

How to Assess Professional Practice: Looking Beyond the Classroom

A comprehensive evaluation of teacher effectiveness includes looking beyond the classroom. Below are three sets of indicators to help guide your assessment of the teacher’s commitment to professional growth, the school community, and professionalism. Use the four-point rubric within each set to assess the teacher’s commitment to professional practice.

10 | Professional Practice

How committed is the teacher to professional learning and contributing to the school community?

Commitment to Professional Growth

- 10.1 Self-assesses and works to improve classroom practice
- 10.2 Develops and implements a professional growth plan
- 10.3 Seeks out professional development and continuous learning opportunities
- 10.4 Works with colleagues to improve practice throughout the building

Commitment to the School Community

- 10.5 Maintains open communication with the entire school community
- 10.6 Assumes appropriate leadership roles
- 10.7 Maintains and builds a positive school culture

Commitment to Professionalism

- 10.8 Maintains a high level of professionalism at all times
- 10.9 Adheres to legal responsibilities and current educational policies

10.1 Novice: The teacher is reluctant or resistant to professional growth.

10.2 Developing: The teacher has made an initial commitment to professional growth and applies new learning in the classroom.

10.3 Proficient: The teacher has made a clear commitment to professional growth and regularly applies new learning in the classroom.

10.4 Expert: The teacher has made a strong commitment to professional growth that is highly evident. The teacher is adept at translating new learning into improved classroom practice. In addition, the teacher has taken an active role in promoting professional learning throughout the school.

10.5 Novice: The teacher is not contributing to the school community beyond his or her classroom.

10.6 Developing: The teacher will contribute to the larger school community, but often requires prompting from colleagues or superiors.

10.7 Proficient: The teacher is a regular and active contributor to the school community.

10.8 Expert: The teacher contributes to the school community consistently and with passion and enthusiasm. The teacher is recognized as a leader and role model within the school community.

10.9 Novice: The teacher needs to be reminded of school rules and has little to no awareness of larger educational policy (e.g., state and national initiatives).

10.10 Developing: The teacher generally follows school rules but has only a basic awareness of educational policy beyond the school walls.

10.11 Proficient: The teacher adheres to school rules and is generally aware of major changes in educational policy.

10.12 Expert: The teacher is a committed professional who follows and promotes school rules. The teacher understands the purpose of educational policies and how they affect classroom practice and the educational community.

How to Develop a Comprehensive Evaluation Using Multiple Measures

The best and most reliable evaluations of teacher effectiveness are based on multiple measures. Based on your school’s or district’s plan, decide how much each measure will be weighted by assigning it a percentage value. (Note: Total weighting should equal 100%.)

I. Instructional Practice (Dimensions 1-9)	___ x ___ % = ___
II. Professional Practice (Dimension 10)	___ x ___ % = ___
III. Student Performance Data	
A. Standardized Test Data	___ x ___ % = ___
B. Local Assessments	___ x ___ % = ___
C. Other	___ x ___ % = ___
IV. Student Feedback/Surveys	___ x ___ % = ___
V. Other Measure	___ x ___ % = ___
TOTAL	100% = ___

Based on your district or state guidelines, use the information from the comprehensive evaluation to determine the teacher’s overall level of effectiveness. If your district or state has not yet defined specific levels of effectiveness, you can use an adapted version of the Framework rubric. See inside panel for full rubric.

(1) Novice (2) Developing (3) Proficient (4) Expert

References

Barber, M., & Mourshed, M. (2007, September). *How the world’s best-performing school systems come out on top*. New York: McKinsey & Company.

Danielson, C. (2007). *Enhancing professional practice: A framework for teaching* (2nd ed.). Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Hunter, M. (1984). Knowing, teaching, and supervising. In P. Hosford (Ed.), *Using what we know about teaching* (pp. 169-192). Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Marzano, R. J. (2007). *The art and science of teaching: A comprehensive framework for effective instruction*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Marzano, R. J., Frontier, T., & Livingston, D. (2011). *Effective supervision: Supporting the art and science of teaching*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Saphier, J., Haley-Speca, M. A., & Gower, R. (2008). *The skillful teacher: Building your teaching skills* (6th ed.). Acton, MA: Research for Better Teaching.

Stronge, J. H. (2010). *Evaluating what good teachers do: Eight research-based standards for assessing teacher excellence*. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Wiggins, G., & McGighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by design* (2nd ed.). Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Training & Implementation

Core Leadership Training

In this training, participants will...

