

FOCUSED PROFICIENCY OBSERVATION

APPRENTICE TEACHER:	HEATHER MCNEILL
OBSERVER:	CRISTA WRIGHT
FOCUS OF OBSERVATION:	CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT
DATE OF THE OBSERVATION:	WEEK OF FEBRUARY 6
SUBJECT/GRADE LEVEL/CLASS PERIOD:	ALGEBRA I / 9TH / BLOCK 1

RECORD OF THE OBSERVATION BELOW

How does the Apprentice Teacher manage student behavior and create rapport with and among students in an environment of respect?

Approaches them consistently with kindness and concern. Is willing to work with students before school and always puts the students' needs above all else. Quiet signal is respectful. She has also collected student interests and uses that information to construct class examples that involve the student and their activities.

How does the Apprentice Teacher effectively and safely use physical space to enhance learning for all students (For Science Apprentice Teachers specifically address lab safety)?

Students are in teams on a daily basis with walkway space between. If individual work is required, students turn out into individual rows/columns quickly and then are just as quickly able to turn back. This is efficient and effective. All students can see the board and Heather can easily get to any student who has a question.

How does the Apprentice Teacher manage classroom procedures to maximize time for instruction?

Her quiet signal includes her asking once for the students' attention and then waiting for them to respond. Students have started to request from each other that talking stop. She also uses a timer at the beginning of class (after the transition from the computer lab) so that students know how long they have to collect their materials and prepare for class. When the timer rings, teaching begins. Heather also teaches bell-to-bell so students expect the time to be filled with learning from start to finish.

How does the Apprentice Teacher establish classroom standards that foster a culture of learning for all students?

Allows all students to have an input. Accepts volunteered answers and also checks in on people who aren't responding appropriately. Also does student consults while we are in the computer lab to assist students who were absent or who have specific needs in relation to the topic taught (misunderstanding, common errors, etc.)

COMMENTS FOR DEBRIEFING:

Talking during an individual quiz is allowed? If so, tell them. If not, tell them. Be up front with your expectations of behavior and process. Students do not dismiss the class The bell ringing is your signal, not theirs. Let them know!

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT TIP (TRY THIS!):

Quiet signal sound? Maybe something on every SmartBoard page that you can click on if you need the quiet signal.
Timing ... try to plan the last minute for instructions for homework, procedure, etc so they aren't trying to talk while you're giving directions.

FOCUSED PROFICIENCY OBSERVATION

APPRENTICE TEACHER:	HEATHER MCNEILL
OBSERVER:	CRISTA WRIGHT
FOCUS OF OBSERVATION:	TEACHING PREPARATION
DATE OF THE OBSERVATION:	WEEK OF FEBRUARY 13
SUBJECT/GRADE LEVEL/CLASS PERIOD:	ALGEBRA I / 9TH / BLOCK 1

RECORD OF THE OBSERVATION BELOW

How does the Apprentice Teacher use subject knowledge to design activities that promote interest, participation, and learning for all students?

Plugs students' names into real-world problems; uses examples that appeal to students (highlights upcoming Busch Gardens trip, uses cell phone data, etc); holds students accountable for participating in their teams by requiring each student to work out problems on group assignments; variety of activities including hands-on experimentation

How does the Apprentice Teacher demonstrate an awareness of and make use of materials, resources, technology, and equipment?

Utilizes SmartBoard and SmartNotebook presentations including timer, graphing, and capture functions; uses resources from online textbook including example problems and pre-formed worksheets; creates appropriate handouts/notes, classwork assignments, exit slips, quizzes, and tests using math equation editing tools

How does the Apprentice Teacher prepare subject specific activities to assess learning of all students?

Students are responsible for filling out their own guided note sheets. Individual assignments as well as partner and team assignments. Circulates throughout the classroom during practice time to answer specific questions. Offers additional assistance before school and at lunch upon request.

How does the Apprentice Teacher demonstrate an awareness of individual student needs and make modifications to the instructional plan?

Constantly adjusts lesson plans/presentations to address needs from the previous day. Designs new assignments to clear up confusion or reinforce new strategies. Meets with students one-on-one during lab time if they have been absent or if they need clarification on a point based on the previous day's exit slip.

