

Inside the Classroom

Teacher Interview Protocol

I appreciate your letting me observe your class. I have some questions I'd like to ask you related to this lesson. Would you mind if I taped the interview? It will help me stay focused on our conversation and it will ensure I have an accurate record of what we discussed.

Preliminary

If applicable, ask:

What is the name/title of this course?

What class period was this?

If applicable, ask:

Can I have a copy of the instructional materials you used for this lesson? [Specify what you would like to have copies of, if necessary.]

A. Learning Goals

1. I'd like to know a bit more about the students in this class.
Tell me about the ability levels of students in this class.
How do they compare to students in the school as a whole?

Are there any students with special needs in this class?
Are there any students for whom English is not their first language?
Are there any students with learning disabilities?
2. Is student absenteeism or mobility a problem for you in this class?
3. Please help me understand where this lesson fits in the sequence of the unit you are working on. What have the students experienced prior to today's lesson?
4. What was the specific purpose of today's lesson?
5. How do you feel about how the lesson played out?
What do you think the students gained from today's lesson?
6. What is the next step for this class in this unit?

B. Content/Topic

7. What led you to teach the mathematics/science topics/concepts/skills in this lesson?

(Use the following probes, as needed, so you can assess the extent of importance of each of these influences:)

Is it included in the state/district curriculum/course of study?

If yes, or previously implied: How important was that in your decision to teach this topic?

Is it included in a state/district mathematics/science assessment? What are the consequences if students don't do well on the test?

If yes, or previously implied: How important were these tests in your decision to teach this topic?

Is it included in an assigned textbook or program designated for this class?

If yes, or previously implied: How important was that in your decision to teach this topic?

C. Resources Used to Design the Lesson

8. What resources did you use to plan this lesson?

(Be sure to get details on sources of materials and activities.)

(If teacher developed materials, SKIP to part D.)

9. Were these resources/materials/activities designated for this class/course or did you choose to use them yourself?

10. What do you like about these resources/materials/activities?

(Compared to what the district designated for the class/course, if applicable.)

What do you not like?

11. a. *If the lesson was based on one resource/material:*

Did you plan this lesson essentially as it was organized in [name of resource/material] or did you modify it in important ways?

11. b. *If the lesson was based on more than one resource/material:*

Did you plan this lesson essentially as it was organized in any one of these resources/materials?

If yes:

Did you modify it in important ways?

12. *If modified:*

Can you describe the modifications you made and your reasons for making them?

D. The Teacher

13. How do you feel about teaching this topic?
Do you enjoy it?
How well prepared do you feel to guide student learning of this content?
What opportunities have you had to learn about this particular content area?
(Probe for professional development opportunities.)
How did you become involved in these professional development opportunities?
Were they required or encouraged by the district?
How helpful were they?

14. How do you feel about teaching with this pedagogy?
How comfortable do you feel using the instructional strategies involved in teaching this lesson?
What opportunities have you had to learn about using these strategies?
(Probe for professional development opportunities.)
How did you become involved in these professional development opportunities?
Were they required or encouraged by the district?
How helpful were they?

15. How many years have you been teaching prior to this year?
Have you taught this lesson before?
If yes: How different was today from how you have taught it previously?

Is there anything about this particular group of students that led you to plan this lesson this way?

16. *If applicable ask:*
I noticed there was another adult in the classroom. Who was that and what was his/her role?

E. Context

17. Sometimes schools and districts make it easier for teachers to teach science/mathematics well, and sometimes they get in the way.
What about your teaching situation influenced your planning of this lesson?

PROBES:

- Did the facilities and available equipment and supplies have any influence on your choice of this lesson or how you taught it?
- Were there any problems in getting the materials you needed for this lesson?

18. Sometimes other people in the school and district can influence your planning of a lesson. Did your principal have any influence on your choice of this lesson or how you taught it?

Other teachers in the school?

Parents/community?

School board?

District administration?

Anyone else?

Thank you for your time. If I have any additional questions or need clarification, how and when is it best to contact you?