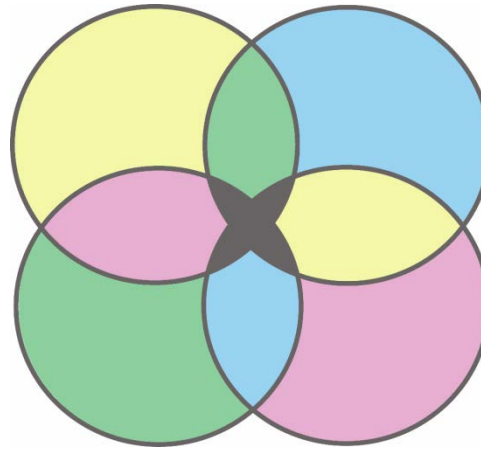


Domain 3: Instruction

d. Using Assessment in Instruction



The Framework for Teaching by Charlotte Danielson

Why is this an important component of effective teaching?

- ▶ Assessment of student learning plays an important role in instruction. It no longer signals the *end* of instruction, but is now recognized to be an integral part *of* instruction. While assessment *of* learning has always been and will continue to be an important aspect of teaching (it's important for teachers to know whether students have learned what they intended), assessment *for* learning has increasingly come to play an important role in classroom practice. And in order to assess student learning for the purposes of instruction, teachers must have their finger on the pulse of a lesson, monitoring student understanding and, where appropriate, offering feedback to students.
- ▶ Although a teacher's actions in monitoring student learning may superficially look the same as those for monitoring student behavior, monitoring learning has a fundamentally different purpose. When teachers are monitoring behavior, they are alert to students who may be passing notes or bothering their neighbors; when teachers monitor student learning, they look carefully at what students are writing, or listen carefully to the questions students ask, in order to gauge whether they require additional activity or explanation in order to grasp the content. In each case, the teacher may be circulating in the room, but the purpose in doing so is quite different in each situation.

Why is this an important component of effective teaching? Cont.

- ▶ Similarly, questions asked of students to monitor learning are fundamentally different from those used to build understanding; in the former, teachers are alert to students' revealed misconceptions, whereas in the latter, the questions are designed to explore relationships or deepen understanding. Indeed, for the purpose of monitoring, many teachers create questions specifically meant to elicit the extent of student understanding, and they use techniques (such as exit tickets) to ascertain the degree of understanding of every student in the class. Indeed, encouraging students to monitor their own learning against clear standards (and actually teaching them the necessary skills to do so) is demonstrated by teachers at high levels of performance in this component.
- ▶ In addition to monitoring student learning and providing feedback to students, a teacher's skill is greatly strengthened by the capability to make mid-course corrections when needed, to seize on a teachable moment or enlist students' particular interests to enrich an explanation.



The Elements

This component may be broken down into five distinct and important elements. As you review these elements, think about what they might look like in practice in the classroom.

- ▶ **Assessment criteria**

Teachers can't incorporate assessment strategies into their teaching, nor can students monitor their own learning, if the criteria for assessment are not clear to teachers and publicly known by students. At the highest level, students themselves have had a hand in articulating the criteria (for example, of a clear oral presentation).

- ▶ **Monitoring of student learning**

A teacher's skill in eliciting evidence of student understanding is one of the true marks of expertise. This is not a hit-or-miss effort, but is planned carefully in advance. Even after careful planning, skilled teachers use a variety of techniques to weave the monitoring of student learning seamlessly into the lesson.

- ▶ **Feedback to students**


Feedback on learning is an essential element of a rich instructional environment; without it, students are constantly guessing as to how they are doing and how their work can be improved. Valuable feedback should be timely, constructive, and substantive, and provide students the guidance they need to improve their performance.



The Elements cont.

- ▶ **Student self-assessment and monitoring of progress**
The culmination of student assumption of responsibility for learning is monitoring their own learning and taking appropriate action. Of course, students can do this only if the criteria for learning are clear and if they have been taught the skills of checking their work against those criteria.
- ▶ **Lesson adjustment**
Experienced teachers are able to make both minor and (when needed) major mid-course corrections, or adjustments to a lesson. Such adjustments depend on a teacher's store of alternate instructional strategies and his or her confidence to make a shift when needed.

