a stranger check a claim about a charity?** A public register, an annual report, a newspaper, a person who knows the founder, or no way at all? Name the source you would actually use, and one thing it could not tell you.

- The three kinds of evidence travel; the documents do not. Where there is no public filing, the *person* and the *observation* carry more of the weight, and your notes need better dates for it.
- For Rail B this is live: a startup sited abroad models its steps on organizations whose records you will have to reach some other way.

The register question from Week 2 · Bromley p. 134, on what an unregistered organization is to a count

# **The clinic**

thirty minutes, sheets 1 and 2, your own organization

# The clinic

*Sheets 1 and 2; use your own notes. Both collected.*

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## IN CLASS

1. **Three notes, three claims** (sheet 1). Pick the three most useful things you saw, heard, or read. Write the note as you took it, then the claim it supports, the kind of evidence, and the exact citation you would hand a stranger.
2. **Why a nonprofit** (sheet 2). The four moves: the failure, the mechanism, one line from the filing with its part, line, and page, one thing from the visit, and what would change your mind.
3. **Social capital**, one observation: what it bonds or bridges, and who chairs.
4. **Swap with a neighbour** at the twenty-minute mark. They tick each claim *checkable* or *not yet*, write which test failed, and sign. Swap back and fix one.

No visit yet? Do sheet 2 from the filing and the website, leave sheet 1's visit rows for the notes you will take, and come to the front during the swap. The next frame is for you.

[v221.jima.me/assignments/site-visits#a4](https://v221.jima.me/assignments/site-visits#a4) · the citation standard: [v221.jima.me/assignments/990-lab](https://v221.jima.me/assignments/990-lab)

## If your visit has not happened

*Usual window ends Fri Oct 2; confirmed later visits are allowed.*

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### 1. A virtual visit

a video call with the organization. The contact's name and email are your proof of contact.

### 2. A phone interview

with a staff member, logged with date and time. Same rule on proof.

### 3. Join another student's visit

this week, to their organization. The work you submit stays your own.

- **A2 wants evidence, not polish:** proof of contact, the 990 linked with its tax year, three or four lines of raw notes. Due **Sun Oct 4**, 10 points, credit or no credit.

*Later visit booked? Submit confirmation to A2 by Oct 4; complete A2 after the visit.*

## Read the tick marks

*Find and fix a claim marked “not yet.”*

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- **Which test did a “not yet” fail?** Nobody could find it, it had no date, or the source did not quite say that. The fix is different for each.
- **Which kind of evidence do you have none of?** Look for a person or observation to complement the documents.
- **Is move four blank?** Then the theory is still a label. Write the fact that would change your mind before you hand the sheet in.

*Sheet 2 is the first draft of A4's second section. Photograph it before you hand it in.*

[v221.jima.me/assignments/site-visits#a4](https://v221.jima.me/assignments/site-visits#a4)

# From today's sheets to the report

*A4 sections and the work that supports them*

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| A4 section                    | Built from                                                                  | Rubric points    |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| the organization and its role | the four roles (Week 3) and the subsector tours (Weeks 9 and 10)            | 4, with the data |
| why a nonprofit               | <b>today's sheet 2:</b> the four moves, and the social-capital line         | 6                |
| the funding story             | Part VIII (Week 5), the funding models (Week 7), the A3 comparison (Week 8) | 4                |
| what the room told me         | <b>today's sheet 1:</b> the person and observation rows                     | 3                |

*Use these sheets to start A4 now. The report is due Sun Nov 15.*

[v221.jima.me/assignments/site-visits#a4](https://v221.jima.me/assignments/site-visits#a4): the four jobs and the rubric table

## Before you go

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- **Wednesday is the theory-of-change studio.** Bring your team's mission draft. The studio sheet is Wednesday's in-class work, and it completes B1.
- **A2 is due Sun Oct 4:** proof of contact, the 990 link and tax year, and raw notes. For a later visit, submit booking confirmation by then and complete A2 afterward.
- **B1, the concept brief, is also due Sun Oct 4:** the need, the mission, the theory of change, and one sentence on why a nonprofit. Two pages at most.

