

ROCKFORD AREA SCHOOLS

Q-COMP PROGRAM

OBSERVATION COACH

SELF STUDY MATERIALS





Dear Observation Coach,

As an Observation Coach, your responsibility is to conduct observations with your colleagues in order to improve practice and ultimately increase student achievement. This practice will not just involve watching and scoring lessons, but, through training, you will learn to coach teachers on possibilities for improvement.

As a group of observers, our first goal is to align our practices with the Rockford Area School's Q Comp Plan. Beyond this, we have the flexibility to build a comprehensive, fair system that values teachers' by recognizing their initial skill levels and challenging them to expand on their current practice.

In order for us to succeed in these goals, as a group, we must participate in on-going training. Today, you are receiving this Teacher Observation Self Study Guide in order to provide a more comprehensive base of knowledge for our team.

Thank you for your service as an Observation Coach.

Warmly,
Traci Moore

Traci Moore
Q-Comp Advisor

Observation Tools

The observer collects data by using the methods determined in the pre-observation conference, which may include use of an observation instrument or (in the case of an unfocused observation) taking exact notes on all significant behavior. There are a variety of techniques that the observer can use to gather data on classroom activities. Some techniques provide a more detailed picture of what is occurring in the classroom setting; others focus on specific aspects of the learning environment. Smith and Garner (1995) identify several observation techniques.

-www.calpro-online.org/pubs/b_observ.pdf

- **Scripting:** The observer records the lesson in a narrative form, capturing as much information as possible. Scripting may include quantitative comments as well as qualitative comments where appropriate such as “It’s hard to hear you” or “No one answered,” and timing of activities.
- **Tables:** The observer records comments under specific topic areas. For example, if the focus of the observation is teacher/student interaction, grid headings would be “teacher” and “student.” Then, records would show quotes or summaries of teacher and student discussion.
- **Tally Sheet:** The observer records the type of participation seen in the class. For example, to determine the level of teacher talk vs. student talk, use three headings, “teacher,” “student,” and “silent.” When the teacher talks, draw a seating chart and note when each student participates.
- **Lesson Plan.** The observer records events in the class under headings such as “Presentation” and “Practice,” to provide information on how the flow of the lesson went.
- **Time Notation.** The observer records the length of time of each activity or step to get a sense of the pacing of the lesson. It's easiest to do this if you record time at regular intervals, such as every 10 or 15 minutes.
- **Dialogue Recording.** The observer records the actual words spoken by the teacher, or the teacher and the students, or the students. This information can be used to determine how clearly the communication is, what type of interaction takes place, who is interacting.
- **Videotape.** The videotape is as an objective a record of a class as possible. It's important to focus the camera on both the teacher and the class.

Evidence vs. Opinion

| EVIDENCE | OPINION |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observed• Documented• Specific• Not influenced by the observer's perspective• Objective | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Draws conclusions without evidence• Influenced by the observer's perspective• Subjective |

Making Evidence-Based Statements

Directions: Review the statements below. Circle or highlight the words or phrases that imply opinion and/or are left open to interpretation. Rewrite statements to make them evidence based.

1. During your lesson, some students had difficulty staying on task.
2. The lesson introduction was not sufficient.
3. Many students were distracted during the lesson.
4. While you led a direct instruction segment of the lesson, I noticed that you used proximity to keep the two girls at table A from talking.
5. The pacing of the lesson was slow, which allowed time for disruptive student behavior.

Look through the observations you have conducted, evaluate yourself based on your use of Evidence vs. Opinion statements. There may be a third option here, if you haven't written many statements. If this is the case, please return to this question after you have done a few more observations with writing.

Is **Evidence vs. Opinion Statements** an area of strength or an area of growth?

- Strength
- Growth
- Return Later

Element 1: Lesson and Unit Structure Expanded Rubric

| | Unsatisfactory | Basic | Proficient | Distinguished |
|---------------------------------|---|--|---|--|
| | The lesson or unit has no clearly defined structure, or the structure is chaotic. The lesson or unit is not based on state standards. | The lesson or unit has a recognizable structure, although the structure is not uniformly maintained. The lesson or unit is based on state standards. | The lesson or unit has a clearly defined structure around which the activities are organized. The lesson or unit is based on state standards. | The lesson or unit has a highly coherent structure around which the activities are organized. The lesson allows for reflection and closure according to student's needs. The lesson or unit is based on state standards. |
| Lesson Structure | No clearly defined structure. | Recognizable, but not uniform | Clearly defined | Highly coherent |
| State Standards | Based on state standards | Based on state standards | Based on state standards | Based on state standards |
| Closure & Reflection | X | X | X | Provides for student reflection and closure according to student needs |

Questions

1. How do you determine if a lesson's structure is clearly defined?
2. What does a "highly coherent" lesson design look like?
3. How do you determine if a lesson is based on state standards?
4. If a lesson provides for student reflection and closure according to student needs, is it automatically distinguished? If not, how do you score for that occurrence?