Determining a level of performance for a component must be grounded in evidence found during an observation of a lesson. The indicators below may be used as a guide for looking for evidence of this component in a classroom.

- ▶ The teacher paying close attention to evidence of student understanding
 - ▶ The teacher posing questions specifically created to elicit evidence of student understanding
 - ▶ The teacher circulating to monitor student learning and to offer feedback
 - ▶ Students assessing their own work against established criteria
 - ▶ The teacher adjusting instruction in response to evidence of student understanding (or lack of it)
- 

Relevant because...

- ▶ Students evaluate a piece of their writing against the writing rubric and confer with the teacher about how it could be improved.

This observation shows students taking the initiative to monitor their own progress, which is evidence for the component. Both student monitoring of progress and teacher monitoring of student learning are elements for the component.

- After receiving a correct response from one student, the teacher continues without ascertaining whether all students understand the concept.

This observation is evidence of lesson adjustment—one of the elements for this component.

Relevant because...

- ▶ The teacher tells students that they're doing a lesson because it's on the test, is in the book, or is district-directed.

*NOT RELEVANT: Even though this observation describes the instructor "teaching to the test," it does not provide evidence of the use of assessment in instruction. Rather, this observation is evidence of the rationale given for what the students will be learning. However, if the only reason for learning a particular concept is that it will be on the test, the teacher is not conveying the importance of the content and of learning, which is an element for **Establishing a Culture for Learning**.*

- ▶ The teacher circulates during small-group or independent work, offering suggestions to groups of students.

This observation is evidence of feedback to students—an element for the component.

Relevant because...

- ▶ A student asks, “How is this assignment going to be graded?”

*This is evidence of assessment criteria—an element for **Using Assessment in Instruction**. Assessment should not only be used for grading. Rather, it should be used to help revise instruction and support individual student needs. To this end, students should be aware of and possibly even help develop the criteria for assessments.*

- ▶ A student asks, “How many ways are there to get this answer?”

***NOT RELEVANT**: This observation is evidence of the quality of questions/prompts—one of the elements for **Using Questioning/Prompts and Discussion Techniques**—not evidence for this component. Students are asking rigorous and relevant questions, but do not seem to be self-assessing their learning progress.*

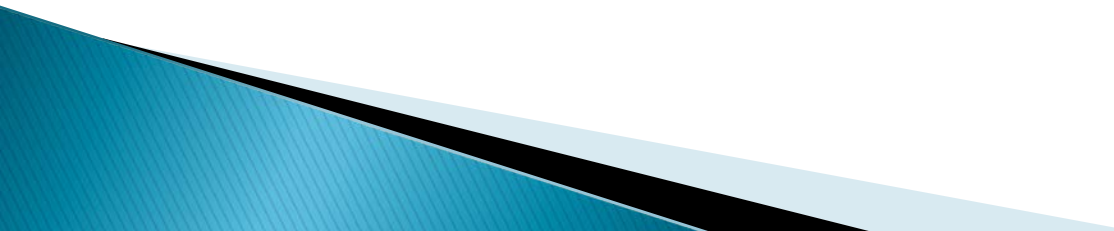
Activity: Level of Performance

You will read four classroom observation descriptions. They are numbered so that we can reference them and in no way reflect their performance level.

After each of the four description, jot down what performance level you would assign it and why.



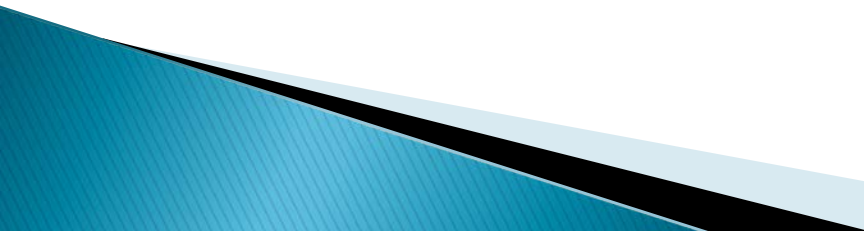
What's the Level of Performance?

- ▶ 1. There is little or no assessment or monitoring of student learning; feedback is absent or of poor quality. Students do not appear to be aware of the assessment criteria and do not engage in self-assessment. There is no attempt to adjust the lesson as a result of assessment.
- 

What's the Level of Performance?