COMMENTS FOR DEBRIEFING:

Excellent work with the new anti-talking strategy. "I'm waiting on x people to stop talking so we can continue" ... it is specific enough without singling out disruptive students on a personal level. I hope this continues to work!

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT TIP (TRY THIS!):

To promote responsibility and participation: maybe try giving a bonus point for students who bring their notes back to class and have every blank filled in from the previous day. You could check by going around during the warm-up or a team assignment. They could then even use the notes on the test, if appropriate, and staple their notes to their test when they turned it in.

FOCUSED PROFICIENCY OBSERVATION

APPRENTICE TEACHER:	HEATHER MCNEILL
OBSERVER:	CRISTA WRIGHT
FOCUS OF OBSERVATION:	INSTRUCTION AND DELIVERY
DATE OF THE OBSERVATION:	WEEK OF FEBRUARY 27
SUBJECT/GRADE LEVEL/CLASS PERIOD:	ALGEBRA I / 9TH / BLOCK 1

RECORD OF THE OBSERVATION BELOW

How does the Apprentice Teacher demonstrate the ability to teach the subject and cognitively engage all students in significant learning?

Lessons are well-thought out and instruction is correct. Students are engaged in learning through projects and individual accountability. Lots of interesting real-world problems and examples (basketball, Beyoncé concerts, weight lifting, etc)

How does the Apprentice Teacher communicate clearly and articulately?

Frequently checks for understanding; asks clarifying questions; gives guided notes; rephrases teaching during one-on-one instruction

How does the Apprentice Teacher use questioning and assessment techniques to enhance students' participation and learning?

Asks for volunteers and calls on reluctant students throughout lesson so that everyone has a chance to be involved; develops team assignments that are structured by student so that it is easier to assess a particular student's learning and encourage participation.

How does the Apprentice Teacher demonstrate flexibility and responsiveness to students' needs during instruction?

Has reassessed pace frequently and adjusted nearly daily to students' needs based on the lesson. Welcomes clarifying questions. Promotes extended thought and high-order questions.

COMMENTS FOR DEBRIEFING (SPECIFY TO TESTING):

Make sure that you aren't helping the students during tests to the point that you aren't getting fair representation of what they know. Decide what you want your assessment to tell you and then be sure you are giving the students the information you want them to give you. Otherwise, is the assessment really necessary in its given form? If you decide to help students during tests, make sure you are always facing the class. Don't turn your back on the room, because talking happens while you are looking away (cheating) and, again, you won't get as accurate of a representation of what your students know. Claim the test: you wrote it! So instead of saying "What they want to know is ...", use "I'm asking you ...". That way students know it's not an arbitrary person asking them disconnected questions. You're asking them what you expect of them after the instruction. Also, for test management, have all students facing the same direction, at least arm's length apart from their neighbor. This will (again) help you maintain the integrity of your assessment.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT TIP (TRY THIS!):

When one student gives an answer, try asking another (maybe more reluctant student) if they agree or disagree, especially if it's an answer that the reluctant student can be successful on ... then ask "why?" Utilize the students' love of debate to promote discussion of *why* something is true more than having them debate if it's actually right.

FOCUSED PROFICIENCY OBSERVATION

APPRENTICE TEACHER:	HEATHER MCNEILL
OBSERVER:	CRISTA WRIGHT
FOCUS OF OBSERVATION:	EQUITY AND INCLUSIVE DESIGN
DATE OF THE OBSERVATION:	WEEK OF MARCH 12
SUBJECT/GRADE LEVEL/CLASS PERIOD:	ALGEBRA I / 9TH / BLOCK 1

RECORD OF THE OBSERVATION BELOW

How did the Apprentice Teacher allow students choice in their activities and how were these choices related to different learning styles?

Allowed students to solve problems in ways that made sense to them. In project, gave teams choices in scenarios so that interest level was high. Offered homework assignment that allowed students to choose problems they felt like they needed to practice most.

How did the Apprentice Teacher introduce the lesson, effectively manage time for students to progress through the activities, and summarize the lesson with the students?

