

EPIISODE 291

Why Teachers Should Get Your Observation Notes Right Away



INSTRUCTIONAL
LEADERSHIP SHOW



Essential Question



Why should I give the teacher a copy of my observation notes immediately?

Typical Practice



- Take notes—handwritten or typed
- Write a summary/report later
- Meet for a postconference
- Give the teacher the summary/report
- Never share the raw notes

Why Share Notes Right Away?



- Basis for feedback conversation
- Chance to correct any misunderstandings
- Maximize trust & minimize fear

TOP SECRET

Secret Dossier Fear



- “What do you have on me?”
- Bad for your professional relationship
- Sharing your notes eliminates it

Unshareable Notes



- Not strictly “evidence”
- Questions and notes to self
- Critical commentary and judgment
- Second-guessing and personal opinions
- Illegible handwriting

The #1 Job of Observation Notes



Your notes primarily serve as
evidence.

Contaminated Notes?



Opinion contaminates factual evidence.





Two Birds, One Stone



Notes you can share with the teacher
are also
notes that'll be admissible as evidence

Good Faith, Good Will



Sharing your notes immediately is also an expression of good will and an act of good faith, showing that you have nothing to hide

Reinterpret Later



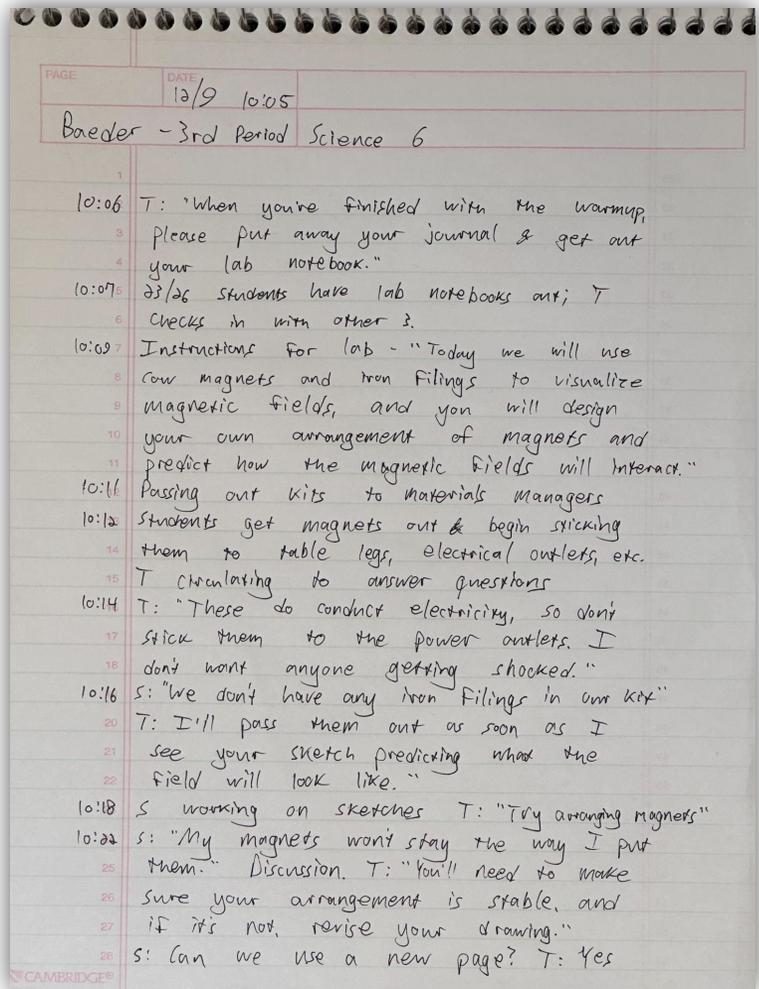
- If you have concerns in the future, you can review past notes for evidence supporting these concerns
- The raw evidence will not raise teacher suspicions
- Evidence already in the teacher's possession is rock solid

Keep Your Options Open



- Sufficient improvement may occur
- The teacher may depart
- The situation may worsen
- Other concerns may become your top priority
- You may want to protect the relationship
- Your reputation can only sustain so much damage

Then What Do I Put In Writing?



Low-inference notes



Adequate Documentation



- Low-inference notes with timestamps
- Every walkthrough + formal observation
- Share with the teacher immediately
- Discuss with the teacher
- Avoid other written feedback



Here is the transcription of the text from the photo:



PAGE DATE 10/9 10:05

Baeder - 3rd Period Science 6

10:06 T: "When you're finished with the warmup, please put away your journal & get out your (lab notebook.)"

10:07 3/06 students have lab notebooks out; T checks in with other 3.

10:09 Instructions for lab - "Today we will use cow magnets and iron filings to visualize magnetic fields, and you will design your own arrangement of magnets and predict how the magnetic fields will interact."

10:10 Passing out kits to Materials Managers

10:13 Students get magnets out & begin sticking them to table edge, electrical outlets, etc.

10:14 T counseling to answer questions.

T: "These do conduct electricity, so don't stick them to the power outlets. I don't want anyone getting shocked."

10:16 S: "We don't have any iron filings in our kit."

T: I'll pass them out as soon as I see your sketch predicting what the field will look like."

10:18 S working on sketches T: "Try arranging magnets"

10:20 S: "My magnets won't stay the way I put them." Discussion. T: "You'll need to make sure your arrangement is stable, and if it's not, revise your drawing."

S: "Can we use a new page?" T: "Yes"

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