

Lesson Structure

Focus

This observation focuses on instruction – what the teacher does to help students learn; what students do to further their learning. Consider how instruction typically unfolds. The teacher has a plan for instruction, the goals of which are driven by standards, district curriculum, and/or known needs of the students. Students are to learn – increase knowledge or skills. Communication takes place to open the lesson, students engage in learning activities (often multiple activities of a variety of types), students are provided with a way to practice what they are learning, and assessments are conducted to evaluate student progress. In this observation, look at lesson structure.

Questions and Prompts:

Briefly describe the class and the lesson you observed – grade level, subject area, number of students and general info about the class.

List the main types of instructional activities you observe in this lesson (teacher lecture, use of media, demonstrations, students reading, researching information, solving problems, individual work, group work, student hands-on work with objects and materials, laboratory activities, etc.). Approximately what percentage of time is the teacher lecturing?

Describe what the teacher does to motivate and engage students in learning. Does the teacher use facial expressions, gestures, problems, stories, demonstrations, etc. to motivate students? How does the teacher continue to motivate students throughout the lesson? Are students rewarded or praised for their engagement and attention?

Is the lesson easy to follow? Are directions clear? Give an example, or describe how students know where the lesson is going?

Once the teacher asks students to begin activities or practice, do they appear to know what is expected of them, or do they seem confused?

Do students have opportunities to practice critical thinking in the lesson? Provide a specific example.

Do students help each other? Are there adults in the classroom helping? Give examples of helping.

Describe any assessments the teacher uses to check student understanding and progress.

What ideas from this observation will you take with you and potentially apply? What instructional steps or activities might you do differently if you were to teach this lesson or a similar one?