Intro with reality shows (Project Runway, So You Think You Can Dance, American Idol, etc) to access concept of elimination. Used timer to help guide solving time. Utilized gradual release model. Checked for understanding throughout. Brought class back together before exit slip to ensure understanding.

How did the Apprentice Teacher assess individual accountability for the student work accomplished in the lesson?

Monitored student work throughout class. Called on specific students. Had students solve a problem individually before completing the exit slip. Assigned exit slip.

How does the Apprentice Teacher demonstrate an awareness of student diversity in their teaching (gender, ethnicity, students who are learning the content in a second language, accommodations for students with special needs)?

Varies pace of delivery, guides through the note-taking process, encourages students to consult with team/teacher as needs arise, builds teams to reinforce sense of classroom safety (high-mid-low achievers in every group, equal gender groups, reinforce IEP needs with extended time and one-on-one instruction). No ESOL students in class.

COMMENTS FOR DEBRIEFING:

Students are STILL talking while you're teaching. DON'T LET THEM DO THIS!! They are missing instruction and then are confused.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT TIP (TRY THIS!):

Use Kagan strategies like "tell your face partner" or "tell your shoulder partner" for quick and easy answers. Example: "Tell your shoulder partner what you got for the x-coordinate. (pause) If your shoulder partner said '2', give them a high-five." It's one of those simple things that differentiates responses so instead of hearing from one person, you get about 14 responses at the same time. It also reinforces student accountability. You can then allow more time for them to calculate y and then have them share with their face partner, again increasing feedback. (This also essentially prevents Thomas from answering every single question!) ☺

FOCUSED PROFICIENCY OBSERVATION

APPRENTICE TEACHER:	HEATHER MCNEILL
OBSERVER:	CRISTA WRIGHT
FOCUS OF OBSERVATION:	SUBJECT MATTER KNOWLEDGE
DATE OF THE OBSERVATION:	WEEK OF MARCH 26
SUBJECT/GRADE LEVEL/CLASS PERIOD:	ALGEBRA I / 9TH / BLOCK 1

RECORD OF THE OBSERVATION BELOW

How does the Apprentice Teacher demonstrate an understanding of the subject?

Explains things in multiple ways. Considers several teaching strategies before introducing concept to class. Highlights places where students will likely make mistakes as a preventative measure during instruction.

How does the Apprentice Teacher connect the content with previously learned topics, future topics, and other subjects?

References topics already taught by her, me, or middle school teachers. References past notes from class and Carnegie lab. Points out applications students can expect to see in future classes or on EOC. Mixes physics applications in with story problems.

How does the Apprentice Teacher demonstrate an understanding of the philosophical and historical development of the subject?

Researches strategies for teaching new topics and selects from methods employed by other teachers. Does not necessarily teach the same way she was taught; looks for new ways to convey information.

How does the Apprentice Teacher demonstrate an understanding of state and national standards and use this knowledge to enhance student achievement?

Uses EOC test item specifications to help drive curriculum based on benchmarks appropriate to subjects. Encourages higher-order thinking and incorporates solution strategies on a nearly daily basis. Asks quiz and test questions that mimic both style and difficulty of EOC.

COMMENTS FOR DEBRIEFING:

It can be frustrating when you feel you pour yourself into developing great lessons and then see that the kids don't pay attention to them. Don't view this as a reflection of your efforts! You are responsible for at least introducing the content they will be held accountable for on the EOC. It is THEIR CHOICE as far as what they do with the information you give them. At some point, they will see the results of their choices. Just keep encouraging them to make good ones, but don't beat yourself up when they don't. Some lessons are learned, unfortunately, the hard way.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT TIP (TRY THIS!):

Nice job with keeping the class on track and ending the distractive talking! When you feel like you are losing them to confusion/sleepiness/boredom, try an off-the-wall strategy to refocus. You could have a mini one-minute class competition or have them tell their neighbor their favorite song or give them a quick 30-second assignment with their team. Anything to break the cycle of events and give them an opportunity to refocus. These could be predetermined questions or something quick you make up on the spot. Sometimes they will come back on track (so to speak) when they can clearly see an on-ramp. ☺