[v221.jima.me/week/w06](https://v221.jima.me/week/w06) · [v221.jima.me/assignments/startup-plan#b1](https://v221.jima.me/assignments/startup-plan#b1)

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Week 6, Session 2

# A theory of change

Ji Ma · O'Neill School, Indiana University

Wednesday, September 30, 2026

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## A2: a confirmed booking gives you time to visit

*Submit your booking evidence by Sun Oct 4, 11:59 PM.*

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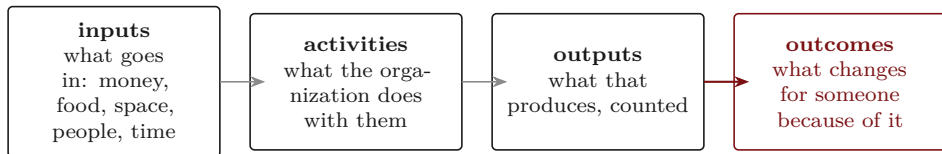
- **Visit scheduled for later? That's fine.** You may complete the visit and remaining A2 work after the deadline, without a late penalty or using a late pass.
- **Upload the confirmation to A2 in Canvas by the deadline.** An email should show the organization, contact, and scheduled date. A request awaiting a reply is not a confirmed booking.
- **After the visit, complete A2:** proof of contact, the Form 990 link and tax year, and a few lines of raw notes.

[v221.jima.me/assignments/site-visits#a2](https://v221.jima.me/assignments/site-visits#a2), booking exception

# What a theory of change is

*How resources and activities should lead to change*

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- B1 records your inputs, proposed activities, and intended outcomes, plus the existing examples and your adaptations. Outputs sit between the activity and its intended effect.

*Each arrow makes a testable claim: **this activity should produce this change.***

## Outputs are counts. Outcomes are changes.

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**An output** counts work delivered: meals served or sessions held. It does not establish that people are better off.

**An outcome** is a change for the people served: fewer skipped meals or more students staying in school.

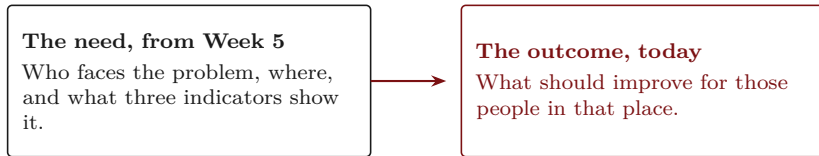
- Week 13 takes up how outcomes get measured and what the numbers cannot tell you. Today you only need to keep the two apart on the sheet.

*Ask: does this measure work delivered, or a change for the people served?*

[v221.jima.me/assignments/startup-plan#b4](https://v221.jima.me/assignments/startup-plan#b4), pitch beat 6: “outputs vs. outcomes, honestly” · Week 13, Gugerty and Karlan

## The outcome column is the need, restated

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- Read your need sentence aloud, then your outcome column. The indicators you gathered are the numbers an outcome would eventually move.

*Your outcome must describe improvement in the need you identified.*

## Watch: Grameen Bank at a Glance

*Muhammad Yunus · 2011 · 5 minutes 31 seconds*

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### Play the video

- Watch for the problem, the lending practice, and the change Yunus expects it to produce.
- Keep one example or claim for the discussion. Treat any figures in this 2011 video as historical.
- After watching, discuss with your team and record brief notes on sheet 1.

Muhammad Yunus, *Grameen Bank at a Glance*, published 2011-09-06; title, channel, and duration checked 2026-09-29.

## Discuss: what could your startup learn from Grameen?

*Eight minutes with your team. Notes on sheet 1; collected.*

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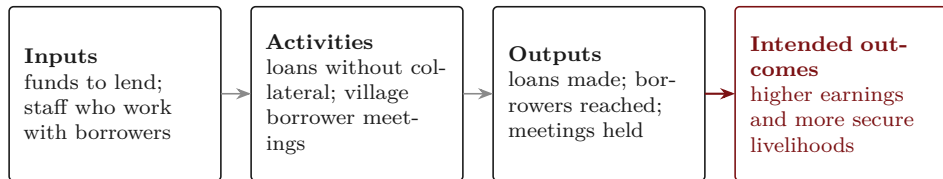
1. **Problem and response.** Who has difficulty getting a conventional bank loan? What does Grameen change to reach them?
2. **The chain.** Identify an input, activity, output, and intended outcome. Which link would need more evidence before you called the program effective?
3. **Your startup.** Choose a practice your team could learn from. What would you keep or change for your community, and why? If it does not fit your mission, explain why.

