NLSA Classroom Observation Tool

NLSA — National Lutheran School Accreditation

This tool has been designed to assist you in observing, identifying, and documenting evidence of classroom environments that are conducive to student learning and growth. Please circle the appropriate number in each of the sections below which identifies what you observed during your time in the classroom.

Date ___ / ___ / ___   School _____   City _____   State _____   Grade Level(s) _____   Subject _____

Time In _____   Time Out _____   Check ALL That Apply: Lesson Beg. _____   Lesson Middle _____   Lesson End _____   Observer Name _____

Student-Focused Observations				
A. Planning and Preparation Planning and preparation is defined as those practices that embody good classroom management techniques, employ instructional methods that align with current educational research and have lessons with a defined purpose in mind.	**Highly Observed**	**Mostly Observed**	**Somewhat Observed**	**Not Observed**
1. Students are engaged in a learning environment that addresses different student needs. *What to Look For: Students at the same or similar chronological age have needs and abilities that vary. Observe for preparation that includes evidence for content that allows for different levels of academic ability, such as differences in amount, depth and rigor of homework in different content areas and available resources at different reading levels.*	3	2	1	0
2. Students know learner goals that align with instruction and are given them prior to teaching the lesson. *What to Look For: Goals of the lesson are communicated to students at the beginning of one's instruction.*	3	2	1	0
3. Students engage in the lesson through various learning objectives and use a variety of resources. *What to Look For: Observe for a balance between teacher-directed and student-centered instruction. (e.g., small group, independent learning outside the classroom, individual learning within the classroom, discovery, prediction, inquiry, etc.)*	3	2	1	0
4. Students participate in a variety of activities that are appropriate for the time allocated to teach the lesson. *What to Look For: Each lesson allocates an appropriate amount of time for introduction, engagement of the task and wrap-up of the lesson.*	3	2	1	0
5. Students are assessed using a mix of formative and summative assessment techniques and instruments. *What to Look For: Formative and summative assessments accomplish different means. Formative techniques can occur during the lesson. (e.g., questioning, think-pair-share, teacher led "say somethings" to help students process textual information to support student reasoning, most clear/least clear cards submitted by students at end of lesson to gauge student mastery, Venn diagrams, charts, etc.); Summative assessments wrap-up a chapter. Observe for a mix or balance of techniques and instruments.*	3	2	1	0
B. Classroom Environment Effective classroom management is integral for a successful learning environment. Meta-analysis studies on classroom management reveal gains in percentile scores and higher engagement rates for students when teachers employ appropriate management techniques as compared to those who do not (Marzano and Pickering, 2003).	**Highly Observed**	**Mostly Observed**	**Somewhat Observed**	**Not Observed**
1. Students learn in a culture of mutual care and genuine concern. *What to Look For: Students are respectful of each other, authoritative figures and classroom property.*	3	2	1	0
2. Students learn in a classroom where order and predictability are sustained and encouraged. *What to Look For: Students appreciate routine, order and discipline. Observe that students have the freedom to express themselves creatively, not criticized for an unusual or incorrect answer and have their misunderstandings or misconceptions corrected with care and respect. Classroom routines are taught and practiced.*	3	2	1	0
3. Students are actively engaged in the learning environment. *What to Look For: Students may or may not be engaged during instruction. Observe for students asking questions, paying attention, being interested and curious about the content and verbally engaged with the teacher and each other.*	3	2	1	0
C. Instruction The research conducted by Marzano (2007) suggests there are gains in student percentile scores when students use different instructional strategies and instructional tools for learning their subject matter.	**Highly Observed**	**Mostly Observed**	**Somewhat Observed**	**Not Observed**
1. Students engage in various modalities of learning (e.g., discussion, collaboration, inquiry, problem-solving, predicting, etc.). *What to Look For: Observe for teacher-directed, guided instruction, collaboration and independent learning. (e.g., Gradual Release of Responsibility (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983; Fischer & Frey, 2012)*	3	2	1	0

2. Students are engaged in higher levels of thinking. *What to Look For: Observe for divergent and convergent thinking among students.*	3	2	1	0
3. Student interactions give evidence of learning and assessment. *What to Look For: Teacher engages students in formative assessment techniques and provides evidence of different types of assessments to assess learned content.*	3	2	1	0
4. Students use instructional rubrics as a guide to inform them of what is expected. *What to Look For: Is there evidence that rubrics are used in some form or way for some or all content areas?*	3	2	1	0
5. Students track their own mastery of content with assistance from their teacher. *What to Look For: Students take accountability for their own mastery of content by charting their own progress through a variety of ways (e.g., charts, graphs, child portfolios, projects, written report, and various media presentations (age appropriate). All of this in addition to teacher created or corporate summative assessments.*	3	2	1	0
6. Students are provided examples of quality work through exemplars. *What to Look For: Teachers make available or display previous years of student work as an example of quality. (e.g., projects, book reports, dioramas and posters)*	3	2	1	0
D. Faith Integration A positive teacher-student relationship is one that accentuates the child's gifts and abilities. Children are unique gifts from God. God blesses each child with a unique set of skills and qualities. Educators know children do not all learn the same way or at the same time. The classroom teacher exerts much time and effort to develop a personal relationship with each child.	**Highly Observed**	**Mostly Observed**	**Somewhat Observed**	**Not Observed**
1. Students shepherd and care for one another in their daily interactions. *What to Look For: Students demonstrate and share their Christian faith in word and action. Students pray for one another.*	3	2	1	0
2. Students show respect for God, property and the teaching of God's word. *What to Look For: Teacher and students foster a culture of Christian love for one another and for their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.*	3	2	1	0
3. Students interact with adults, each other, parents and students with Christian care and mutual respect. *What to Look For: Students demonstrate genuine and mutual care and respect for each other and other adults in the building.*	3	2	1	0
E. Technology Learning is no longer isolated within a particular classroom. The advancement of technology provides students with the means by which they can move beyond classroom walls and into a global environment. Technology is paramount when attempting to prepare students to engage in a 21st century world.	**Highly Observed**	**Mostly Observed**	**Somewhat Observed**	**Not Observed**
1. Students use technology to learn. *What to Look For: Technology is easily accessible and integrated in some or all of the lesson.*	3	2	1	0
2. Students use technology to extend their learning beyond the classroom. *What to Look For: Students are assigned group projects that incorporate some type of media. (e.g., Google Docs)*	3	2	1	0
3. Students use technology to solve problems individually and/or in collaborative teams. *What to Look For: Students are observed using basic calculators or graphing calculators for high-level math instruction. Students are observed using collaborative online tools for team projects or problem-solving with each other. Students use science equipment that correlates with their grade level.*	3	2	1	0

Comments: