

Peer Observation Essentials

Purpose: To support collaborative teacher teams in continuously improving student outcomes through peer observation. We recommend that teams take a student-centered approach– this isn't about "fixing" your fellow teachers' practice; it is about working collaboratively to plan and execute instruction, with a lens toward how the plan actually impacted student learning. Even if one teacher is the "host", the best teams will approach this as a team effort.

Timing: The Peer Observation Tool should fit in naturally into the scope and sequence of the Unit Planning Cycle. It will be most effective if done after educators have collaboratively unpacked a lesson together and can be used to strengthen the Student Learning Analysis protocol.

Before the Observation:

- Select a lesson from a collaboratively unpacked unit.
- If desired, identify a specific **focus area** tied to one or more of the 3 dimensions below (see below).
- Review lesson learning targets and success criteria together.

After the Observation:

- Complete the Student Learning Analysis protocol to review student learning outcomes. Within that protocol there is opportunity to reflect on your observation before looking at student learning.

Pre-Requisites:

1. **Review the unpacked lesson. Consider what you would expect to see in the lesson and if applicable, what segment of the lesson would have the highest productive struggle and should be observed.**
2. **Review list of focal students, with a lens of observing their experience while ensuring that attention remains unobtrusive and supportive to avoid disrupting the natural classroom dynamic.** *As defined by the Student Success Act, focal students include students of color, students with disabilities, emerging bilingual students and students experiencing poverty, homelessness, or foster care. This definition also encompasses other student groups who have historically faced disparities in schools, as guided by the Oregon Department of Education's (ODE) principles of Targeted Universalism and Focal Student Snapshots.*

Meeting Notes:

- Inclusive Welcome: Reference [this resource](#) for Inclusive Welcome prompts
- **Mindsets:** TBD by school teams, with an emphasis on [Liberatory Design Mindsets](#)
 - What mindsets will guide our conversation today?
 - As we think about the work we're going to do today, what mindsets will be easiest to uphold and which ones might feel more challenging?

Questions to Consider:

- *What mindsets will guide our conversation today?*
- *As we think about the work we're going to do today, what norms will be easiest to uphold and which ones might feel more challenging?*

Peer Observation Note-Catcher

Observation Norms:

- Focus on student thinking and learning, aligned to the success criteria of the lesson
- Remain nonjudgmental—describe, don't evaluate.
- Limit comments to evidence connected to the focus dimension(s) identified below.
- Consider assigning one educator to complete peer observation note-catcher, just with focal students in mind.

Grade-Level, Standards-Aligned	Culturally-Affirming	Deeply Engaging + Accessible
<i>Are students engaged in grade-level, standards-aligned tasks?</i>	<i>Are students' identities, experiences, and voices reflected within the lesson?</i>	<i>Are students deeply engaged and provided equitable access to the grade-level standard?</i>
Grade-Level Learning Consider the learning target and success criteria, and observe what students are producing through reading, writing, speaking, and/or listening. Where are students showing evidence of the success criteria, and where might they need more support? Consider both formative and summative assessment. Productive Struggle Where are students showing the most evidence of productive struggle?	Culturally-Affirming Connections Does the content of the lesson affirm students' identities and experiences? As you circulate, are students able to make their own connections between the content and their lived experiences?	Engagement Are students engaged in the lesson through reading, writing, speaking, and listening? Accessibility Are scaffolds provided to students to access the grade-level standard? Did those scaffolds enable deeper learning?