

Video-Viewing Guide

Unit 4: Observing Standards-in-Action

Content Area: English-as-a-Second Language



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL AND ADULT EDUCATION

Innovations for Standards-Based Education



VIDEO-VIEWING GUIDE UNIT 4: OBSERVING STANDARDS-IN-ACTION

CONTENT AREA: ENGLISH-AS-A-SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)
LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE/ADVANCED

Video Features:

Prince William County Public Schools Adult Education

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Directions

Review the following observation form with the attendant questions and points before watching the videotaped lesson. Then put the guide aside while you watch the video, and take notes on a blank observation form or separate paper. Because of the central nature of the lessons, you can also use your own state standards to determine which standard(s) are reflected in the lessons. Drawing on your notes, use the questions to guide a discussion about what constitutes concrete evidence and how that translates into scoring.

Virginia Department of Education Office of Adult Education and Literacy

ESL High Intermediate/Advanced Exit Benchmarks: Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing

- S5.4 Express and support ideas with some organization and cohesiveness using examples, explanations, and descriptions; use strategies to monitor and enhance communication.

- L5.2 Identify topic and purpose in simple conversations and short connected oral discourse in familiar situations.

- R5.2 Interpret simplified connected text employing some higher-order rhetorical structures on familiar topics.

- W5.2 With support, organize and develop writing to address a range of written tasks.

SIA Observation Tool

Effective Teaching and Learning Practices¹

E = Evident
NFE = Not Fully Evident

1. Curriculum <i>content</i> of the lessons is aligned to the demands of standards.	E/NFE	Evidence
a. Instructor presents lesson clearly reflecting the concepts/skills of one or more of the standards.		How close to the class objectives are these standards?
b. Instructor outlines a well-defined standards-based lesson objective stated in terms of the desired student learning outcomes.		<p>In the first 10 minutes, how specific are the outcomes of the lesson identified by the instructor?</p> <p>Are they understandable to students? Do you have a sense of the knowledge and skills the lesson is trying to foster (e.g., increased efficacy, increased mastery, assembling elements into larger wholes, increased accuracy)?</p> <p>Throughout the lesson, how often does the instructor refer back to lesson objectives? What does she say and do?</p> <p>How does she involve students in defining the lesson objectives?</p>
c. Students use resources directly related to the targeted standards.		<p>How closely do the components of the “hamburger” relate to writing paragraphs as delineated in standards?</p> <p>As you observe the various activities students are asked to complete throughout the lesson, were there any that seemed off-point?</p> <p>A major objective in the lesson was paragraphing. Did activities tie closely to this?</p>

¹ For the purposes of Standards-in-Action, a “standard” is defined as the most specific level of outcome used by a state to indicate what students should know and be able to do. These can include indicators, objectives, and benchmarks.

2. Cognitive level of learning activities is aligned to the demands of the standards.	E/NFE	Evidence
a. Instructor poses questions that stimulate student thinking beyond recall.		<p>How does the instructor stimulate interest through the writing chart? Does it work? How do you know?</p> <p>As the instructor works with students, how often does she impart information vs. ask questions?</p> <p>She keeps asking: “What does that mean to you?” “Why is that important?” “What do you like about...?” “Can you explain that?” What skills of cognition are these questions aiming at? Analysis? Synthesis? Evaluation?</p>
b. Instructor allows appropriate wait-time (3 or more seconds) after posing questions.		<p>Throughout the lesson, do you have a sense that students are given time to express their opinions?</p> <p>Does the instructor step in when students are struggling to put their thoughts into words?</p> <p>Do students act as though they need to hurry, or do they seem comfortable taking their time?</p> <p>When the instructor asks questions, does she seem comfortable with wait-time?</p> <p>Once she asks a question, does she stay silent or does she fill the space with more questions or explanations? Count the seconds that she waits at different times throughout the lesson.</p>
c. Instructor asks students to elaborate on and justify their answers.		<p>How often throughout the lesson does the instructor ask questions requiring elaboration or justification?</p> <p>Can students answer with a “yes” or “no” or one-word answer?</p> <p>Does she ask students to explain at different parts of the lesson?</p> <p>Does she use any strategies to invite students to follow up on one another’s comments? What are they?</p>

2. <i>Cognitive level</i> of learning activities is aligned to the demands of the standards. (Continued)	E/NFE	Evidence
d. Instructor activates students' metacognitive skills (e.g., models strategies, inquires about students' strategies).		Throughout the lesson, did she prompt students with questions that resemble the following: "Why are we practicing this skill?" "How will it help you?" "How will you use what we are learning outside of class?" "What did we learn today?" or "Can you explain the strategies you are using to solve this problem?"
e. Students work on assignments reflecting the highest demands posed by the standards targeted by the lesson.		As she scaffolds the lesson, what are the demands of the various activities, from the first class discussion to the assignment to write a class paragraph? How did the instructor build challenges into the assignments? For example, how did she make the assignment more challenging in which students had to put sentences in order from topic sentence, to supporting sentences, to conclusion?