- Learn the dimensions, indicators, and rubrics in the Framework.
- Use the Framework to conduct formal and informal observations and collect evidence of effective practice (using real classroom videos).
- Compare evaluations with those of other administrators to begin establishing inter-rater reliability.
- Use each successive round of observation to refine practice and calibrate judgments.
- Learn how to provide meaningful feedback to teachers.
- Learn how to conduct powerful pre- and post-conferences with teachers.
- Learn how to develop final evaluations of teacher effectiveness based on multiple measures.
- Explore different formats for writing up final evaluations.
- Learn how to promote teacher growth through the development of targeted professional growth plans.

Contact us for more details or to set up a free consultation!


Silver Strong & Associates
Thoughtful Education Press

Supplemental Coaching & Training

Additionally, Silver Strong & Associates offers a host of training and coaching services to help schools implement a successful teacher evaluation process, including **foundation training**, on-site **coaching**, and the development of **teacher-leadership cadres**.

Electronic Implementation

In order to fully automate the teacher evaluation process, improve data management, and target professional development to teachers’ needs, Silver Strong & Associates is proud to announce that we have developed partnerships with a number of technology providers.

The Framework is fully automated using **STAGES** software developed by:


www.k12EvaluationSolutions.com

The Framework is also compatible with:


ColinR@MichiganPrincipals.org


www.MyLearningPlan.com


www.SchoolImprovement.com


www.Netchemia.com

Overview

The Thoughtful Classroom Teacher Effectiveness Framework is a comprehensive system for observing, evaluating, and refining classroom practice. It synthesizes a wide body of research on instructional design and teacher effectiveness, as well as insight from over 250 teachers and administrators from around the country.

The ultimate goal of the Framework is to create a common language for talking about high-quality teaching and how classroom practice can be improved. The Framework allows for assessment according to ten dimensions of teaching, outlining a set of **observable teaching indicators** within each dimension and relevant **student behaviors** associated with effective instruction. It also includes **rubrics for developing summative evaluations**, along with a set of **protocols** to help school leaders provide **meaningful feedback** to teachers and conduct powerful **pre- and post-observation conferences**.

What Are the Components of Effective Teaching?

Research and experience prove, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that classroom instruction has far more impact on student learning than any other factor. A study of the world’s top 25 school systems puts it this way: “The only way to improve outcomes is to improve instruction” (Barber & Mourshed, 2007). This is why two of the three Framework components focus directly on classroom instruction.

COMPONENT ONE

Four Cornerstones of Effective Teaching (Dimensions 1, 2, 3, & 4)

Around the Framework are four foundational dimensions that have been adapted from the preeminent teacher-effectiveness models (Danielson, 2007; Marzano, 2007; Marzano, Frontier, & Livingston, 2011; Saphier, Haley-Speca, & Gower, 2008; Stronge, 2010). These are the four dimensions:

- 1 Organization, Rules, and Procedures
- 2 Positive Relationships
- 3 Engagement and Enjoyment
- 4 A Culture of Thinking and Learning

These cornerstones represent the universal elements of quality instruction, whether in a kindergarten class, AP Physics lab, or anywhere in between. Without these four cornerstones in place, student learning will be compromised.

COMPONENT TWO

Five Episodes of Effective Instruction (Dimensions 5, 6, 7, 8, & 9)

While there are clear universal elements to good instruction, it is also true that good instruction tends to unfold in a series of distinct learning episodes. By synthesizing the best research on instructional design (Hunter, 1984; Marzano, 2007; Wiggins & McGighe, 2005), we’ve identified five critical episodes that increase the likelihood of deep learning. In these five episodes, teachers work towards distinct instructional purposes:

- 5 Preparing Students for New Learning
- 6 Presenting New Learning
- 7 Deepening and Reinforcing Learning
- 8 Applying Learning
- 9 Reflecting on and Celebrating Learning

Understanding these five episodes—and their driving purposes—is critical for both the teacher and the observer. Teachers use these episodes to design high-quality lessons and units. For classroom observations, these five episodes immediately orient the observer within the instructional sequence, ensuring that teachers and observers are on the same page.

COMPONENT THREE

Looking Beyond the Classroom

Effective Professional Practice (Dimension 10)

10 The Framework also includes a tenth dimension focused on professional practice, which addresses important non-instructional responsibilities, including the teacher’s commitment to **ongoing learning**, **professionalism**, and **the school community**.

