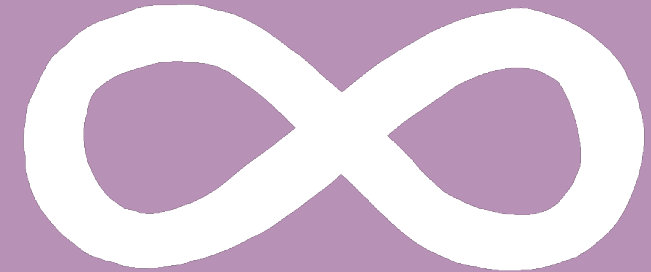


Observation of colleagues' teaching: Learn how to maximize learning opportunities for teachers

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Session Overview

- Challenges in teachers' learning from observation of colleagues
- A framework for supporting professional learning through observation
- Administrator decisions: Supporting teachers' learning

Challenges in Teachers' Learning From Observation of Colleagues

Value of observation...

We inherently believe in the power of observing one another's teaching to improve practice...

But we know learning from teaching takes support to notice the work of the teacher, student thinking, and other features of teaching and learning.

By observation of teaching, we don't mean the observation of demonstration teaching, but the observation of the daily work of teaching in typical classrooms.

But what is there for teachers to learn through observation of colleagues?

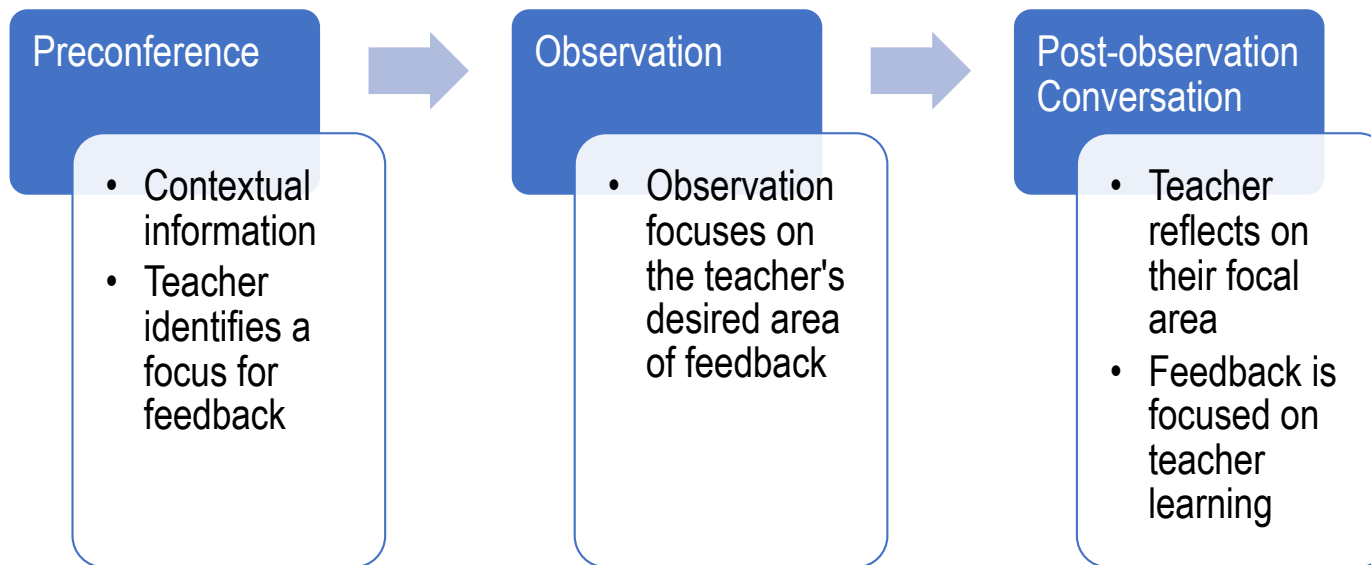
- Building content knowledge for teaching
- Building understanding of teaching practice
- Broadening our views of students as sense-makers
- Learning to see specific issues related to equity, and to develop skills for promoting equitable classrooms

