

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

Record 1

Date and time, year group: 26th September 2022 – 10:45am – Year 7
Where and When: Context of the observation – subject/AOLE, general classroom context Mathematics & Numeracy. A second period lesson where the students were playing maths games on computers due to a reshuffling of their classes, so no work was set. They were in the music room with the music teacher. They had not yet been put into sets and the teacher was not their usual maths teacher.
What happened: a detailed description of the critical incident (the more detail the better to refer to in your later work) One of the pupils came to a math's problem she could not get the answer to ($501 - 20$), she called for help from the teaching assistant and after a few minutes trying to help the student the teaching assistant walked away. However, the student did not get the answer still so simply gave up on the equation and closed the game. They then went on to a different game and came to another question they could not answer. Instead of asking for help this time, the student simply closed the game without even trying to work it out.
Areas of possible exploration: what you think could be "under the hood" in these incidents? What avenues of research could you consider? What I could investigate to try and get a better understanding of this incident are 'Fight or Flight'. Did the student show any fight or flight responses during the incident by refusing to attempt the questions. I could also look at the classroom atmosphere, as due to it not being their usual classroom or teacher, the atmosphere may have been different or not yet established. This may mean that the student did not feel comfortable getting the answer wrong and was scared to ask for help because of this.
Notes: any details you can note (is it a busy environment, is it after lunch, are there lots of distractions, are directions made explicit - the more you can refer to the better here) The lesson was just after the first break of the day, but i do not think that it would have affected the incident. As previously stated they were not with their usual teacher, with their usual peers or in their usual classroom. This could have played a role in how the child acted. It may have also meant that the teaching assistant was not used to how that particular child works, perhaps they require more help with their work. The class was also very busy, with only the teacher and the teaching assistant to manage approximately 20 children. They were also all sat around the edge of the class on computers, so perhaps the teaching assistant felt rushed to help other students, therefore not giving the required amount of help to every student.

Record 2

Date and time, year group: 26th September 2022 – 11:45am – Year 7
Where and When: Context of the observation – subject/AOLE, general classroom context Languages, Literacy & Communication. This was a Year 7 class who had just been put into their new class for this AoLE. Some of the students had already been taught by this teacher, but it was only about 40% of them. They were also put into a new seating plan at the start of this lesson. They were a very well-behaved class who were all listening very intently to the teacher.
What happened: a detailed description of the critical incident (the more detail the better to refer to in your later work) The students were asked to write out their full names and turn them into an acronym describing themselves. Once they had all finished, the teacher gave them all 3 minutes to discuss in pairs or small groups and find something new out about the person they were sat next to. After about 1 minute he rang a small chime that he had on his desk, then all the students stopped talking and listened to them. They then gave instant feedback based on what they saw, such as whether a group was talking well, or not talking enough. They then set them a further 3 minutes and got them back on task.
Areas of possible exploration: what you think could be “under the hood” in these incidents? What avenues of research could you consider? For this incident it would be interesting to look at Pavlovian conditioning. As the children knew to stop talking and listen to the teacher when the chime was rung, even though many of them had never been in the class before. I would also look at the effects of instant feedback on children, as the teacher was sure to give feedback to every group in order to keep them on task or get them on task. It may also be interesting to look at how some of the children had presumably heard the chime in previous lessons and knew to listen, so perhaps the actions of the few influenced the many.
Notes: any details you can note (is it a busy environment, is it after lunch, are there lots of distractions, are directions made explicit - the more you can refer to the better here) It is important to remember that the class was very well behaved anyway, so it would be hypothetically easier to get them to listen to the teacher. It would be very interesting to see how the chime works with a less well-behaved class. It was also the lesson just before lunch time, so the students would presumably be excited to go to lunch as soon as possible, so perhaps this played a role in why they were so well behaved, so as not to be kept behind into lunch.

Record 3

Date and time, year group: 27th September 2022 – 10:45am – Year 8
Where and When: Context of the observation – subject/AOLE, general classroom context Religious Education. This lesson was just after the first break. There was a majority of ALN students in the room as the constantly needed additional help from the teacher and the teaching assistant. There were a few disruptive students in the lesson, and one was sent out halfway through the lesson.
What happened: a detailed description of the critical incident (the more detail the better to refer to in your later work) One of the students constantly had their head down not looking at the teacher, when their head was up, they were messing around with the students sat next to them. The teacher had told the student twice to stop messing around and listen. On the third time of telling them to stop, the teacher moved the student away from their friends and sat them on their own. After the student was moved, the almost instantly began to engage in the lesson and listen to the teacher. They were engaging in whole class discussions and putting their hand up to answer questions from the teacher.
Areas of possible exploration: what you think could be “under the hood” in these incidents? What avenues of research could you consider? I think looking at Skinner’s theory of ‘Operant Conditioning’, negative/positive reinforcement/punishment would be very interesting. As soon as the student was removed from the situation they were in they behaved much better. The teacher saw behaviour they did not like so removed (negative) the child from the not ideal situation (punishment).
Notes: any details you can note (is it a busy environment, is it after lunch, are there lots of distractions, are directions made explicit - the more you can refer to the better here) This lesson took place after the first break of the day so the students would have already been more excitable than normal. The teacher was also calling the student by their full name, so perhaps this was a regular occurrence, and the teacher knew that moving the student would yield good results.