Organization, Rules, and Procedures	Preparing Students for New Learning	Positive Relationships
Deepening and Reinforcing Learning	Presenting New Learning	Reflecting on and Celebrating Learning
A Culture of Thinking and Learning	Applying Learning	Engagement and Enjoyment
Professional Practice		

THE THOUGHTFUL CLASSROOM TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS FRAMEWORK

How to Collect Evidence through Classroom Observation

1. Determine what kind of observation you will be conducting.
A **formal observation** is announced, lasts for an extended period of time, and usually involves a pre- and post-observation meeting between the teacher and the observer (see the **green** pre- and post-observation panels below and to the right).
Informal observations are typically shorter in duration than formal observations, may be unannounced, and should happen regularly throughout the year.
2. Review the nine dimensions and instructional indicators to decide which ones you will focus on during the observation.
3. Select the appropriate online template or paper form for your observation.
4. Use these simple marks to help you collect information about the teacher's instruction:
☒ **Evident** – Place a **checkmark** in the box.
☐ **Not Evident** – Leave the **box blank**.
☐ **Missed Opportunity** – **Circle the box**.
5. **Remember:** Quality instruction **does not** mean addressing all indicators.
6. Look for student behaviors that are signs of effective instruction during your observation.
7. Collect notes to support your observation and develop meaningful feedback (see **gray** feedback panel to the right).

How to Conduct a Pre-Observation Conference

- I. Learning Goals:** Start by working with the teacher to identify and establish the learning goals. *What are your learning goals for the lesson to be observed? How do these specific goals relate to your broader learning goals and overall instructional sequence?*
- II. Instructional Episodes:** Once you've established the learning goals, work together to identify the relevant dimensions the teacher will be focusing on. *Which instructional episode(s) (Dimensions 5-9) will you likely be engaged in during this observation?*
- III. Assessing Student Learning:** *How will student learning be assessed? What evidence will you collect to check student understanding (in relation to your learning goals)?*
- IV. Learning Activities:** *What learning opportunities or instructional activities will you use to achieve your learning goals?*
- V. Learning from this Observation:** Finally, help the teacher clarify expectations and identify focus points for the observation. *What questions do you have about your lesson design and delivery? What data would you like me to collect during the lesson to help you better understand your own practice?*



Contact us!

We understand that choosing a teacher evaluation system is a complex decision. If at any time you'd like more information, have any questions, or would like to schedule a more detailed "walk through" of the Framework, just give us a call.

800-962-4432

www.ThoughtfulClassroom.com

1 | Organization, Rules, and Procedures

How does the teacher organize the classroom to enhance learning and establish rules and procedures that clarify expectations?

Instructional Indicators (Formative Observation)*

- ☐ **1.1** Organizes the classroom for safety and learning
- ☐ **1.2** Maintains smooth flow of activities
- ☐ **1.3** Establishes classroom rules and procedures
- ☐ **1.4** Provides clear task directions
- ☐ **1.5** Manages student behavior
- ☐ **1.6** Manages non-instructional tasks efficiently
- ☐ **1.7** Works effectively with other adults in the classroom

Impact on Student Learning – Sample Student Behaviors

- Show respect for each other and the classroom
- Understand and follow classroom rules and procedures
- Take responsibility for their own learning

Four-Point Assessment Rubric (see panel for description)†

(1) Novice | (2) Developing | (3) Proficient | (4) Expert

TC 1

7 | Deepening and Reinforcing Learning

How does the teacher help students solidify their understanding and practice new skills?

Instructional Indicators (Formative Observation)*

- ☐ **7.1** Identifies critical junctures and has students assess progress
- ☐ **7.2** Assigns regular content-based writing tasks [ccss]
- ☐ **7.3** Conducts periodic review and practice sessions
- ☐ **7.4** Provides descriptive feedback
- ☐ **7.5** Groups students to maximize learning
- ☐ **7.6** Uses a variety of resources [ccss]
- ☐ **7.7** Provides opportunities to process learning deeply [ccss]
- ☐ **7.8** Assigns purposeful homework

Impact on Student Learning – Sample Student Behaviors

- Are able to distinguish between what they know, don't know, and need to work on
- Practice and rehearse
- Use feedback to assess and modify their performance

Four-Point Assessment Rubric (see panel for description)†

(1) Novice | (2) Developing | (3) Proficient | (4) Expert

TC 7

4 | A Culture of Thinking and Learning

How does the teacher develop a classroom culture that promotes serious learning and sophisticated forms of thinking?

