How to Assess Professional Practice: Looking Beyond the Classroom

A comprehensive evaluation of teacher effectiveness includes looking beyond the classroom. Below are three sets of indicators to help you, as the teacher, assess your commitment to professional practice, the school community, and professionalism. Use the four-point rubric within each set to assess the teacher’s commitment to professional practice.

10. Professional Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commitment to Professional Growth</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.1 Self-assesses and works to improve classroom practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.2 Develops and implements a professional growth plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.3 Seeks out professional development and continuous learning opportunities</td>
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<td>10.4 Works with colleagues to improve practice throughout the school</td>
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<tr>
<th>Commitment to the School Community</th>
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<tr>
<td>10.5 Maintains open communication with the entire school community</td>
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<td>10.6 Assumes appropriate leadership roles</td>
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<td>10.7 Maintains and builds a positive school culture</td>
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<td>10.8 Maintains a high level of professionalism at all times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.9 Adheres to legal responsibilities and current educational policies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Training & Implementation

Core Framework (for School Leaders)

In this training, participants will:

- Identify the dimensions, indicators, and rubrics in the Framework.
- Use the Framework to conduct formal and informal evaluations.
- Collect evidence of effective practice (using real classroom videos).
- Compare evaluations with those of other administrators to begin establishing inter-rater reliability.
- Use each successive round of observation to refine practice and calibrate judgments.
- Learn how to provide meaningful feedback to teachers.
- Learn how to conduct powerful pre- and post-conferences with teachers.
- Learn how to develop and implement comprehensive professional development plans.
- Explore different formats for writing up final evaluations.
- Learn how to promote teacher growth through the development of targeted professional development plans.

Contact us for more details or to set up a free consultation.

| This is the beginning of the Framework |

The Thoughtful Classroom Teacher Effectiveness Framework is a comprehensive system for observing, evaluating, and refining classroom practice. It synthesizes a wide body of research on instructional design and teacher effectiveness, as well as insights from over 250 teachers and administrators from around the country.

The ultimate goal of the Framework is to create a common language for talking about high-quality teaching and how classroom practice can be improved. The Framework allows for assessment according to ten dimensions of teaching, outlining a set of observable teaching indicators within each dimension and relevant student behaviors associated with effective instruction. It also includes rubrics for developing summative evaluations, along with a set of protocols to help school leaders provide meaningful feedback to teachers and conduct powerful pre- and post-observation conferences.

What Are the Components of Effective Teaching?

Research and experience prove, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that classroom instruction has far more impact on student learning than any other factor. A study of the world’s top 25 school systems puts it this way: “The only way to improve outcomes is to improve instruction” (Barber & Moshref, 2007). This is why two of the three Framework components focus directly on classroom instruction.

The Thoughtful Classroom Teacher Effectiveness Framework: Five Episodes of Effective Instruction (Dimensions 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5) Around the Framework are four foundational dimensions that have been adapted from the preeminent teacher-effectiveness models (Danielson, 2007; Marzano, 2007; Marzano, Frontiera, & Livingston, 2011; Saphier, Haley-Speca, & Gower, 2008; Stronge, 2010). These are the four dimensions:

1. Organization, Rules, and Procedures
2. Positive Relationships
3. Engagement and Enjoyment
4. A Culture of Thinking and Learning

These cornerstone episodes represent the universal elements of quality instruction, whether in a kindergarten classroom, AP physics lab, or anywhere in between. Without these four cornerstones in place, student learning will be compromised.

