



Standards-in-Action 2.0

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education

Observation Checklist

The following procedures included within this checklist are designed to help you prepare for classroom observations and the meetings with teachers that will follow. They include a series of before-, during-, and post-observation reminders. Importantly, they are intended to ensure that you and the teachers you are observing have a positive and collaborative learning experience.

A. Launch Pre-Observation Procedures

Hold pre-observation meeting(s) with teachers to:

- ___ Explain the purpose and principles of the SIA 2.0 Classroom Observation System.
- ___ Discuss the specific classes and levels that will be observed.
- ___ Review the SIA 2.0 Observation Tool and answer any questions.
- ___ Reassure staff that observations will be used to support teachers' growth and will *not* result in individual personnel evaluations.

Prepare to:

- ___ Arrive early and stay in the classroom for the entire lesson to observe the arc of the lesson, including its setup, flow, and conclusion.
- ___ Assume the role of a researcher, collecting observational data on teaching practices, not evaluating teacher performance.
- ___ Bring a copy of the standards for the level and content area. Also, bring a copy of the SIA 2.0 Classroom Observation Tool and additional resources you may want for notetaking.

B. Conduct Observations

During the observation:

- ___ Support the natural atmosphere of the classroom, taking your cues from the teacher. That includes, for example, minimizing your interaction with students unless the teacher invites you to do otherwise.



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___ Pay attention to students' verbal and nonverbal responses, including how they are constructing their understanding, strategies for solving problems, and any patterns of student error.

___ Focus on teacher-student interactions, including types of student engagement and how the teacher encourages engagement.

Immediately following the observation:

___ Review notes and record your evidence and final thoughts on a clean Observation Tool while observations are fresh in your mind.

___ If you find you need additional information to check your observations or to better interpret them, ask the teacher for clarification.

C. Launch Post-Observation Procedures

Conduct post-observation debriefings:

___ Begin by stating the purpose and agenda for the discussion: to debrief the observation and promote an exchange of information.

___ Begin on a positive note by discussing the strengths observed and then move to areas of instruction that could be strengthened:

___ Speak explicitly and concretely about the Core Actions and indicators observed.

___ Inquire about those indicators not observed to determine the reasons why (e.g., perhaps some did not apply to the specific lesson observed).

___ Provide an opportunity for the participating staff member to reflect on your observations and thoughts.

Agree on future learning:

___ Ask which areas of the teaching and learning practices the teacher wants to know more about.

___ Think through PD priorities for continuous improvement.