



Observation Reflection Notebook for Admission to the Teacher Preparation Program at Bloomsburg University

One of the major requirements for admission to the Teacher Preparation Program (TPP) at Bloomsburg University is the completion of this notebook. By observing classrooms and recording your reflections, you will have the opportunity to demonstrate your ability to notice nuanced classroom interactions and to reflect thoughtfully on those. The quality of your responses will also reflect on your commitment to becoming an excellent teacher. All prompts and questions must be addressed for this notebook to be considered “complete”.

Before you do anything else, read the entire notebook. Familiarize yourself with the prompts and the specific expectations in each section. This will help you better plan your next steps.

In order to complete this assignment, you must observe several classroom environments by watching video recordings of classrooms, such as those provided below. If you are a dual major, we strongly encourage you to observe classes in both areas.

Students may not contact schools themselves for the purpose of scheduling visits in which they will complete assignments or work required by the College of Education.

Lastly, please consider this as more than just a requirement for admission to the TPP. This is an opportunity to explore what it means to be a teacher. Take advantage of this chance to learn from the teachers you observe and to identify challenges that you can address in the coming years.

Video Observation

There are many videos of actual classrooms available on the internet. The links below represent only a few of the available resources. All observations must use video from actual classrooms.

- “Classroom Observation Videos” search on YouTube:
https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=classroom+observation+videos
- High-Leverage Practices in Special Education: <https://highleveragepractices.org/unedited-clips-of-teachers-implementing-hlps/>
- Lehman College: <https://www.lehman.edu/academics/education/education-technology/teaching-videos.php>
- Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education:
<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/calibration/videos.html>

Student Name:

Student ID #:

SECTION 1: POLICIES/PROFESSIONALISM

It is essential to understand the professional expectations in a school. You can accomplish this by reviewing policies and procedures available on a school's website, reading a published handbook, and by speaking with school personnel directly. Once you learn how to familiarize yourself with a school's policies, you should do that in the future prior to any observation, field experience, or practicum. This activity will help you learn to this.

Respond to the following prompts:

- A. Name of school:
- B. URL of page on which policies were found OR URL of school page if a paper copy of policies was obtained:
- C. Summarize the school's (or district's) policies on integrity, ethical behavior, and professional conduct.
- D. Describe school policies for teacher dress code, attendance, and punctuality.

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SECTION 2: CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

One of the most challenging aspects of teaching is classroom management. To begin thinking about this challenge, observe at least TWO live or recorded classroom sessions, for a total of at least 60 minutes and respond to the following prompts. These observations should not be the same as those you use to address prompts in other sections.

- A. Classroom A information (include as much of the following information as is available name of school, teacher name, subject, age level, URL of video):
- B. Classroom B information (include as much of the following information as is available name of school, teacher name, subject, age level, URL of video):

Repeat Classroom information as needed, depending upon the number of observations completed.

- C. Describe the culture of the classroom. (How is it a culture for learning?)
- D. How is the classroom organized for learning and instruction (e.g. arrangement of furniture, walls, and specialized areas in the room)?
- E. How do students and teachers interact in the classroom? (for example, small groups, electronic tools.)
- F. Identify classroom procedures used in the class.
- G. How is student behavior managed?
- H. Describe something you saw in each classroom that you would consider using in your future classroom management plan, and explain why you chose the strategy/process that you did.

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SECTION 3: PLANNING AND PREPARATION

According to Danielson (2009), numerous elements must be considered when planning and preparing to teach a lesson. To begin your education around these elements, observe at least TWO live or recorded classroom sessions, for a total of at least 60 minutes and respond to the following prompts. These observations should not be the same as those you use to address prompts in other sections.

- A. Classroom A information (include as much of the following information as is available name of school, teacher name, subject, age level, URL of video):
- B. Classroom B information (include as much of the following information as is available name of school, teacher name, subject, age level, URL of video):

Repeat Classroom information as needed, depending upon the number of observations completed.

- C. Evidence of planning in terms of subject matter (content) and instruction (pedagogy) - if you are unable to see how planning went into the lesson, you may ask the teacher to see her lesson plan or ask her how she planned for the lesson.) How and what was taught?
- D. Ways in which the age and characteristics of students seem to have been considered in planning.
- E. Use of PA Academic Standards to plan lesson.
- F. Use of resources. (What, such as technology or materials, does the teacher use to teach?)
- G. Describe how your observation of planning and preparation affects your plans for your future teaching.