The Thoughtful Classroom Teacher Effectiveness Framework

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How to Collect Evidence through Observation

1. Determine what kind of observation you will be conducting.
   - A formal observation is announced, lasts for an extended period of time, and usually involves a pre- and post-observation meeting between the teacher and observers (see the green pre- and post-observation panels below and to the right).
   - Informal observations are typically shorter in duration than formal observations, may be unannounced, and should happen regularly throughout the year.
2. Review the nine dimensions and instructional indicators to decide which ones you will focus on during your observation.
3. Select the appropriate online template or paper form for your observation.
4. Use these simple marks to help you collect information about the teacher’s instruction:
   - Evidence: Plan form in the box.
   - Not Evidence: Leave the box blank.
   - Missed Opportunity – Circle the box.
5. If you are using the blank form, please note that instruction does not mean addressing all indicators.
6. Look for student behaviors that are signs of effective instruction during your observation.
7. Collect notes to support your observation and develop meaningful feedback (see gray feedback panel to the right).

How to Conduct a Peer Observation Conference

Objectives:
- Identify relevant dimensions the teacher will be focusing on.
- Collaborate with each other.

The Thoughtful Classroom Teacher Effectiveness Framework

**Organization, Rules, and Procedures**
- 5.1 Organizes the classroom for safety and learning.
- 5.2 Establishes classroom rules and procedures.
- 5.3 Provides clear and consistent rules and procedures.
- 5.4 Manages non-instructional tasks effectively.
- 5.5 Works effectively with other adults in the classroom.

Impact on Student Learning – Sample Student Behaviors
- Show respect for each other and the classroom.
- Understand and follow classroom rules and procedures.
- Take responsibility for their own learning.

Instructor Indicators (Formative Observation)*
- 5.1 Selects appropriate standards [ccss].
- 5.2 Defines learning goals/targets [ccss].
- 5.3 Poses essential questions.
- 5.4 Uses engaging hooks.
- 5.5 Builds a supportive and respectful classroom.
- 5.6 Assess students’ background knowledge, skills, and interests.
- 5.7 Clarifies expectations for products and performances.
- 5.8 Encourages students to develop personal goals.

Four-Point Assessment Rubric (see panel for description) [1] [2] [3] [4]

Deepening and Reimbeding Learning
- How does the teacher help students solidify their understanding and practice new skill?

Instructor Indicators (Formative Observation)*
- 6.1 Organizes content into meaningful chunks [ccss].
- 6.2 Uses diverse resources of information/media [ccss].
- 6.3 Demonstrates high-quality communication skills [ccss].
- 6.4 Uses various presentation techniques to enhance memory [ccss].
- 6.5 Encourages students to use resources [ccss].
- 6.6 Uses a variety of questioning and response techniques to assess understanding and adjust instruction [ccss].
- 6.7 Uses outcome informed homework [ccss].
- 6.8 Helps students assemble big ideas [ccss].

Impact on Student Learning – Sample Student Behaviors
- Are able to identify big ideas and important details.
- Can answer questions about their learning.
- Can summarize what they’ve learned.

Four-Point Assessment Rubric (see panel for description) [1] [2] [3] [4]

**Applying Learning**
- How does the teacher use the lessons to achieve their learning goals in a meaningful way?

Instructor Indicators (Formative Observation)*
- 7.1 Helps students develop skills for reading rigorous texts [ccss].
- 7.2 Engages students in higher-order thinking [ccss].
- 7.3 Challenges students to support ideas with evidence [ccss].
- 7.4 Uses technology as a class tool [ccss].
- 7.5 Encourages discussion, dialogue, and debate [ccss].
- 7.6 Requires use of critical academic vocabulary [ccss].
- 7.7 Creates a respectful and supportive classroom.
- 7.8 Supports students to use strategies on their own [ccss].

Impact on Student Learning – Sample Student Behaviors
- Use different forms of critical thinking.
- Support their thinking with evidence.

Four-Point Assessment Rubric (see panel for description) [1] [2] [3] [4]

Preparing Students for New Learning
- How does the teacher present new information and provide students with opportunities for active engagement with content?

