

Teacher Observation Guide—Writing

Directions: For each statement, the observer will put a checkmark in the appropriate box—*yes*; *to some extent* (done, but not to fullest extent possible); *could have been done* (would have been appropriate), *should have been done* (the absence of this technique impaired the lesson), and *N/A* (not applicable, would not have been appropriate). It will be normal to have many *N/A* responses as not all lessons reasonably can accommodate all of the listed activities. Then answer the questions at the end of the survey.

The Teacher ...	Yes	To Some Extent	Could Have Been Done	Should Have Been Done	N/A
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Writing Purposes

Assigns writing tasks that extend content-area learning.					
Assigns writing tasks that assess what students know and can do.					
Assigns writing tasks that help students think critically about content-area knowledge.					
Gives students a clear purpose for writing.					
Provides a clear and specific set of instructions for the writing assignment.					
Has appropriately placed the writing task and lesson into a structured sequence of writing skills taught throughout the quarter, semester, or year.					

Prewriting

Provides students with specific prewriting strategies for brainstorming.					
Provides students with specific prewriting strategies for organizing thoughts.					
Provides time and structures for students to talk about their thoughts before writing.					

The Teacher ...	Yes	To Some Extent	Could Have Been Done	Should Have Been Done	N/A
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Composing

Expects students to go through all parts of the writing process.					
Provides students with appropriate time frames in which to complete the various parts of the writing process.					
Provides students with easy access to dictionaries and other reference materials while writing.					
Models specific writing strategies.					
Provides students with advanced vocabulary (e.g., on Word Walls) that may be useful in the particular assignment.					
Provides students with the opportunity to ask the teacher or peers for thoughts, help, suggestions, and critiques.					
Provides <i>just-in-time</i> information on the specific writing needs noticed about a particular assignment.					

Postwriting

Provides opportunities for students to revise with the help of peer comments.					
Expects students to revise for content, organization, and tone—not just mechanics, grammar, and spelling.					
Provides multiple venues and methods for revision.					
Provides students with opportunities to make their work public.					
Gets students involved in rubric creation.					
Assesses students with a rubric or other clear assessment method.					
Provides timely, specific feedback on student drafts that goes beyond grammatical commentary.					

1. What was the single most effective element of the writing instruction?

2. What was the element that you most *wish* were included in the lesson or the instruction? (This element is something that may have made the lesson better but was not absolutely necessary.)

3. What was the element that you most thought *should* have been included in the lesson or instruction? (This element is something that needed to be in the lesson.)

4. What is the element that you thought should be shared with other teachers?

5. What is the element that you hope to see improved upon before the next observation?

6. What—if anything—from the preobservation statement did not seem to be reflected in the actual lesson?