

## McREL Protocol for Classroom Walkthrough Debrief

### Purpose of group classroom visits and debrief

The primary purpose of the group/buddy classroom visits followed by debrief sessions is to deepen the observers' understanding of the elements in the walkthrough and to increase inter-rater reliability. The goal is not to "cover" the building, but rather to do a few 3–5 minute observations, each followed by a 10–20 minute discussion of that visit. It is this discussion that is the most valuable part of the process. McREL is providing the following series of questions to guide you through the debrief process.

### Prioritized Strategies (ongoing and integrated with the primary strategy)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Setting Objectives</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Reinforcing Effort</i>    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Providing Feedback</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Providing Recognition</i> |

Learning Objective (the goal should be that 100% of classrooms have posted learning objectives stated in student-friendly terms)

- Was there a posted learning objective stated in student friendly terms?
- Was that objective aligned to the activity being taught? (Remember that objectives can extend over a longer period of time, with new activities posted every day under those objectives.)
- Was there a posted activity, rather than an objective?
- If there wasn't a posted objective, did a student handout contain the learning objective for the activity?
- Was there a rubric specific to the objective that students were using to help guide in the lesson?

### Providing Feedback

- Was there specific feedback provided by the teacher that was connected to the stated learning objective and corrective in nature?
- Were students using a rubric to provide peer- or self-feedback?

### Reinforcing Effort

- Was a connection being made by the teacher or others between effort and achievement toward the learning objective? (e.g. "That was really a tough problem, but you stayed with it and were able to get the right answer. Great job, Alex.")
- Was there evidence of students tracking their effort and achievement? (e.g. Students keeping track of their effort as measured by a rubric and their achievement in their math minute drills over time.)

### Providing Recognition

- Was specific and personalized recognition provided as students moved toward achieving the learning objective?
- Did the teacher provide rewards to students for meeting or moving toward a learning objective?

## Primary Instructional Strategy (teacher-intended main strategy)

If you were to ask the teacher what they had intended the lesson to accomplish, what might they have said?

- I wanted the students to classify this set of terms/items. (ISD Classify)
- They are practicing solving equations. (Practice)
- I wanted them to think about different ways of solving this problem. (GTH Problem Solving)
- They are doing an experiment to learn more about chemical reactions. (GTH Experimental Inquiry)
- They just finished a big project and I am giving them a break today. (No research-based strategy)

When you think you have identified a primary strategy, is it really aligned with the research?

- “I think this was *GTH Problem Solving*.” The steps for this strategy are:
  1. Identify the goal you are trying to accomplish
  2. Describe the barriers or constraints that are preventing you from achieving your goal—that are creating the problem
  3. Identify different solutions for overcoming the barriers or constraints and hypothesize which solution is likely to work
  4. Try your solution—either in reality or through a simulation
  5. Explain whether your hypothesis was correct; determine if you want to test another hypothesis using a different solution

Ask yourself, “Does this match the activity you just observed?”

- If your first inclination is either *practice* or *cues and questions*, is there a larger, more foundation strategy you might be missing? Sometimes, but certainly not always, these two strategies in particular are used as supporting strategies.

## Secondary Instructional Strategy (in support of main strategy, optional)

There is not always a secondary strategy, but if you identify one, it should be in support of the main strategy. If your first thought in the classroom was, “This is *Cues and Questions*,” but as you thought about it more, it really was a comparison activity; the *Cues and Questions* is likely the secondary strategy. While they can be either primary or secondary strategies, likely strategies that you might see as support strategies are:

- Cues and Questions
- Practice
- Note Taking
- Summarizing
- Graphic Organizer

## **Bloom's Taxonomy**

Remember

Analyze

Create

Understand

Evaluate

Apply

*Remember: Can students recall or remember information?*

- Straight recall of facts and information.
- Reciting times tables (not doing calculations).
- Listing states and their capitals.
- Copying definitions of vocabulary words from board or dictionary.

*Understand: Can students explain ideas of concepts?*

- Explain why gasoline floats on top of water.
- Uses a provided formula to calculate area of a rectangle.
- Writes a book report.
- Paraphrases a story.
- Prepare a flowchart to show the sequence of events.

*Apply: Can the student use the information in a new, different, or real-world way?*

- Select the correct mathematic process to solve a problem.
- Work with a small group to dramatize a story selection.
- Constructs a model to show how erosion occurs.
- Classifies conflicts in recent stories into different categories provided by the teacher.

*Analyze: Can the student make larger meaning?*

- Categorize organisms found in a local pond based on the criteria.
- Create an advertisement to target a specific audience.
- Determine is a pattern can be synthesized in a graph of data or set of observations.

*Evaluate: Can the student weigh different points of view or data and justify a position?*

- Debate the relative merits of raising the driving age to 18.
- Write an editorial on a specific topic.
- Use the problem solving framework to decide how best to overcome a barrier.

*Create: Can the student create a new product, idea, or way of doing things?*

- Take a story just studied and write a version in today's context.
- Create a movie that clearly explains a concept being studied.
- Hypothesize what the consequences of the passage of a bill today will be in 20 years.

## **Context**

*Cooperative Group*

*Individual*

*Pair*

*Small Group*

*Whole Group*

- Was there evidence of cooperative groups?
  - Assigned roles and responsibilities
  - Small group processing
  - Interdependence
  - Individual and group
- Were all students doing the same work with the same expected product? (whole group)
- Were students working on different assignments and/or with various expected products? (small group)

## **Teacher Directed Technology**

- Was the teacher actually using technology during your observation?
- If an interactive whiteboard was being used, were features of the whiteboard being used, or could the same presentation have been displayed on the wall?

## **Student Centered Technology**

- Are students actively using the technology?
- Is even one student using technology anywhere in the room?

## **Evidence of Learning**

- It is not a question of “are they learning?” The question is what is happening or being produced that would provide evidence of learning?
- Remember you can select as many as applicable.

## **Student Interview**

- Ask a random student, “What are you learning?”
- If they reply with an activity, ask, “Why are you doing that?”
- Other questions might include:
  - How will you know when you have learned this?
  - How will you be able to use this?
- If you talk to a number of students, only code the first student you talk with.

If you see something that needs immediate attention, it is appropriate to address it. As you start to see trends in a classroom or as a staff in general, use the aggregate information to begin coaching. For example, you have been in a room 4–5 times and notice that if the teacher had only stopped on occasion and had the students do a think-pair-share; it would have elevated the level of the lesson. Talk with the teacher and make that suggestion.