

Demonstration Classroom Transcripts

Pre-visit discussion

Teacher: And so, working our way back to that...but what we found for both of us has been timing of the different stages –

Researcher: you were focusing on the three-part lesson a lot –

Teacher: Yeah, so, looking at each stage and how we find, okay, the first stage tends to be longer because we're catching up a lot of our kids because they come in and their skill set is so low that you're not actually teaching grade 6, or 5 in her instance. You're actually working from 2, 3, 4, 5 – and I'm telling them, I'm saying, here's what you learned in [grade] 2, and going through it. And here's what you did in [grade] 3 and going through it with them. And seeing some of the leaves start to fall off. And that's the piece in the beginning. And it gives you a sense of where they're at, but it's also difficult, because the majority of my kids are supposed to be working at a grade six level.

Teacher 2: That's been the frustration for me, is, okay, so you've got, you get a sense of where your kids are at... I'm getting much better at sort of the whole assessment piece, figuring out, oh, great, okay, now I know where they're all at. And then it just all goes to hell in a hand bucket after that because you're like, okay, well I've got this group of kids that need to redo the whole proportions piece because they didn't get it, and then I've got this group of kids whose problem solving is great and I can really move them on, and then I have a couple of kids that are way low, and then a mid-range. And so now I've got five groups to manage, and it's just...that's where it starts to become very very challenging trying to keep that going. And so when you do your minds-on at the beginning, which of the groups do you kind of figure you're going to go to.

Demonstration classroom visit

Narration: Observation is the key catalyst for teacher learning in the demonstration classroom process. Teachers in our study talked about the power of seeing the lesson enacted, rather than reading about it or being told about it. The teachers valued that what they witnessed in the observation wasn't a polished model, but a "piece in process" where the demonstration classroom teacher took risks to try new strategies.

Debrief and goal setting

Teacher: The first thing that struck me was the set up of the classroom – I love that kind of organizational stuff. So not that it had a lot to do with the math only, but I like the way she set up the class with her desk not the main focus anymore, and different areas of the room had different purposes – not just displaying purposes, but actually where she would actually teach or where the kids could go. The kids had lots of different places where they could go within the room to do work. So I really liked that as well. And she had them set up in groups. So those were some of the first things that I noticed. And then when she got to the teaching, it was interesting to see how the kids moved throughout that space and how she did as well.

Enactment

Teacher: I think for me it's been more of a heads up to attempt to do the three-part lesson as often as I can and when it fits. And for me one thing I had to do is set up reminders. So I have changed where I teach math, physically in the room, and that reminds me to do the activation piece and then I also change spots for when we consolidate. So just physically changing the room like that has given me just kind of a cue to, okay, yeah, I'm supposed to do this now. And I'm finding that I'm doing it more often and that it's valuable to me.