Element 2: Instructional Materials & Resources Expanded Rubric

| | Unsatisfactory | Basic | Proficient | Distinguished |
|----------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| | Instructional materials and resources do not support the instructional goals or do not engage students in meaningful learning. | Some instructional materials and resources support the instructional goals and engage students in meaningful learning. | All instructional materials and resources support the instructional goals and most engage students in meaningful learning. | All instructional materials and resources support the instructional goals and engage students in meaningful learning. |
| Support Instruction | Do not support instructional goals | Some support instructional goals | All support instructional goals | All support instructional goals |
| Learning Engagement | Materials & resources do not provide learning engagement | Some provide learning engagement | Most provide learning engagement | All provide engagement |

Questions

1. What is included in instructional materials and resources?

2. Give three examples of instructional materials or resources that would not support learning goals.

3. What does an engaged student look like? Is that look the same for every student? Is it the same for every class?

Element 3: Knowledge of Content & Assessment Expanded Rubric

| | Unsatisfactory | Basic | Proficient | Distinguished |
|--------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| | Teacher has minimal knowledge about the content being taught. No formal or informal assessment is done to check for student understanding. | Teacher has some knowledge about the content being taught. Some formal or informal assessments are done, but lesson is not altered to meet student needs. | Teacher has adequate knowledge about the content being taught. Either formal or informal assessments are done, and the lesson is altered to meet student needs. | Teacher has exemplary knowledge about the content being taught. Assessments are varied and appropriately meet the students' needs. |
| Content Knowledge | Minimal content knowledge | Some content knowledge | Adequate content knowledge | Exemplary knowledge |
| Assessments | No checking for understanding | Some formal or informal assessment | Formal or informal assessment conducted | Varied assessment use |
| Differentiation | X | Altered lesson to meet student needs | Altered lesson to meet student needs | Varied assessments based on student needs |

Questions

1. What are some ways you can determine if teachers have content knowledge related to the lesson they are teaching?
2. Make a list of how teachers at the level you observe might assess informally.
3. What does “varied assessment use” look like?
4. How do teachers vary formal assessments?
5. How do teachers vary informal assessments?

Element 4: Teacher/Student Interaction Expanded Rubric

| | Unsatisfactory | Basic | Proficient | Distinguished |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| | Teacher is unavailable, inappropriate, or disrespectful in handling student interactions including but not limited to students' needs for help, answers to questions, or needs for acceleration. | Teacher/student interactions are generally appropriate, but may reflect occasional inconsistencies, favoritism, or disregard for student differences. | Teacher accepts responsibility for the success of all students. Teacher/student interactions are friendly and demonstrate general warmth, caring, and respect. | Teacher accepts responsibility for all students' success. Teacher persists in seeking effective approaches for students who need help or acceleration. Teacher demonstrates genuine caring and respect for all students. |
| Interactions | Teacher is unavailable, disrespectful, and/or shows favoritism | Teacher is generally available and respectful | Teacher is friendly, warm, caring, and respectful | Teacher shows genuine caring and respect for all students |
| Student Differences | Teacher shows blatant disregard for student differences | Teacher may show minimal disregard for student differences | Teacher's interactions are positive and consistent among varying students | Teacher seeks effective approaches for students who need help or acceleration |
| Responsibility for Success | X | X | Accepts responsibility for all students. | Accepts responsibility for all students. |

Questions

1. What might a teacher be doing to be unavailable to students?
2. Write three examples of how a teacher could show disregard for student differences.
3. How can you tell if a teacher accepts responsibility for all students?
4. If you do not see that acceptance displayed during the observation, what questions might you ask in your post conference to determine if the teacher has this belief?
5. How might you coach a teacher on interactions with students?

Element 5: Directions, Questions, & Procedures Expanded Rubric

| | Unsatisfactory Teacher's directions and procedures are confusing to students. There is little to no questioning or questions are of poor quality. | Basic Teacher's directions and procedures are clarified after initial student confusion or the directions are excessively detailed. Some questions are of high quality. Only some questions invite a response. | Proficient Teacher's directions and procedures are clear to students and contain an appropriate level of detail. Most of teacher's questions are of high quality. Adequate time is available for students to respond. | Distinguished Teacher's directions and procedures are clear & teacher anticipates possible misunderstandings. Questions are all high quality and give students adequate time to respond. Teacher encourages questions and discussion. |
|--------------------|---|--|---|---|
| Directions | Confusing | Clarified after confusion Excessively detailed | Clear and concise | Clear with anticipated misunderstandings |
| Procedures | Confusing or absent | Clarified after confusion Not completely clear | Clear and present | Clear with anticipated misunderstandings |
| Questioning | Poor quality or absent | Inconsistent | Most high quality | High quality, encouraging student questioning and discussion |
| Wait Time | X | Questions lack student response | Adequate | Adequate |

Questions

1. Give two examples of how teachers might anticipate misunderstandings with procedures or directions.
2. How can you tell if procedures are being used successfully?
3. What constitutes a good question? What tool can we use to help determine question quality?

Element 6: Managing Student Behavior Expanded Rubric

| | Unsatisfactory | Basic | Proficient | Distinguished |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| | There is no evidence that standards of conduct have been established, and little or no teacher monitoring of student behavior. Response to student misbehavior is repressive, or disrespectful of student dignity. | The teacher has made an effort to establish standards of conduct for students. Teacher tries, with uneven results, to monitor student behavior and respond to misbehavior. | Standards of conduct are clear to students and the teacher monitors student behavior against those standards. Teacher response to student misbehavior is appropriate and respects the students' dignity. | Standards of conduct are clear. Teacher's monitoring of student behavior is subtle and preventive, and teacher's response to misbehavior is sensitive to student needs. Students take an active role in monitoring the standards of behavior. |
| Student Standards of Conduct | No evidence | Effort has been made | Clear to students | Clear to students |
| Teacher Monitoring | Little or no monitoring of behavior | Some with mixed results | Proficient monitoring | Subtle and preventative |
| Response to Misbehavior | Repressive or disrespectful to the student | Adequate, but inconsistent response | Appropriate and respectful | Sensitive to students' needs |
| Student Role | X | X | X | Active in monitoring behavior |

Questions

1. How can you tell if a teacher has established standards of conduct for students?
2. What does proficient monitoring of behavior look like?
3. What does a teacher do to respond to misbehavior in a way that is sensitive to students' needs?
4. What does it look like when students play an active role in behavior monitoring?