2. Assessment is regularly used during instruction through teacher and/or student monitoring of progress of learning, resulting in accurate, specific feedback that advances learning. Students appear to be aware of the assessment criteria; some of them engage in self-assessment.

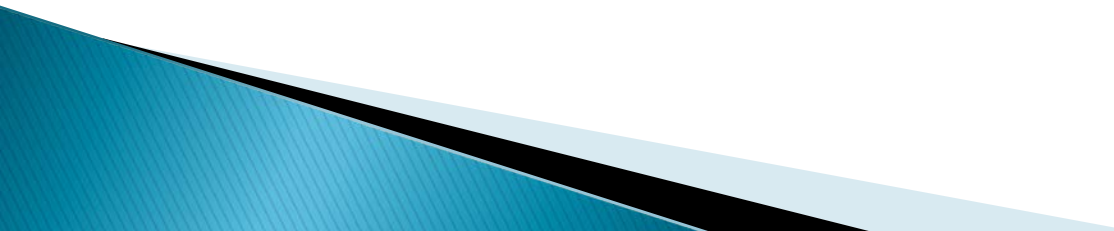
Questions/prompts/assessments are used to diagnose evidence of learning, and adjustment to instruction is made to address student misunderstandings.



What's the Level of Performance?

- ▶ 3. Assessment is fully integrated into instruction through extensive use of formative assessment. Students appear to be aware of, and there is some evidence that they have contributed to, the assessment criteria. Students self-assess and monitor their progress. A variety of feedback, from both the teacher and peers, is accurate and specific and advances learning. Questions/prompts/assessments are used regularly to diagnose evidence of learning, and instruction is adjusted and differentiated to address individual student misunderstandings.

What's the Level of Performance?

4. Assessment is sporadically used to support instruction through some teacher and/or student monitoring of progress of learning. Feedback to students is general, and students are only partially aware of the assessment criteria; few assess their own work. Questions/prompts/assessments are rarely used to diagnose evidence of learning. Adjustment of the lesson in response to the assessment is minimal or ineffective.
- 

Level of Performance Answers

1. Ineffective (Rubric Level 1)
2. Effective (Rubric Level 3)
3. Highly Effective (Rubric Level 4)
4. Partially Effective (Rubric Level 2)

Any surprises?



Level 3: Critical Attributes

- ▶ Students indicate that they clearly understand the characteristics of high-quality work.
- ▶ Feedback includes specific and timely guidance on how students can improve their performance.
- ▶ The teacher elicits evidence of individual student understanding during the lesson, for at least some groups of students.
- ▶ Students are invited to assess their own work and make improvements.
- ▶ When necessary, the teacher makes adjustments to the lesson to enhance understanding by groups of students.

Level 3: Evidence

- ▶ The teacher circulates during small-group or independent work, offering suggestions to groups of students.
- ▶ The teacher uses a specifically formulated question to elicit evidence of student understanding.
- ▶ The teacher asks students to look over their papers to correct their errors.

Level 3 Sample Video

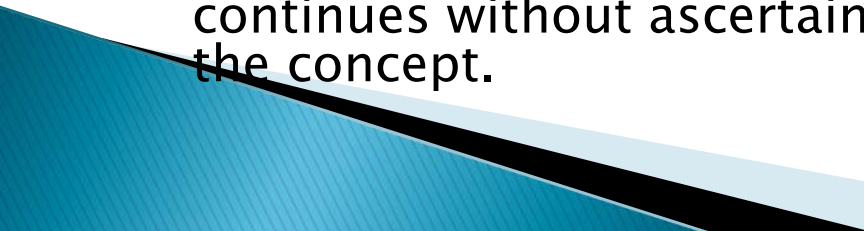
(ELEMENTARY: Insert Benchmark A.... 4:29)

(MS: Insert High Rangefinder...7:15)

Level 2: Critical Attributes

- ▶ There is little evidence that the students understand how their work will be evaluated.
- ▶ The teacher monitors understanding through a single method, or without ensuring that all students understand.
- ▶ The teacher requests global indications of student understanding.
- ▶ Feedback to students is not uniformly specific, nor oriented toward future improvement of work.
- ▶ The teacher makes only minor attempts to engage students in self- or peer assessment.
- ▶ The teacher's attempts to adjust the lesson are partially successful.