Typical Observation Structures

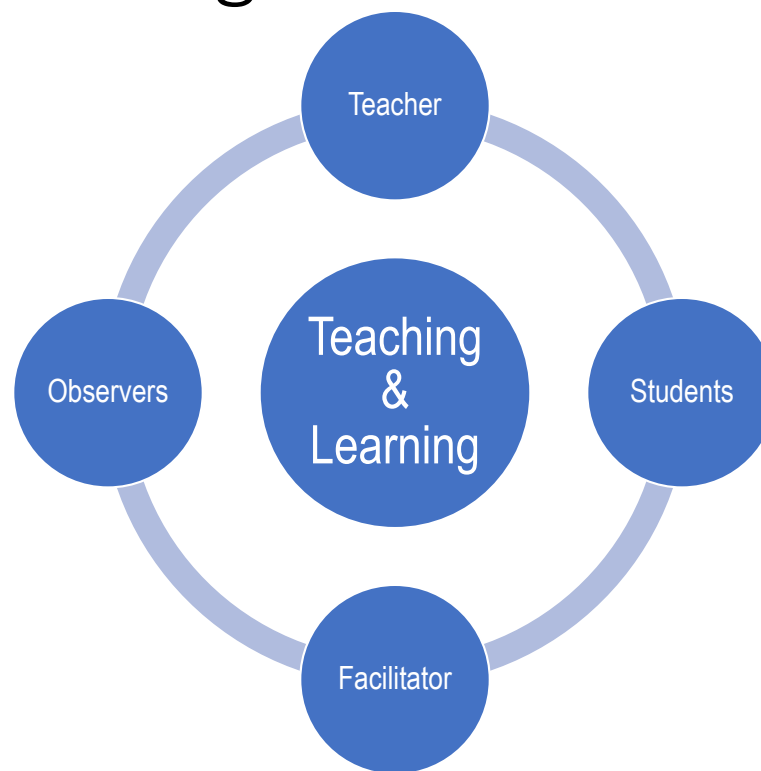
What structures do you currently use for peer observation?

Drop your comments in the chat

Typical Observation Structures

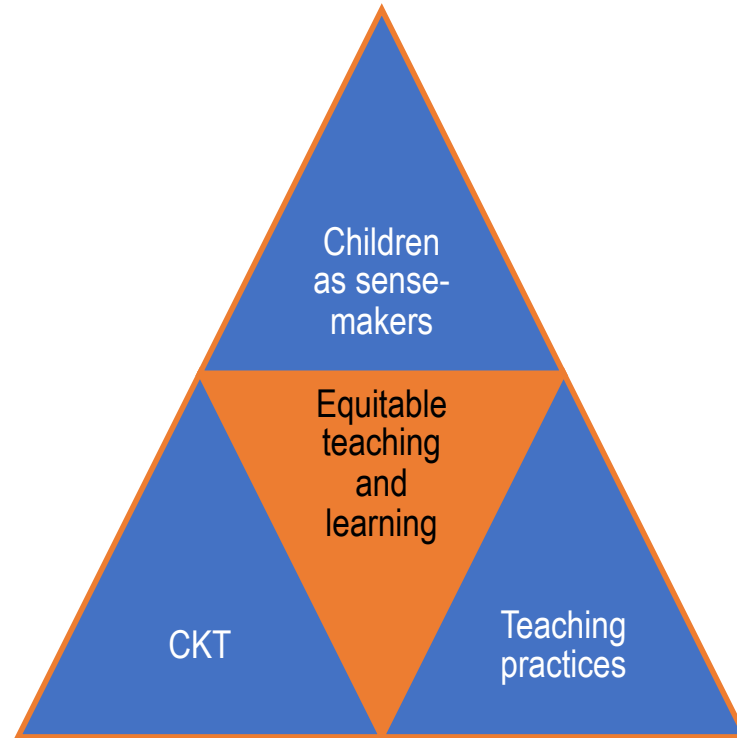


What might it look like to focus on everyone's learning?

