



Lesson Study Guidelines for Observations

Writing Team Responsibilities Before the Study Lesson

1. Invite Outside Observers

- Invite other teachers, administrators, and at least one knowledgeable other from outside the school setting, such as a university-based educator. The number of observers will depend on how comfortable the group is with the lesson study process.
- Ask one knowledgeable other to be the final commentator.

2. Assign Specific Tasks to Writing Team Members

- Assign a moderator and a general recorder for discussion sessions.
- Assign members to observe and record specific student responses during the lesson, such as one student's responses or the role of student collaboration.
- Assign a videographer. While important for record-keeping, videotaping is not a substitute for live observation.

3. Prepare Materials for Observers, Including:

- The lesson plan. Include the goal of the lesson, where the lesson fits in a unit, where the lesson fits across grades in the entire curriculum, how it relates to the school goal, anticipated student responses, and progression of the lesson.
- Copies of student worksheets
- Seating charts containing student names and space to write notes.

4. Organize the Details and Logistics

- Arrange the classroom so that observers have space to stand and to circulate through the students' workspaces.
- Allow time in the schedule to meet with the invited observers prior to the lesson to specify the kind of feedback being sought.
- Schedule a break after the lesson to allow observers to gather their thoughts for the Debriefing.

Observers' Responsibilities During the Study Lesson

1. Respect Natural Atmosphere of the Classroom

- Minimize side conversation during the lesson.
- Remain in the classroom during the entire lesson to capture how the lesson is set up, its flow, and the conclusion.
- Do not block the students' view of the blackboard; do not block video camera.
- Circulate freely when students are working individually or in groups but move to the side or back of the room during whole class discussion.
- Minimize interaction with students. Refrain from teaching or assisting the children. Occasional interaction is permissible if done discreetly and with the purpose of understanding student thinking.

2. Become a Researcher

- Keep in mind the goal of the lesson.
- Use the lesson plan, seating chart, and work sheets to record your data.
- Study how students are collaborating.
- Take notes on individual student responses, using the students' names.
- Indicate how individual students constructed their understanding
- Document the variety of solutions that individual students use to solve problems, including errors.
- Examine the teacher-student interaction; e.g. is the teacher attempting to call on all students?
- Document the type of student talk and student engagement.

3. Consider These Questions While Observing

- Was the goal clear? Did the supporting activities contribute effectively to achieving the goal?
- Was the flow of the lesson coherent, and did it support students' learning of the concept?
- Were the problems and the materials helpful in achieving the goal of the lesson?
- Did the classroom discussions help promote student understanding?
- Was the content of the lesson appropriate for the students' level of understanding?
- Did students apply their prior knowledge to understand the content of the lesson?
- Did the teacher's questions engage and facilitate student thinking?
- Were student ideas valued and incorporated into the lesson? Did the lesson summary refer to student theories or ideas?