

Trainer Handout #1 (Rubric Activity)

INSTRUCTION DIMENSION 2.3 Communication

The teacher clearly and accurately communicates to support persistence, deeper learning and effective effort.

Standards Basis: 1D, 1E, 2A, 3A, 4D

Distinguished

Accomplished

Proficient

Developing

Improvement Needed

STUDENT-CENTERED ACTIONS

The Teacher

- Establishes classroom practices that encourage all students to communicate safely and effectively using a variety of tools and methods with the teacher and their peers.
- Uses possible student misunderstandings at strategic points in lessons to highlight misconceptions and inspire exploration and discovery.
- Provides explanations that are clear and coherent and uses verbal and written communication that is clear and correct.
- Asks questions at the creative, evaluative and/or analysis levels that require a deeper learning and broader understanding of the objective of the lesson.
- Skillfully balances wait time, questioning techniques and integration of student responses to support student-directed learning.
- Skillfully provokes and guides discussion to pique curiosity and inspire student-led learning of meaningful and challenging content.

The Teacher

- Establishes classroom practices that encourage all students to communicate effectively, including the use of visual tools and technology, with the teacher and their peers.
- Anticipates possible student misunderstandings and proactively develops techniques to address obstacles to learning.
- Provides explanations that are clear and coherent and uses verbal and written communication that is clear and correct.
- Asks questions at the creative, evaluative and/or analysis levels that focus on the objective of the lesson and provoke thought and discussion.
- Skillfully uses probing questions to clarify, elaborate and extend learning.
- Provides wait time when questioning students.

The Teacher

- Establishes classroom practices that provide opportunities for most students to communicate effectively with the teacher and their peers.
- Recognizes student misunderstandings and responds with an array of teaching techniques to clarify concepts.
- Provides explanations that are clear and uses verbal and written communication that is clear and correct.
- Asks remember, understand and apply level questions that focus on the objective of the lesson and provoke discussion.
- Uses probing questions to clarify and elaborate learning.

The Teacher

- Leads lessons with some opportunity for dialogue, clarification or elaboration.
- Recognizes student misunderstandings but has a limited ability to respond.
- Uses verbal and written communication that is generally clear with minor errors of grammar.
- Asks remember and understand level questions that focus on the objective of the lesson but do little to amplify discussion.

The Teacher

- Directs lessons with little opportunity for dialogue, clarification or elaboration.
- Is sometimes unaware of or unresponsive to student misunderstandings.
- Uses verbal communication that is characterized by inaccurate grammar, written communication that has inaccurate spelling, grammar, punctuation or structure.
- Rarely asks questions, or asks questions that do not amplify discussion or align to the objective of the lesson.

TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS

Possible Sources of Evidence:

- Conferences and Conversations with the Teacher
- Formal Observations/Walkthroughs
- Student Growth Processes
- Analysis of Student Data



INSTR					
Communication (Dimension 2.3)					
Dimension 2.3	DISTINGUISHED	ACCOMPLISHED	PROFICIENT	DEVELOPING	IMPROVEMENT NEEDED
<p>Communication: The teacher clearly and accurately communicates to support persistence, deeper learning and effective effort.</p> <p>Standards Basis: 1D, 1E, 2A, 3A, 4D</p> <p>Potential Sources of Evidence: Conferences and conversations with the teacher; formal observations and walkthroughs; student growth processes; analysis of student data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes classroom practices that encourage all students to communicate safely and effectively using a variety of tools and methods with the teacher and their peers. Uses possible student misunderstandings at strategic points in lessons to highlight misconceptions and inspire exploration and discovery. Provides explanations that are clear and coherent and uses verbal and written communication that is clear and correct. Asks questions at the creative, evaluative and/or analysis levels that require a deeper learning and broader understanding of the objective of the lesson. Skillfully balances wait time, questioning techniques and integration of student responses to support student-directed learning. Skillfully provokes and guides discussion to pique curiosity and inspire student-led learning of meaningful and challenging content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes classroom practices that encourage all students to communicate effectively, including the use of visual tools and technology, with the teacher and their peers. Anticipates possible student misunderstandings and proactively develops techniques to address obstacles to learning. Provides explanations that are clear and coherent and uses verbal and written communication that is clear and correct. Asks questions at the creative, evaluative and/or analysis levels that focus on the objective of the lesson and provoke thought and discussion. Skillfully uses probing questions to clarify, elaborate and extend learning. Provides wait time when questioning students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes classroom practices that provide opportunities for most students to communicate effectively with the teacher and their peers. Recognizes student misunderstandings and responds with an array of teaching techniques to clarify concepts. Provides explanations that are clear and uses verbal and written communication that is clear and correct. Asks remember, understand and apply level questions that focus on the objective of the lesson and provoke discussion. Uses probing questions to clarify and elaborate learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads lessons with some opportunity for dialogue, clarification or elaboration. Recognizes student misunderstandings but has a limited ability to respond. Uses verbal and written communication that is generally clear with minor errors of grammar. Asks remember and understand level questions that focus on the objective of the lesson but do not amplify discussion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directs lessons with little opportunity for dialogue, clarification or elaboration. Is sometimes unaware of or unresponsive to student misunderstandings. Uses verbal communication that is characterized by inaccurate grammar; written communication that has inaccurate spelling, grammar, punctuation or structure. Rarely asks questions, or asks questions that do not amplify discussion or align to the objective of the lesson.