Instructional Indicators (Formative Observation)*

- ☐ **4.1** Helps students develop skills for reading rigorous texts [ccss]
- ☐ **4.2** Engages students in higher-order thinking [ccss]
- ☐ **4.3** Challenges students to support ideas with evidence [ccss]
- ☐ **4.4** Uses effective questioning and recognition techniques [ccss]
- ☐ **4.5** Encourages discussion, dialogue, and debate [ccss]
- ☐ **4.6** Requires use of critical academic vocabulary [ccss]
- ☐ **4.7** Uses technology as a learning tool [ccss]
- ☐ **4.8** Encourages students to use strategies on their own [ccss]

Impact on Student Learning – Sample Student Behaviors

- Use different forms of critical thinking
- Support their thinking with evidence
- Use academic vocabulary

Four-Point Assessment Rubric (see panel for description)†

(1) Novice | (2) Developing | (3) Proficient | (4) Expert

TC 4

5 | Preparing Students for New Learning

How does the teacher establish purpose, activate students' prior knowledge, and prepare students for learning?

Instructional Indicators (Formative Observation)*

- ☐ **5.1** Selects appropriate standards [ccss]
- ☐ **5.2** Establishes clear and measurable learning goals/targets [ccss]
- ☐ **5.3** Poses essential questions [ccss]
- ☐ **5.4** Uses engaging hooks
- ☐ **5.5** Introduces key vocabulary [ccss]
- ☐ **5.6** Assesses students' background knowledge, skills, and interests
- ☐ **5.7** Clarifies expectations for products and performances [ccss]
- ☐ **5.8** Encourages students to develop personal goals

Impact on Student Learning – Sample Student Behaviors

- Understand/restate learning goals in their own words
- Know what they have to produce and what's expected of them
- Call up their prior knowledge

Four-Point Assessment Rubric (see panel for description)†

(1) Novice | (2) Developing | (3) Proficient | (4) Expert

TC 5

6 | Presenting New Learning

How does the teacher present new information and provide opportunities for students to actively engage with content?

Instructional Indicators (Formative Observation)*

- ☐ **6.1** Organizes content into meaningful chunks [ccss]
- ☐ **6.2** Uses multiple sources of information/media [ccss]
- ☐ **6.3** Demonstrates high-quality communication skills [ccss]
- ☐ **6.4** Uses various presentation techniques to enhance memory
- ☐ **6.5** Conducts modeling and think-alouds
- ☐ **6.6** Uses a variety of questioning and response techniques to assess understanding and adjust instruction
- ☐ **6.7** Uses outside resources to enhance learning [ccss]
- ☐ **6.8** Helps students assemble big ideas [ccss]

Impact on Student Learning – Sample Student Behaviors

- Are able to identify big ideas and important details
- Can answer questions about their learning
- Can summarize what they've learned

Four-Point Assessment Rubric (see panel for description)†

(1) Novice | (2) Developing | (3) Proficient | (4) Expert

TC 6

8 | Applying Learning

How does the teacher help students demonstrate their learning, and what kinds of evidence does the teacher collect to assess student progress?

Instructional Indicators (Formative Observation)*

- ☐ **8.1** Aligns summative assessment with learning goals/targets
- ☐ **8.2** Requires students to transfer learning [ccss]
- ☐ **8.3** Develops writing tasks that promote college and career readiness [ccss]
- ☐ **8.4** Engages students in authentic research projects [ccss]
- ☐ **8.5** Challenges students to present and defend ideas [ccss]
- ☐ **8.6** Helps students analyze and address task demands [ccss]
- ☐ **8.7** Clarifies expectations (e.g., checklists, rubrics, models, etc.)
- ☐ **8.8** Differentiates assessment tasks

Impact on Student Learning – Sample Student Behaviors

- Analyze and revise their own work to improve its quality
- Incorporate feedback into their revisions
- Present and explain their work

Four-Point Assessment Rubric (see panel for description)†

(1) Novice | (2) Developing | (3) Proficient | (4) Expert

TC 8

2 | Positive Relationships

How does the teacher build meaningful relationships with the students and among students to promote learning?

Instructional Indicators (Formative Observation)*

- ☐ **2.1** Maintains a positive and "with it" demeanor
- ☐ **2.2** Incorporates students' interests into lessons
- ☐ **2.3** Differentiates instruction and assessment to meet students' needs
- ☐ **2.4** Builds a respectful and supportive classroom [ccss]
- ☐ **2.5** Promotes high-level student collaboration [ccss]
- ☐ **2.6** Communicates with students and the home
- ☐ **2.7** Shows care and concern for students as individuals

Impact on Student Learning – Sample Behaviors

- Are respectful of each other and the teacher
- Collaborate with each other
- Participate in whole-class and small-group discussions

Four-Point Assessment Rubric (see panel for description)†

(1) Novice | (2) Developing | (3) Proficient | (4) Expert

TC 2

9 | Reflecting on and Celebrating Learning

How does the teacher help students look back on their learning and refine their learning process?

