

Research Lesson OBSERVATION

The main **purposes** of research lesson observation and post-lesson discussion are:

1. to study the impact of the lesson on student thinking, learning, and understanding.
2. to help improve the lesson developed by the lesson-planning team.

The effectiveness and usefulness of the **post-lesson discussion** depend on:

1. the focus questions asked by each participant after reading the lesson plan.
2. the quality of the observation data collected by each participant.

Participants may collect different observation data based on their views, interests, and prior experiences. They may also interpret the data differently though they are looking at the same students. As a result, participants can share and discuss a wide range of data during the post-lesson discussion. A rich discussion helps the planning team to improve their lesson as well as to gain a better understanding of students and student learning. It also provides other participants with an opportunity to think about critical issues for improving teaching and learning. Participants should keep in mind that the purpose of the observation is to ensure an effective and meaningful discussion and a reflective learning experience for everyone involved.

BEFORE the observation:

- Read the lesson plan carefully to understand the rationale and hypothesis of the research lesson and what the lesson planning team wants to learn.
- If there is a pre-lesson discussion, try to learn what questions the lesson planning team wants to learn.
- Identify the focus of your observation/investigation.

Suggested **data collection methods**:

- *Use (or create) a seating chart to record student thinking and learning.*
- *Transcribe teacher/student interactions to record the flow of the lesson and how the interaction helped the students to think and learn. Data collection is important so that the discussion of student thinking and learning is based on evidence. Experienced lesson study practitioners often use both of these methods simultaneously.*

Research lesson observation etiquette:

All participants share responsibility for maximizing each participant's learning opportunities during the lesson observation and post-lesson discussion. Respect the natural atmosphere of the classroom by minimizing:

- side conversations during the lesson.
- interaction with the students and the classroom teacher.
- the interruption of teacher-student and student-student interactions.