Using Reflective Questions in Instructional Coaching

# Overview

Reflective questioning occurs when the coach asks questions that invite a teacher to engage in reflection. The ultimate goal is to help teachers frame, and then answer, their own reflective questions.

Sometimes reflective questioning happens naturally as part of the on-going conversation between the teacher and the coach. Often, however, it’s better for the coach to think in advance about some reflective questions he or she might want to use. Below are some issues that the teacher and coach might want to talk about and some illustrative questions that might prompt reflection and thereby lead to a focused and productive conversation.

# Student Engagement

1. What parts of the lesson seemed to engage students most?
2. What led you to think that those parts of the lesson were most engaging?
3. Why might those parts of the lesson have been especially engaging?
4. How can you build those same features into other lessons?

# Communicating Content

1. What were the different ways you communicated content?
2. Which ways did the students seem to prefer?
3. What ways seemed to work most effectively?
4. What approaches did you use to encourage students to process information in deep and complex ways?

# Instructional Strategy

1. What instructional strategy were you implementing?
2. Why did you choose that instructional strategy?
3. How “true to form” was your use of the instructional strategy?
4. What challenges did you experience as you were using the instructional strategy?
5. How well do you think the instructional strategy worked?
6. What evidence leads you to think the instructional strategy worked well (or not so well)?

# Formative Assessment

1. How did you check to make sure the students were grasping the concepts or skills you intended to teach with this lesson?
2. Was the approach you used effective?
3. Did the approach you used tell you what you needed to know about all the students?
4. What other formative assessment methods might help you figure out how well the students learned the concepts or skills?

# Inclusive Practice

1. What evidence showed that all students did (or did not) have an equal chance to participate in the lesson?
2. Which students participated more fully? Why?
3. Which students participated less fully? Why?
4. What changes can you make to allow all students to have an equal chance to participate in the lesson?
5. What tools can you make accessible to all students so that they all have an equal chance to participate in lessons?