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SECTION 4: INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY

After teachers plan lessons, they have to deliver instruction that is likely to help students meet the identified goals. Thinking, specifically, about instructional delivery, observe at least TWO live or recorded classroom sessions, for a total of at least 60 minutes and respond to the following prompts. These observations should not be the same as those you use to address prompts in other sections.

- A. Classroom A information (include as much of the following information as is available name of school, teacher name, subject, age level, URL of video):
- B. Classroom B information (include as much of the following information as is available name of school, teacher name, subject, age level, URL of video):

Repeat Classroom information as needed, depending upon the number of observations completed.

- C. Verbal and non-verbal communication techniques.
- D. Questioning and discussion techniques.
- E. Use of technology as a teaching and learning tool.
- F. Active student engagement during instructional activities. How could you tell that the students were intellectual engaged in what they were doing?
- G. Communication to students about instructional goals, subject matter (content) and procedures.
- H. What have you learned about instructional delivery from this observational experience?

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SECTION 5: DIVERSITY

Diversity can be conceptualized in different ways depending on the context. When it comes to our classrooms, we conceptualize diversity as understanding each student brings unique experiences, strengths, and ideas to our classroom. These differences can be along dimensions of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, socio-economic status, age, ability, geographical regions of residency, religious or political beliefs, and/or varying ideologies. Diversity is the exploration and incorporation of these differences to enrich learning in our classrooms.

This section offers you the opportunity to consider how your personal experiences and observations have shaped your thinking, perhaps reinforcing previously held beliefs, or discovering and accepting new ideas. Thinking specifically about diversity, observe at least TWO live or recorded classroom sessions, for a total of at least 60 minutes and respond to the following prompts. These observations should not be the same as those you use to address prompts in other sections.

- A. Classroom A information (include as much of the following information as is available name of school, teacher name, subject, age level, URL of video):
- B. Classroom B information (include as much of the following information as is available name of school, teacher name, subject, age level, URL of video):

Repeat Classroom information as needed, depending upon the number of observations completed.

- C. What actions did the teacher take to try to ensure that each and every student felt welcome and respected?
- D. What evidence did you observe that the teacher's actions were working?
- E. In what ways did the students in the class differ (e.g. gender, race, dress, language, apparent interest in school, etc.)?
- F. What approaches did the teacher take to address these differences?
- G. In what ways did the teacher use her/his knowledge of student differences to build relationships with the students?
- H. In what ways did student differences enhance the quality of the classroom experience? In what ways did those difference undermine the quality of the classroom experience?

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SECTION 6: Communication with Families/Communities

Using a school website, as well as any resources you see if you get to visit the school, address the prompts below related to the school's or teacher's practices for communicating with families, caregivers, and the broader community. These can include electronic, face-to-face, paper, and other methods of communication with families and communities.

- A. Name of school:*
- B. URL of page on which policies were found OR URL of school page if a paper copy of policies was obtained:*
- C. What methods and tools does the school or teacher use for communicating with various stakeholders?*
- D. What information does the school or teacher communicate to stakeholders?*
- E. What additional information do you think would be useful for parents, the community, and others to have? Why?*
- F. How effective are the school's current communication practices?*

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SECTION 7: TEACHER INTERVIEW

Some of the most important information you will learn about teaching will come from other teachers. Start learning from these veteran educators by interviewing a practicing teacher yourself—either in person, by phone, or using a videoconferencing application like Zoom. Make sure to include the following questions, but you should add at least one or two of your own.

Teacher Name:

School:

Number of Years Teacher has been Teaching:

Date of Interview:

- A. How do you establish a curricular routine at the beginning of the year?
- B. How do you plan for instruction and what resources do you utilize to help you plan?
- C. Do you plan the types of questions you are going to ask students?
- D. What are some ways in which you assess student learning?
- E. How do you reflect on your instructional practices? How do you improve your instruction?
- F. How often do you contact parents and for what purpose?
- G. How do you develop learning goals for individual learners to address individual needs?
- H. What suggestions do you have, so I can better prepare to be an effective teacher?

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