

EPISODE 320

Documenting Teacher Practice & Feedback Conversations



INSTRUCTIONAL
LEADERSHIP SHOW



Essential Question



What should I document in my 3rd cycle of classroom walkthroughs and beyond?

Documentation By Cycle



Cycle 1: Roster/Tracker—check off each teacher

Cycle 2⁺: Notecards—document subject/period visited

Cycle 3⁺: Observation notes + conversation summary



teacher you supervise 1-2 minute visits, back to back ☒ Notes ☒ Chat

[illegible]

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Cycle 2 3 a day

 5-10 minutes each

 Notes Chat

| | M | T | W | Th | F |
|---------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| WEEK 1 | Vis □ □ □ | Chat □ □ □ | Vis □ □ □ | Chat □ □ □ | Vis □ □ □ |
| WEEK 2 | Vis □ □ □ | Chat □ □ □ | Vis □ □ □ | Chat □ □ □ | Vis □ □ □ |
| EXTRA | Vis □ □ □ | Chat □ □ □ | Vis □ □ □ | Chat □ □ □ | Vis □ □ □ |

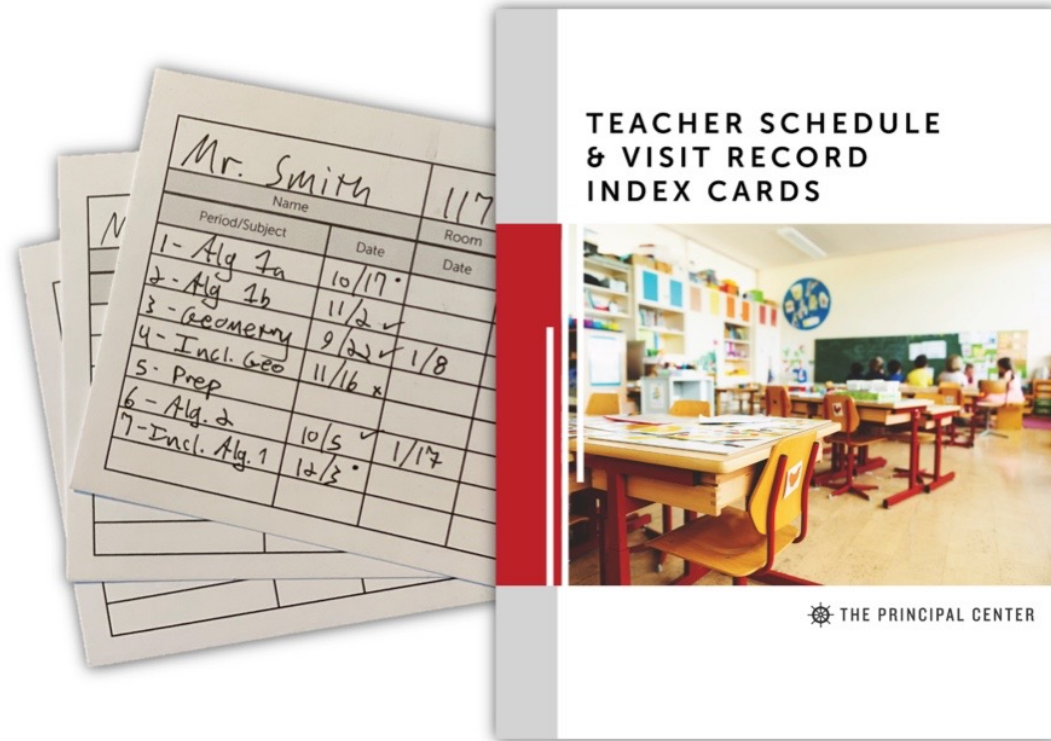
Cycle 3 3 a day

 10-15 minutes each

☒ Notes ☒ Chat[illegible]

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Classroom Visit Notecards



PrincipalCenter.com/notecards





What Counts As Documentation?



- Informal visits may not “count” toward formal evaluation
- A recap of a conversation is a good way to document what you talked about for future reference
- A recap does not really document teacher practice
- Low-inference notes are the best way to document practice
- “Barbed facts” are not helpful
- Timestamps are very helpful

The Importance of Talking



edutopia

ADMINISTRATION & LEADERSHIP

The Case for Face-to-Face Debriefs After Observations

Although quick, written feedback may seem efficient, talking with a teacher after an observation is much more effective.

By [Kim Marshall](#)

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No Feedback In Writing



- No “glows and grows” or “wows and wonders”
- No forms
- No suggestions
- No questions
- No commentary
- Just the facts



Barbed Facts



Factual, but with implied criticism of omissions:

"2 of 5 groups began working."