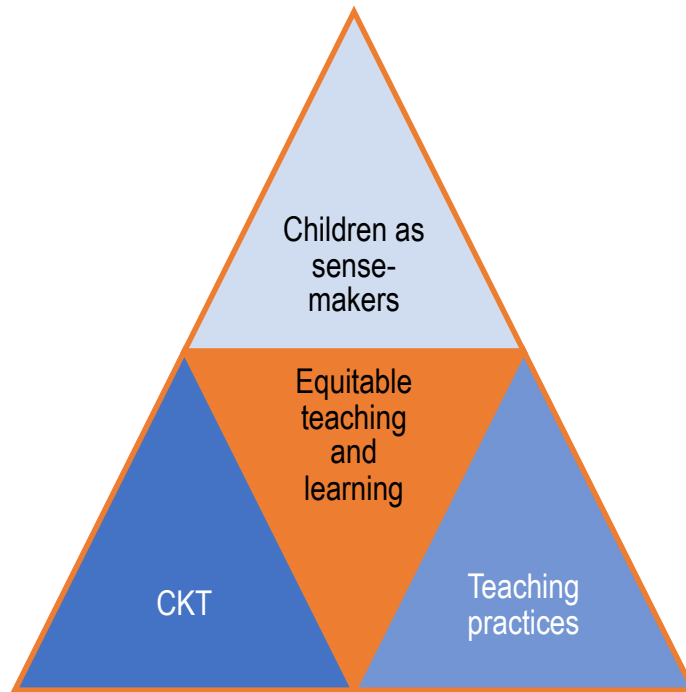


A Framework for Supporting Professional Learning Through Observation





Pre-observation Work and Discussion



- What is the k-12 content that observing teachers need to understand in order to see and hear students and their ideas?
- What do observing teachers need to know about the activity design and the teacher's anticipated outcomes in order to attend to the content and the teaching simultaneously?
- What do observing teachers need to know about the instructional decision points and practices in order to see and hear teachers' work?
- What do observing teachers need to know (or not) about the students in the room?

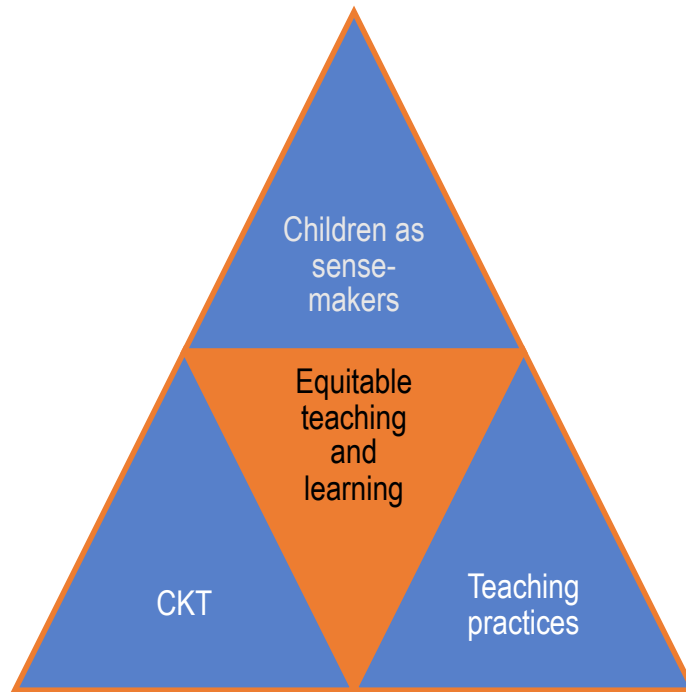
These are also considerations that administrators can use for the observation of teaching

Framing a focused observation

Areas of work	Examples	Questions and caveats
<p>Establish rapport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek to learn about and connect with each student as a whole person Provide opportunities for students to learn about and connect with you as a whole person Use work on content to both convey appreciation/regard for and connect with students 	<p>For example,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find small moments to connect with children. Communicate interest, openness, warmth, and caring Engage in light-hearted exchanges with students to convey a sense of the teacher as a person Signal to students that you are listening to them and taking their ideas seriously 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What other information might you need to make sense of these examples? What are you still wondering about? When might these examples be more productive or counterproductive for relationship building?
<p>Build mutual trust</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate trustworthiness Treat students as trustworthy Support students to engage in productive struggle with content and to persevere 	<p>For example,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be willing to admit to and apologize for mistakes Redirect students in a manner that preserves their self-worth (e.g., avoid shaming students) and respect their choice Ask questions to fully understand any problem or difficulty a student is having Position every student as capable, explicitly marking their strengths 	

- How will observing teachers be supported to make low inference claims through observation?
- What will the focus of the observation be with respect to the content, the teaching, and the children?
- How will observing teachers note questions that are coming up and wonderings so that they might set aside inferences and non-focal observations?