Instructional Indicators (Formative Observation)*

- ☐ **9.1** Celebrates student achievement
- ☐ **9.2** Encourages students to look back and develop new insights [ccss]
- ☐ **9.3** Provides students opportunities to reflect on their learning
- ☐ **9.4** Promotes metacognition [ccss]
- ☐ **9.5** Helps students review and address unmet goals
- ☐ **9.6** Helps students set future performance goals

Impact on Student Learning – Sample Student Behaviors

- Take a step back to see the big picture
- Talk about their own learning process
- Look back at their learning goals to assess their effort and achievement

Four-Point Assessment Rubric (see panel for description)†

(1) Novice | (2) Developing | (3) Proficient | (4) Expert

TC 9

3 | Engagement and Enjoyment

How does the teacher motivate students to do their best work and inspire the love of learning?

Instructional Indicators (Formative Observation)*

- ☐ **3.1** Invites diverse forms of thinking [ccss]
- ☐ **3.2** Uses motivational levers (e.g., controversy, choice, competition, challenge, creativity, etc.)
- ☐ **3.3** Maintains excitement and on-task behavior using a variety of tools and strategies
- ☐ **3.4** Displays a passion for teaching and learning
- ☐ **3.5** Encourages students to pursue interests, make choices, and develop personal perspectives
- ☐ **3.6** Creates a classroom that inspires and delights

Impact on Student Learning – Sample Student Behaviors

- Are energetic and enthusiastic
- Enjoy themselves in the classroom
- Express their own interests, ideas, and insights

Four-Point Assessment Rubric (see panel for description)†

(1) Novice | (2) Developing | (3) Proficient | (4) Expert

TC 3

How to Provide Meaningful Feedback

Any time you conduct an observation, it is essential that you provide the teacher with meaningful feedback. Based on your observation, use the Four Ps below to develop your feedback.

Provide Evidence that supports what you observed.
Praise positive teaching behaviors that enhance learning.

Pose questions that foster reflection on the teacher's decisions and their impact.

Propose (collaboratively, if possible) how to improve the teacher's practice.

How to Conduct a Post-Observation Conference

Use these questions to help focus the teacher's reflection after the lesson/observation:

Review: *What did you and your students do during the lesson? What changes did you make during the lesson that deviated from your lesson design?*

Reactions: *What are your personal reactions to the lesson? What do you feel went well? What caused you concern? How do you feel your students reacted to the lesson? What caused them to feel this way?*

Reasons: *What caused you, if at all, to modify your plans during the lesson? Why do you feel the way you do about the lesson? Why do you think the lesson went well? Where do you think it could have gone better? What were the results of the lesson? What did students learn? Why do you think this is so?*

Rethink: *What would you do differently next time? What have you learned from this lesson and observation? How will this observation influence your teaching in the future?*

Reflect: *How did this observation and feedback process work for you? How, as a coach and observer, can I better help you?*

† How to Assess a Teacher's

Effectiveness Using a Four-Point Rubric

When you have enough information, use this four-point rubric to assess the teacher's instructional effectiveness. Note that the rubric may be used in different ways: You may use it to assess a teacher's effectiveness within each dimension or you may use it to assess the overall effectiveness of a lesson.

(1) Novice: *Minimal or no commitment to effective instruction.* Relevant practices are not being used or need reconsideration because they are not having their intended effects on student learning.

(2) Developing: *Initial commitment to effective instruction.* The teacher is using relevant instructional practices, but the practices need further refinement. With refinement, the impact on student learning can be increased.

(3) Proficient: *Clear commitment to effective instruction.* The teacher applies relevant instructional practices that have a positive impact on student learning.

(4) Expert: *Strong commitment to effective instruction that shows advanced expertise.* The teacher applies relevant instructional practices and is able to adapt them to students' needs and particular learning situations. These practices have a consistently positive impact on student learning.

This [ccss] notes instructional indicators that support key themes in the Common Core State Standards. A full analysis is available at: www.ThoughtfulClassroom.com/PDFs/CommonCore.

*Note: Instructional indicators and student behaviors have been condensed. See *The Thoughtful Classroom Teacher Effectiveness Framework [Resource Guide]* for full-length indicators.

This icon notes that corresponding templates are available for your laptop or mobile device. See back page for training and implementation options.