"One student in the back row has his head down."

"Student raises hand to ask a question, but is not called on."

"23/26 students have lab notebooks out."

Avoid Passive-Aggressive Inquiry



- "I'm wondering..."
- "I'm curious..."
- "Perhaps you could help me understand..."

Positive Inquiry

- Clarify the teacher's instructional purpose
- Ask about what you actually saw
- Inquire about the teacher's thinking
- Press for elaboration
- Don't play "guess what I'm thinking"
- Don't second-guess

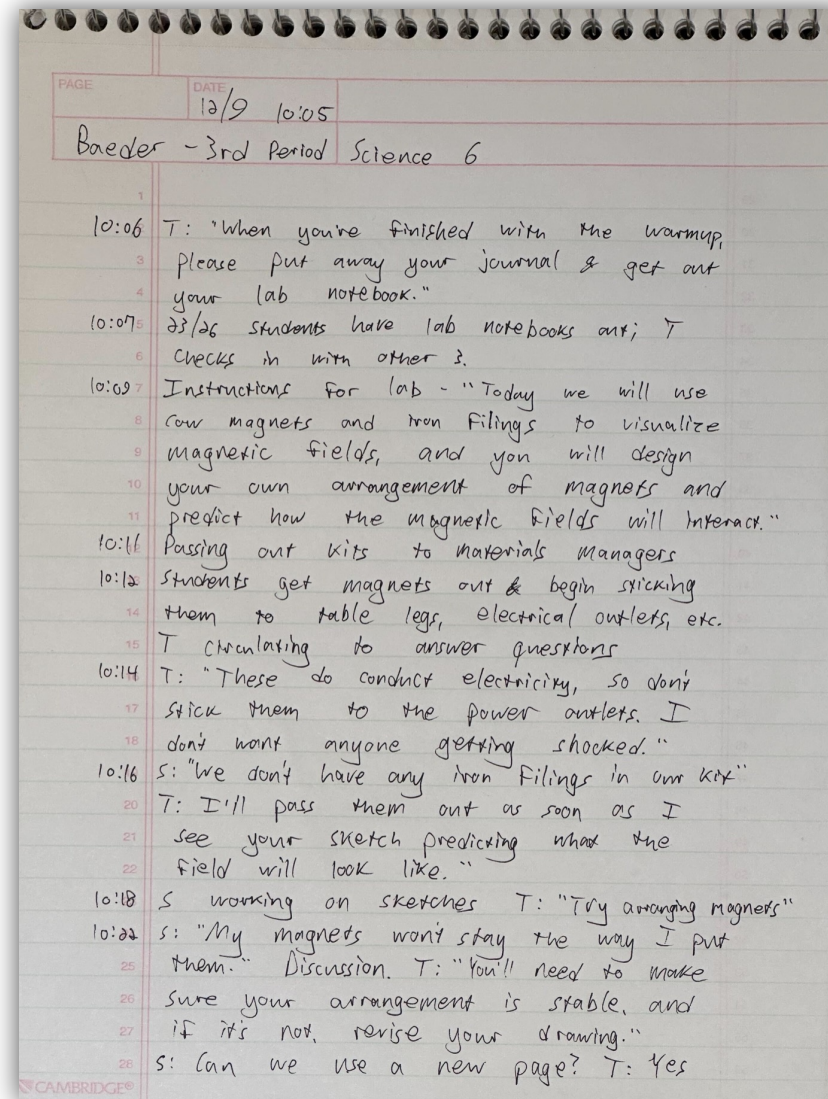


Asking About Omissions



10:06 T: "When you're finished with the warmup,
3 please put away your journal & get out
4 your lab notebook."
10:07 5 23/26 students have lab notebooks out; T
6 checks in with other 3.
10:09 7 Instructions for lab - "Today we will use
8 row magnets and iron filings to visualize
9 magnetic fields, and you will design
10 your own arrangement of magnets and
11 predict how the magnetic fields will interact."

Giving Teachers Raw Notes



Giving Teachers Raw Notes



- Wait until Cycle 3—build trust with positive experiences
- Backfires if full of commentary or barbed facts
- Stick to factual description
- Don't ask for written responses
- OK if teacher responds to clarify

Handwritten or Email?



- Use your judgment
- Be respectful of teacher preferences
- Be mindful of legibility
- Explain if emailing:

"Nice to stop by today. Here are my notes—no response needed. Hope we can chat soon!"

Documenting A Conversation



- Use any required form
- Send a recap email if necessary
- Skip if low-stakes & not required
- Both parties retain a copy of observation notes