3. Standards are translated into lesson content <i>relevant</i> to adult students.	E/NFE	Evidence
a. Instructor ties standards-based lesson to students' goals, interests, or needs.		<p>Early in the lesson, how does she tie the lesson back to students' own work?</p> <p>What evidence do you have that the instructor knows about the lives and interests of her students? What specific things does she say to indicate this?</p> <p>How does she relate what they are studying back to students' home countries and experiences?</p> <p>Who wrote the paragraphs that she asks them to work on? Why is that important?</p> <p>Do you understand after viewing the lesson why it was important? If someone asked you why knowing how to write is important, would you have answers based on this lesson?</p> <p>What topic does she choose for writing a class paragraph?</p> <p>How does talking about the "right to express your own voice" resonate with these students? Does the distinction she draws between speaking and writing make sense to you?</p>
b. Students actively participate in the lesson through class discussions, group projects, etc., instead of doing solitary seatwork or listening to extended lectures.		<p>Is the lesson dominated by teacher talk or student talk?</p> <p>Is the lesson dominated by lecture or discussion?</p> <p>What does the instructor do throughout the lesson, both nonverbally and verbally, to ensure students understand what she is saying, so that students stay actively involved?</p> <p>What do you notice about the students? Are they bored or animated? How do you know?</p> <p>Did only some students actively participate in activities? Many? Most? All?</p>
c. Students have varied opportunities (beyond worksheets) to apply new learning in authentic or practical adult-oriented contexts.		<p>Were the activities practical and useful? List them.</p> <p>Were the assignments worksheets or were students asked to create?</p>

4. Standards are addressed by a <i>coherent progression</i> of learning.	E/NFE	Evidence
a. Instructor explicitly links lesson content to previous lessons or what students already know.		<p>What does the instructor do in the first part of the lesson to review previous lessons?</p> <p>What does she do to jog the memory of students about what they already know, thus building their confidence?</p>
b. Students have prerequisite knowledge/skills to understand lesson content.		<p>Do you think students were prepared for this lesson?</p> <p>What does their verbal and nonverbal (face and body language) communication tell you about whether they can follow the lesson?</p> <p>How does the instructor check on students' prerequisite skills?</p>
c. Instructor incorporates standards in a lesson in a manner that builds on their natural connections.		<p>In what ways does the instructor make connections between the different domains of language study?</p>
<p>d. Instructor closes lesson by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reviewing lesson objectives; • summarizing student learning; and • previewing how the next lesson builds on that learning. 		<p>Does she close the lesson?</p> <p>Does she review the lesson objective?</p> <p>Are students involved in reflecting on the lesson?</p> <p>Do you have a sense about what the next lesson will cover?</p>

5. Students' level of understanding is assessed during the lesson and instruction is adjusted accordingly.	E/NFE	Evidence
a. Instructor regularly checks whether students are mastering standards-based lesson content (e.g., circulates to check on students' work, monitors verbal responses).		<p>When students are working in groups, does she circulate?</p> <p>What does she do several times during the lesson to check on understanding with the whole class?</p> <p>When the instructor calls on students to share what they have written, what indicates that she had checked on their work previously?</p>
b. Instructor provides students with prompt, specific feedback to correct misunderstandings and reinforce learning.		<p>What strategies does she use to reinforce their learning?</p> <p>How does saying it another way do that?</p>
c. Students signal understanding of lesson content before instructor introduces new ideas.		<p>What were the various ways in which students were asked to demonstrate concepts, to check on what they know?</p>
d. Instructor provides supplemental instruction for students who show that they need it (e.g., individualized or peer tutoring, re-teaching, review of basic skills).		<p>Did the teacher provide supplemental instruction? Was it needed?</p>
e. Instructor provides extension activities for students who complete classwork, instead of leaving them idle or unchallenged.		<p>Were any students bored while waiting for others to finish?</p>
f. Students evaluate and reflect on their own learning.		<p>At the end of the lesson, how does the instructor activate students' metacognition?</p>