Grameen Bank at a Glance; B1: existing practice, adaptation, intended change

# Grameen Bank: from credit to an intended change

*Bangladesh; shared the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize with Muhammad Yunus*

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*Loans made or repaid do not establish that borrowers escaped poverty.*

Grameen Bank, Introduction, practice and aims; Nobel Committee, 2006 press release. Checked 2026-09-29.  
Chain is our teaching interpretation; outcomes are intended.

# Adapt Grameen's practice to a new nonprofit

*Hypothetical startup: helping local home-based business owners*

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- **Borrow a practice:** small loans without collateral (property pledged as security). Grameen supplies an example of how credit can reach people excluded by that requirement.
- **Design your version:** a donated loan fund and volunteer advisers support small equipment loans, with meetings scheduled around local owners' working hours.
- **Explain the expected change:** equipment should help owners earn more after loan costs, if lack of equipment is the barrier and customers want what they sell.
- **Test the assumptions:** do owners need credit, can they repay, and does income improve? A famous example cannot answer those local questions.

*Grameen is a bank. Your nonprofit concept still needs its own case for that legal form.*

Grameen Bank, Introduction, checked 2026-09-29. The startup and adaptation are hypothetical; B1 asks why a nonprofit fits.

# Use existing programs to inform your startup design

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## Existing practice

What does the real program do? Identify the practice relevant to your proposed activity.

## Checkable source

Legal name, EIN if in the US, and the page or section of its website, annual report, or Form 990.

## Your adaptation

What would your startup keep or change for the people and place in your need statement?

## Expected change

Why should your activity lead to this outcome? Explain the reasoning you would need to test.

*A source can show that a program exists without showing that it works.*

EIN Employer Identification Number

[v221.jima.me/assignments/startup-plan#b1](https://v221.jima.me/assignments/startup-plan#b1)

## Studio: the theory of change

thirty minutes, sheet 2 of your handout, one per team

# Build the chain

*Sheet 2 becomes plank 2 in B1, due Sun Oct 4.*

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## IN CLASS

1. **Read the mission aloud.** Rewrite until a teammate can repeat it back. Two sentences at most.
2. **Build three to four rows:** input, proposed activity and adaptation, intended outcome. Say why you expect that change.
3. **Cite the existing practice:** organization, EIN if in the US, source page or section.
4. **Circle the least-sure row.** Name the assumption you need to test.
5. **Swap after twenty minutes.** Check the source, adaptation, intended change, and assumption, then sign. Return the sheet and revise.

I circulate. Photograph both sheets before handing them in. Sheet 1 is your Grameen discussion; sheet 2 applies the same questions to your own startup and feeds B1.

[v221.jima.me/assignments/startup-plan/#b1](http://v221.jima.me/assignments/startup-plan/#b1)

EIN Employer Identification Number

# Assemble B1

*Two pages; due Sun Oct 4, 11:59 PM, on Canvas.*

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## **The need**

from the Week 5 studio sheet: the problem, three indicators with sources, who already works on it, the gap.

## **The mission**

the two sentences from today, after the repeat-back test.

## **The theory of change**

your startup's chain, with cited examples, adaptations, intended changes, and an assumption to test.

## **Why a non-profit**

one sentence naming a failure, from the Week 5 sheet. The trust test is the fastest check.

- **Credit or no credit, 5 points**, for grounded and genuinely there, not for polish. Two pages, single-spaced; the theory-of-change table does not count against the limit.

*Write B1 clearly enough for every teammate to explain the proposed organization.*

[v221.jima.me/assignments/startup-plan#b1](https://v221.jima.me/assignments/startup-plan#b1) · template: V221-B1-concept-brief.docx, on the same page

## Before you go

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- **Sun Oct 4, both on Canvas: A2, the visit evidence** (10 points) and **B1, the concept brief** (5 points). For a later visit, upload your booking confirmation by the A2 deadline.
- **Next week Module 4 opens: where the money comes from.** Monday, Marwell and Brown, “Toward a Governance Framework for Government–Nonprofit Relations,” pp. 231–243, plus the two short pieces on the 2025 funding disruptions. Wednesday, Foster, Kim, and Christiansen, “Ten Nonprofit Funding Models,” seven pages.
- **Nothing is due Sun Oct 11.** Lab week is the week after, and Wednesday’s 990 walk-through is the preparation for it.

