

MTEI ASSIGNMENT #2
 Observation of Teacher
 6/22/16
 Yoel Schwartz

Preparation:

I asked one of our star 5th grade teachers to help me with this assignment. I observed a full 45 minute lesson in social studies. We have a strong professional relationship and she would trust enough to help with this assignment.

Observation:

I was a neutral non-participatory visitor in the lesson on causes of the American Revolution. I used the format suggested for tracking the lesson.

Time (rounded)	Description	Questions
1:30	Bell work reviewing previous lesson attendance	Graded?, how get all students involved
1:35	Nice introduction to today's lesson (objectives on board)	Clear roadmap of what to expect, how establish routines for students to follow-flow so smooth
1:40	Read page in text about revolution, students take turns	How know all are listening?, how differentiate and check for understanding
	Ask for feedback, opinions, discussion of some pivotal characters	How make sure to include entire class
1:55	Asked, "If I was alive at this time, would I join revolutionary efforts or not"	Nice hook, all kids wanted to talk, writing harder-collected? How follow up with that
2:05	Journal writing and then asked for answers	Collect journals? Use this time to circulate and give individual attention?
2:13	End conversation, tell what to expect coming lesson, get ready for writing the next lesson of day	Homework?, exit ticket?

Post-Observation Preparation:

I reviewed the lesson and tried to prepare questions/comments that were important to me and the instructional leadership position I have been trying to promote certain themes and wanted to be sure to ask about them. At the same time, I wanted to be open to the actual lesson and discuss strengths and weaknesses observed.

I did take notes on our school observation form during the lesson. We met the following day to discuss the lesson and I was able to prepare questions in advance for the post observation conference.

Themes important to me:

- Differentiating
- Culture of engagement and accountability
- Checking for understanding
- Student engagement and high participation rates
- Growth mindset and culture of acceptance, risk taking, and cognitive development

Themes from actual lesson to discuss

- Balance between frontal and student centered approach.
- Use of journaling
- How will you know student learned material you taught? Assessment?
- How include more students into discussions

Post-Observation Conversation

1. Who observe and why? Answered above
2. What was lesson about? Answered above
3. What questions did I ask and why?

I decided to ask all of the questions mentioned above. Some of the questions were from "my agenda" of helping develop general school culture and others from the actual lesson itself.

4. Which ones worked well and why?

My assumption was that all of the global issues would also be important to the teacher. This was not true. The ones more specific to her class were better.

5. How use observational record?

I took as many notes as I could to ask specific questions during the post observation from timing the transitions to almost word for word how the teacher introduced concepts.

6. What learn about teacher's thinking and practice?

The more open ended the questions, the more I listened and heard things from the teacher's perspective. For example, the role of journaling and how it can be used as an assessment was an interesting conversation.

7. Supporting and challenging- try it and what learn?

It was easy to support most of the lesson because she is such a good teacher. In that way, I made this easier for me to accomplish. The one conversation that was more challenging was about the global goals of the school. It became more of a conversation challenging the choice of some goals for all grades and then leading to other topics to discuss (better discipline, salaries, etc...).

8. What learn about observing teaching?

I have been observing teachers for a while but the challenge of agenda was evident. Each observer is biased towards what they are looking for in a classroom. It is nice to hear things from the teacher's perspective while advancing topics or themes important to me.

9. What learn about talking in non-evaluative way?

This becomes much harder if the trust level between observer and teacher is low or if the teacher is not strong. For example, there are four general categories of teachers. The "superstars and keepers" are easier to be non-evaluative than the "marginal and terminators." At the same time, the goal is growth and some discomfort needs to be created for growth to occur. Bringing this up in a non-evaluative manner was challenging.

In addition, my role as principal automatically creates an evaluative component to the observation. It almost seemed easier with my chavrusa than with someone that I supervise, even though she is excellent, on a regular basis.

