



Practical ✓
Useful ✓
Transformational ✓

Ticked off

CHECKLISTS for
Teachers ✓
Students ✓
School leaders ✓

Foreword by Sir Tim Brighouse

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36. What am I looking for in this observation?

- * Classroom culture: Are the students focused on learning?
- * Objectives: Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? Do the lesson activities promote that purpose?
- * Direction: Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?
- * Access and challenge: Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?
- * Assessment: How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching?
- * Specifics: Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss?

Observations are troublesome beasts: they can be a powerful tool for teacher improvement, yet there is also worrying evidence that observers' impressions of lessons can sometimes align poorly with student progress. Either way, observations remain the most commonly used form of individual professional development that teachers receive, so it pays to use them wisely.

The priorities given here are based on the assumption that the goal of the observation is to help the teacher improve their practice. Depending on how long the observer spends in each classroom, they may not see every aspect in one lesson. The priorities identified combine some of those highlighted in the leverage observation process used by Uncommon Schools* and some aspects of formative assessment. Checklist 37 sets out ways to approach feedback.

Pause point

Check/do (or, in this case, check/look) – during an observation.

* Paul Bambrick-Santoyo, *Leverage Leadership: A Practical Guide To Building Exceptional Schools* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2012).

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use.

- * Praise: Who particularly doing this?
- * Probe: Who focus on? That has
- * Explicit to changing
- * Practice: into reali
- * Reinforce further t
- * Plans: Who see her