### IN CLASS

**Progress check-in, thirty seconds each:** visit done, visit booked, or stuck. If booked, submit the confirmation by Sunday. Anyone stuck: the ladder from Monday, and an email from me tonight.

# Week 6 review

test yourself before Module 4

# Can you define these without looking?

## *Evidence*

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| Term                          | You should be able to say                                                              |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| document, person, observation | the three kinds of evidence, and one thing each cannot support                         |
| the three tests               | findable, dated, says that: what each catches                                          |
| the four moves                | claim, mechanism, evidence, counter-case, and which two the rubric's six points reward |
| proof of contact              | the four forms A2 accepts, and why the checkpoint exists                               |
| the fallback ladder           | its three rungs, and the rule that the work stays your own                             |

Monday's deck; the A2 spec; the Resources page

# Can you define these without looking?

*The chain*

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| Term                             | You should be able to say                                                   |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| theory of change                 | the four links, and why each arrow is a bet                                 |
| output vs outcome                | the test that separates them, with one example of each                      |
| existing practice and adaptation | what the source establishes, what you change, and what still needs testing  |
| the mission test                 | what a stranger has to be able to do with it                                |
| B1                               | its four parts, its length limit, and the studio sheet each part comes from |

Wednesday's deck; the B1 spec

## Six questions you should be able to answer

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1. A note in your book says “they help anyone who walks in.” **Turn it into a checkable claim** with a source a stranger could open, and name the kind of evidence.
2. Community Kitchen charges no fees and takes 97 percent of its revenue as contributions and grants. **Which failure theory does the money support**, and which single line of the PDF could change the reading?
3. Write the **four moves** of a “why a nonprofit” argument for your own organization, and mark which move you still cannot fill.
4. **Which is an outcome:** meals served this year, volunteer hours logged, or households that stop skipping meals? Apply the test, not your instinct.
5. Your startup borrows a practice from Grameen Bank. **Identify the source, your adaptation, and the intended change.** What assumption would you need to test?
6. Your visit is confirmed for after Oct 4. **What must you submit by Sunday, and what may follow after the visit?**

Answers: Q1 the three-kinds and three-tests frames; Q2 Child pp. 21–25 and 27–28, and the money frame; Q3 the four-moves frame; Q4 the outputs-and-outcomes frame; Q5 the Grameen adaptation frame; Q6 the opening A2 reminder and **the A2 spec**

# Numbers worth remembering from this week

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97% / \$0

Community Kitchen,  
FY2023: contributions  
and grants as a share of  
revenue; program service  
revenue

6 + 3

A4 points for the theory  
argument, and for what  
being there added

Sun Oct 4

A2 visit or booking  
evidence; B1 concept brief

- **Three** kinds of evidence, **three** tests, **four** moves. The same three tests you ran on a chatbot in Week 3.
- B1 is **5 points**, credit or no credit, **two pages** at most, and the theory-of-change table does not count against the limit.
- The chain is graded again in B2 (**10**, per member), B4 (inside the **10**), and B5, where coherence from need to impact carries **6 of 15**.

## Carry into Week 7

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- **Module 4 opens: where the money comes from and goes.** Monday, Marwell and Brown, “Toward a Governance Framework for Government–Nonprofit Relations,” **pp. 231–243**, and the two short pieces on the 2025 government funding disruptions. Wednesday, Foster, Kim, and Christiansen, “Ten Nonprofit Funding Models.”
- **Monday Oct 5 is a seated three-sector argument** over one community need. Read Marwell and Brown for who is accountable to whom, not for the history.
- **Wednesday Oct 7 ends with a walk through a real Form 990**, page by page. It is the preparation for lab week, when A3 is built.
- **Nothing is due Sun Oct 11.** A3, the 990 comparison, is due Sun Oct 18; the filing you pulled for A2 is half of it.

*For every claim, identify the evidence and how another reader can check it.*