Instructor Indicators (Formative Observation)*
- 8.1 Engages students in meaningful discussions [ccss].
- 8.2 Requires students to transfer learning [ccss].
- 8.3 Develops writing tasks that promote college and career readiness [ccss].
- 8.4 Engages students in authentic research projects [ccss].
- 8.5 Challenges students to present and defend ideas [ccss].
- 8.6 Teaches students to assess their own success [ccss].
- 8.7 Clarifies expectations (e.g., checklists, rubrics, models, etc.) [ccss].
- 8.8 Differentiates assessment tasks.

Impact on Student Learning – Sample Student Behaviors
- Analyze and review their own work to improve its quality or completion.
- Make evidence-based improvements.
- Present and explain their work.

Four-Point Assessment Rubric (see panel for description) [1] [2] [3] [4]

Positive Relationships
- How does the teacher create positive relationships with the students and among students to promote learning?

Instructor Indicators (Formative Observation)*
- 9.1 Encourages students to look back and develop new insights [ccss].
- 9.2 Provides opportunities to reflect on their learning [ccss].
- 9.3 Encourages students to develop outside resources to enhance their learning experience [ccss].
- 9.4 Helps students review and address unmet goals.
- 9.5 Helps students set future performance goals.

Impact on Student Learning – Sample Behaviors
- Take a step back to see the big picture.
- Learn from their own learning.
- Look back at their learning goals to assess their effort and achievement.

Four-Point Assessment Rubric (see panel for description) [1] [2] [3] [4]

Engagement and Enjoyment
- How does the teacher motivate students to do their best work and inspire the love of learning?

Instructor Indicators (Formative Observation)*
- 10.1 Encourages students to participate in learning.
- 10.2 Helps students develop and follow learning goals.
- 10.3 Maintains a warm and positive classroom environment.
- 10.4 Shows students how to set goals, develop a plan, and follow through with their goals.
- 10.5 Celebrates student achievement.

Impact on Student Learning – Sample Behaviors
- Marketable and enthusiastic in the classroom.
- Express their own interests, ideas, and insights.

Four-Point Assessment Rubric (see panel for description) [1] [2] [3] [4]

How to Conclude a Post-Observation Conference

Use these questions to help focus the teacher’s reflections after your observation:
- What do you feel went well? What caused you concern?
- What do you feel you need to explore further in your professional development?
- How do you feel your students reacted to the lesson? What caused them to feel this way? Reassure: What caused your students to feel this way?
- What are your next steps?
- What did you learn? Why do you think this is so?

Rethink: What would you do differently next time? Why?

Assess a Teacher’s Effectiveness using a Four-Point Rubric

When you have enough information, use this four-point rubric to assess the teacher’s instructional effectiveness. Note that the rubric may be used in different ways. You may use it to assess a teacher’s effectiveness in any setting or you may use it to guide your assessment of other teachers. The rubric is designed to assess the overall effectiveness of a lesson. (1) Novice: Minimal or no commitment to effective instruction. Relevant practices are not being used or need reconsideration because they are not having their intended effects on student learning.

(2) Developing: Initial commitment to effective instruction. The teacher has some consistency in their instructional practices, but the practices need further refinement. With refinement, the impact on student learning can be improved.

(3) Proficient: Clear commitment to effective instruction. The teacher applies relevant instructional practices that have a positive impact on student learning.

(4) Expert: Strong commitment to effective instruction that shows advanced expertise. The teacher applies relevant instructional practices and is able to adapt them to their needs. These practices have a consistently positive impact on student learning.

Contact us!
We understand that choosing a teacher evaluation system is a complex decision. If at any time you need more information, have any questions, or would like to schedule a more detailed “walk through” of the framework, just give us a call.

800-962-4832
www.ThoughtfulClassroom.com

*Note: Instructional indicators and student behaviors have been condensed. See the Thoughtful Classroom Teacher Effectiveness Framework Resource Guide for full-length indicators.

This icon notes instructional indicators that support key themes in the Common Core State Standards. See www.ThoughtfulClassroom.com/CC Sri for more information.

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The Thoughtful Classroom Teacher Effectiveness Framework™