Level 2: Evidence

- ▶ The teacher asks, "Does anyone have a question?"
 - ▶ When a student completes a problem on the board, the teacher corrects the student's work without explaining why.
 - ▶ After receiving a correct response from one student, the teacher continues without ascertaining whether all students understand the concept.
- 

Level 2 Sample Video

(ELEMENTARY: Insert Benchmark A.... 6:15)

(MS: Insert Benchmark B...5:50)

Level 1: Critical Attributes

- ▶ The teacher gives no indication of what high-quality work looks like.
- ▶ Assessment is used only for grading.
- ▶ The teacher makes no effort to determine whether students understand the lesson.
- ▶ Feedback is only global.
- ▶ The teacher does not ask students to evaluate their own or classmates' work.
- ▶ The teacher makes no attempt to adjust the lesson based on student confusion.

Level 1: Evidence

- ▶ A student asks, "How is this assignment going to be graded?"
- ▶ A student asks, "Does this quiz count toward my grade?"
- ▶ The teacher forges ahead with a presentation without checking for understanding.
- ▶ The teacher says, "Good job, everyone."

Level 1: Sample Video

(ELEMENTARY: Insert Benchmark B... 4:26)

(MS: Insert Benchmark A... 3:00)

Level 4: Critical Attributes

In addition to the characteristics of a level of performance 3,

- ▶ There is evidence that students have helped establish the evaluation criteria.
- ▶ Teacher monitoring of student understanding is sophisticated and continuous; the teacher is constantly taking the class's pulse.
- ▶ The teacher makes frequent use of strategies to elicit information about individual student understanding.
- ▶ Feedback to students is provided from many sources, including other students.
- ▶ Students monitor their own understanding, either on their own initiative or as a result of tasks set by the teacher.
- ▶ The teacher's adjustments to the lesson are designed to assist individual students.

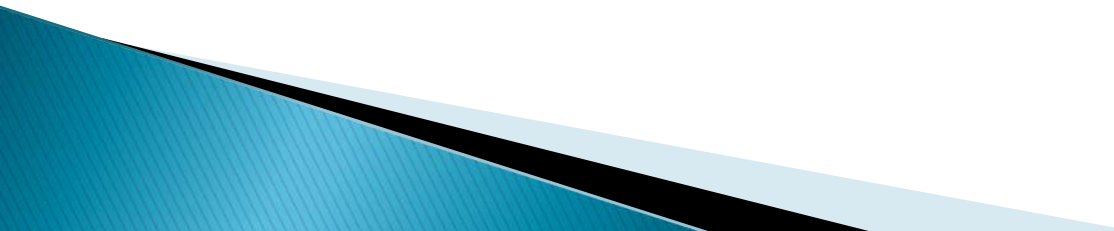
Level 4: Evidence

- ▶ The teacher reminds students of the characteristics of high-quality work (the assessment criteria), suggesting that the students themselves helped develop them.
- ▶ While students are working, the teacher circulates and provides specific feedback to individual students.
- ▶ The teacher uses popsicle sticks or exit tickets to elicit evidence of individual student understanding.
- ▶ Students offer feedback to their classmates about their work.
- ▶ Students evaluate a piece of their writing against the writing rubric and confer with the teacher about how it could be improved.

Level 4: Sample Video

(ELEMENTARY: Insert Low Rangefinder... 7:42)

(MS: Insert Benchmark A... 8:20)



Discussion

- ▶ After reviewing the Performance Levels for Domain 3d: Using Assessment in Instruction, do you think you could distinguish between them?
- ▶ Did the sample videos of each of the performance levels in this component help to provide clarity in what each of the performance levels looks like?
- ▶ Reflect on your classroom practices.... What would the performance level of your classroom on a typical day be as it relates to this component?



Remember...

Our performance goal
is to LIVE in 3...
and
vacation in 4.



Session Reflection & Exit Card

- ▶ An insight I had as a result of today's session is...
- ▶ Concepts from this session that are most applicable to my teaching practice are...
- ▶ A question I have related to today's session is...

