



## Things That a Principal Looks for During Classroom Observations

*Be it a first grade classroom or one in which an Advanced Course is taking place, there are certain elements that all principals expect to find in their observations of teachers. These elements reflect that learning is occurring provided by an instructionally strong teacher. Principals ask themselves these questions as they observe and expect that the answers are always positive.*

1. Is the classroom atmosphere warm, caring, and nurturing with high expectations, students' work displayed, and students actively engaged in the lesson?
2. Does the teacher clearly communicate the objectives, tasks to be performed, how students will accomplish them, and does she make a connection to prior learning?
3. Are students organized in a variety of grouping structures (whole, small, cooperative, partners) to meet high, middle, and low achievers' needs?
4. Is instructional time maximized so that the class starts promptly, pacing is on target, transitions are smooth, and behavioral expectations are positively reinforced?
5. Is the teacher using appropriate assessment data to plan and adjust instruction and to monitor student progress?
6. Are lesson plans aligned with the Standards of Learning; do they maintain students' interests, and are they connected to the real world?
7. Does the teacher provide for higher level questioning, sufficient wait time for student responses, and provide positive feedback to student responses?
8. Are visuals, differentiation activities, cooperative learning strategies, graphic organizers, hands-on activities, and technology used on a regular basis?
9. Does the teacher provide sufficient modeling, guided practice, reinforcement, and application time to ensure that students understand and master skills, strategies, and concepts?
10. Does the teacher provide summary or closure at the end of the lesson to review the objective and reinforce what was taught and learned?

*Perhaps the most important item, although intangible, that principal searches to find is that the teacher has established a strong, positive student-teacher relationship built on trust, respect, and communication. Relationships with students make the difference. Build those, and you will become immortal in the eyes of your students.*

**Perry Williams**

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