Post-observation Work & Discussion



- How will space be made for people to process initial reactions without these reactions taking over the focal discussion space?
- Which teaching practices, student strengths, and content ideas are most productive to discuss?
- Were there instructional segments that may need further unpacking to support sense-making around what was observed (e.g. a math problem plays out differently than anticipated)?
- Where did issues of equity show up in instruction? How can these critical moments mutually inform the other spaces for the conversation (the content, the teaching practice)?

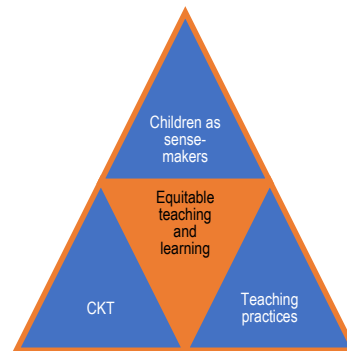
What types of professional learning structures might make use of this framework?

- Peer-observation-based professional learning communities
- Video-based professional learning sessions
- Intensive observation-based learning experiences

Examining the Framework in Action

The Scenario

- A PLC is preparing to observe a 5th grade mathematics classroom. The class was given an exit ticket the day before asking them to name the fractional value of the shaded region on two different diagrams.
- The teacher has been working on making use of student thinking during discussions, in particular, working carefully with “incorrect” student answers.



Pre-Observation Work & Discussion

CKT

- Complete the exit ticket and name the core ideas represented in your own answer. Consider how they connect to grade-level concepts.

Children as Sense-makers

- Examine the set of answers generated by students and name 1) why the student solution is reasonable and 2) what key fractional reasoning ideas are present in the solution.

Pre-Observation Work & Discussion

Teaching Practices

- Why might the teacher decide to discuss each of the solutions?

Issues of Equity

- How might the teacher set up the discussion so that students with alternative solutions are positioned as mathematically capable?

Framing the Observation

Observer Focus

- Pay careful attention to student reasoning shared in the discussion.
- Note moves the teacher is making to position students with “incorrect” answers as mathematically capable.



Post-Observation Work and Discussion

Discussion Questions

- What did you notice about student understanding as they shared their ideas during the discussion?
- What moves did you see the teacher making to highlight the mathematical capability of students?
- What key mathematical ideas were raised in the discussion that could be built upon?

Continued Work

- Name one key take-away that you will use in your next discussion with students.

How are these discussion questions similar to or different from the types of discussion prompts you have seen used in peer observation?

Drop your ideas in the chat

Administrator Decisions: Supporting Teacher Learning

Key Decisions That Impact Teacher Implementation

- Grade level changes
 - Consider keeping teachers at the same grade level across their time in the professional learning series. Changes in grade level impact implementation.
- Adherence to pacing guide and curriculum materials
 - Clearly support your teachers in being flexible with respect to strict adherence to pacing guides and materials. Teachers need permission to try new things!
- Time and structure to support the work
 - Provide adequate time to engage in the work. Support your teachers in planning for their own learning.
 - Support teachers to develop norms and routines for peer observation that make the observations feel supportive and push learning, but not critical.

Key Decisions That Impact Teacher Implementation

Finally....

Less is more!

A high-quality observation experience with carefully crafted supports has more impact than lots of observations without supports.

Key Take-Aways

- Build time into the master schedule for peer observation to happen
- Ensure that teachers have time built in that supports planning for these observations
- If we are working on changing teaching practice, avoid changes in demands on teachers during the professional learning cycle
 - Grade-level changes, curricular changes, competing professional learning, etc.
- Change takes time! If teachers are working on many changes at once (curricular change, changing teaching practice, etc.), changes in some areas may take time to implement
- Break away from observation as evaluation toward observation as learning – for teachers and administrators

Questions?

- Drop your questions in the chat