

Tools to Support Educator Reflection, Dialogue, and Growth

The following tables contains a series of self-reflective questions designed to promote educators’ professional growth and dialogues with colleagues. A great way to open a team meeting is to begin with self-reflection that leads to a discussion about effective practices. Think about the learning experiences that you are planning, currently teaching, or have taught. Apply the appropriate set of questions to the learning experiences on which you have chosen to reflect.

Thought-Provoking Questions to Promote Teachers’ Self-Reflection Prior to Team Meetings and Observations

Planning – Where am I going?	
1. What are my goals for student learning (skills, concepts, content)? How did I arrive at these goals?	
2. What skills, concepts, and content do my students already know? What evidence do I have for my thinking?	
3. How can I make the students’ learning experiences more personally relevant and engaging?	
4. How successful were my students the last time I taught this material, and what do I need to do to ensure student success this time?	
5. How do I want my students to be able to apply the skills, concepts, and content by the end of this year? What do I want them to still be able to do and know in five years?	
Implementing and Monitoring – How am I doing?	
1. What do I notice about how students are behaving during this class session? Why do I think this is happening?	
2. What language or instructional practices am I using that appears to be facilitating learning? Impeding learning?	
3. How is the pace of my class? What is the level of student engagement? What could I do right now to improve this class session?	
4. In what ways am I effectively reaching my goals for each student’s learning? What is my evidence? What am I observing?	
5. In what ways is my approach to teaching in this class hindering student learning? What is my evidence? How can I change my approach?	

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Reflecting – What are my next steps?	
1. How do I think today's class session went? What is my evidence? What did I do well? What will I do differently?	
2. How did the concepts, skills, and content emphasized in today's class session connect to concepts, skills, and content taught in previous class sessions? To what extent do I think students saw those connections? How will I ensure that learning connections are clear in the next learning experiences I design and implement?	
3. How will my thoughts about the quality of today's class session influence my preparation for next time? What can I do to engage each learner more deeply?	
4. What variety of evidence can I collect next time to ensure that students in my class learn the skills, concepts, and content?	
5. How is my thinking about teaching changing? How will this change be reflected in the next learning experiences I design and implement?	

Additional Notes:

Transforming Teaching, Leading, and Learning Through Collaborative Inquiry in Teacher-Based Teams

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

- What are the goals for learning? On which skills, concepts, and content will students be working towards proficiency (standards aligned)?
- What variety of evidence will we collect that aligns with the goals for student learning?
- What learning experiences and differentiated research-based practices will we implement?
- ✦ How will we engage students to ensure that they understand the learning goals and criteria?
- ✦ How will students be responsible for their own learning (voice and choice)?
- ✦ How will students be involved with peer-to-peer teaching and feedback?

**1. Determine
Goal(s), Evidence,
and Action(s)**

HOW ARE WE DOING?

- What are we observing about student learning in the evidence we evaluated?
- Why are we getting these results? What learning experiences and instructional practices did we use?
- What are we doing well? What practices do we want to replicate?
- What can we do better? How can we work together effectively to support struggling learners? What can we do to reteach learners who need extra support?
- How can we more effectively infuse evidence-based Tier 1 practices?
- ✦ How did we/can we involve students in receiving feedback to revise their work and plan their next steps and learning goals?

2. Reflect on Results

WHAT ARE OUR NEXT STEPS?

- Which appropriate, research-based instructional practices will we implement?
- How will we more effectively monitor the impact of our practices? How can we better determine the learning needs of each student in real time?
- How can we share our learning with other educators?
- ✦ How will we involve students in peer-to-peer teaching and feedback?
- ✦ How will we involve students in reflecting on their learning, setting their own learning goals, and taking specific action steps that they establish?
- ✦ How will we provide and receive feedback from our students?

**3. Engage /Re-
Engage Learners**

Supporting Dialogues About Instruction, Assessment, and Learning

The following questions are designed to stimulate dialogues between administrators and teachers as they collectively reflect on how student-learning results inform improved teaching, learning, and leadership practices. Do not feel compelled to answer all questions at once. Select two or three on which to focus deeply.

1. On which learning goals (skills, concepts, content) are students currently concentrating?
2. How do the lessons/units of study address the learning goals? Are the lessons/units of study engaging for students? Are they student-centered?
3. What cognitive rigor (Bloom's Taxonomy) and depth of complexity (Webb's Depth of Knowledge) are students expected to meet? What do those expectations look like specifically in terms of student performance?
4. To what extent are students meeting the desired learning expectations? What evidence of student learning is being used to determine if students are proficient on their learning goals? How is this evidence being used to inform instructional decisions?
5. How are the components of formative learning being implemented in daily work with students?
 - a. How are students involved in generating the success criteria?
 - b. How are students provided opportunities to engage with one another in peer-to-peer teaching and feedback? What guidelines and documents are used to support peer feedback?
 - c. How and when do teachers supply feedback to students? How do students use this feedback to revise their work?
 - d. How is evidence of student learning used to personalize instruction? How are students engaged in teaching one another?
 - e. How are students involved in meta-cognitive reflection?
 - f. How are students shaping and sharing their learning goals, and what do their plans-of-action involve?
 - g. How are students provided with multiple opportunities for success?
6. What are the possible cause/effect relationships between instructional practices and students' results (evidence of student learning)?
7. What adjustments are being made to improve practices? Which new strategies may require additional professional learning?
8. How are literacy strategies being infused into the curriculum? What impact are these strategies making on student learning?
9. What can administrators do to better support teachers' efforts with students as all educators work together to improve learning?