← Student-Centered Teacher-Centered →

The purpose of this next activity is to think about how we might “unpack” or deconstruct each dimension of the T-TESS rubric. We will begin by looking at the Communication dimension (2.3) and use this as a model for an initial cursory view of the rubric. It will be necessary that we have in-depth conversations around each dimension to define what we expect to see in practice.

- 1. I want to start my highlighting with the general description which reads: The teacher clearly and accurately communicates to support persistence, deeper learning and effective effort.** This definition helps guide me in what to look for as I collect evidence. As I read it again, the words that I highlight because they stand out the most are **clearly** and **accurately communicates**, then I would underline the word ‘**support**’ and would likely box the words **persistence, deeper learning, and effort** as these are the things the teacher’s communication should support.
- 2. Next, I want to do most of my highlighting in the “Proficient” column** as this represents ‘*rock solid*’ teaching, not necessarily “Rock Star” but rock solid. As with every observation, we begin by looking at the Proficient performance level.
- 3. Then, I move to the first bullet.....It reads..... The teacher establishes classroom practices that provide opportunities for most students to communicate effectively with the teacher and their peers.** What stands out to me are the words “*establishes practices*”...and the words “*most students*” ...then “*communicate with teacher and peers*”, so I will highlight those.

Just the words “*establishes classroom practices*”seem to point to something that is common and typically in place. I want to look for evidence of students actively communicating/



interacting with the teacher AND each other throughout the lesson. Again I want to keep in mind that “communication” is more than someone talking to someone else..... I need to think about messages being ‘sent’ and received’. My eyes move to the columns to the left, I see the inclusion of things like “**visual tools**”, “**technology**” in Accomplished, and “**a variety of tools and methods**” in Distinguished. This makes me realize that a stronger lesson will provide opportunities for students to communicate with the support of technology and visual media in addition to verbal and written communication with each other AND the teacher.

In the developing and improvement needed levels, I see there’s “some opportunity for dialogue, clarification or elaboration,” then “little opportunity” with improvement needed.

To summarize my thinking, I started in the Proficient column to read the descriptor and highlight key words. Then I thought about what this might look and sound like in practice. Finally, I looked to the left, then to the right, to see how the descriptors change across performance levels.

- 4. The second descriptor reads ... *The teacher recognizes possible student misunderstandings and responds with an array of teaching techniques to clarify concepts.*** As I read this, words that stand out are “*recognizes misunderstanding*” so I highlight those... and “*responds with array of techniques to clarify.*” In practice, the teacher sees students having difficulty, and I’m capturing evidence to see what the teacher says and does to address the confusion or uncertainty and clear up misunderstandings. For example, I might also look for evidence of the teacher encouraging students to communicate with each other through exploration and inquiry to work through difficult concepts.

As we look to the left, we see that “anticipates” and “obstacles” have been added to the Accomplished level. In Distinguished, we see that the teacher uses the misunderstandings at strategic points to highlight misconceptions and inspire exploration and discovery.

When we look to the right, we see that in Developing, the teacher sees the misunderstandings but has limited ability to respond. In Improvement Needed, the teacher is unaware or unresponsive to these misunderstandings.

- 5. The next descriptor reads: *Provides explanations that are clear and uses verbal and written communication that is clear and correct.*** Here I would highlight *explanations* and *clear, along with verbal, written communication clear and correct.* In terms of explanations being clear.....I think of communication as ‘something being sent and also received’! My thoughts here are that I would focus on the students in terms of the questions they are asking that might indicate a lack of understanding, or any looks of confusion that may stem from a lack of clear explanation by the teacher. These verbal explanations might also include visual explanations as well, through modeling by the teacher. I’m seeing evidence of verbal and written communication throughout the lesson.

As we look to the left, we see that “coherent” has been added under Accomplished, and the descriptor remains the same in Distinguished. When we look to the right under Developing, we see that “communication is generally clear, with minor errors of grammar. In Improvement Needed, we see inaccurate grammar, along with inaccurate spelling, grammar, punctuation or structure.

6. **We are back in the Proficient column, the fourth descriptor reads... asks remember / understand / and apply level questions that focus on the objective of the lesson and provoke discussion** Here, I will highlight “remember/understand/apply questions”.... “Focus on objective”... “provoke discussion.” What I’m seeing and hearing is questions at these levels, they are tied to the objective and discussion is occurring.

As I glance over to the Accomplished level, questions are at the creative, evaluative and/or analysis levels, with an expectation of broader understanding of the objective, and for deeper levels of student thinking, discussion, and learning. Again, these two levels seems to be placing more emphasis on **students’** deep levels of understanding through the use of communication and questioning.

As we look to the right in Developing, questions are at the “remember and understand”, or knowledge and comprehension levels, and do little to amplify discussion. In Improvement Needed, the teacher rarely asks questions OR they don’t align to the lesson objective.

7. **The last descriptor in the Proficient column reads: uses probing questions to clarify and elaborate learning.** I would highlight the words ‘*probing questions*’ and the words *clarify* and *elaborate*. *I am seeing that probing questions are used to clarify content and processes or methods.*

In Accomplished, I see that “skillfully” has been added, along with “extend.” Wait time has also been added in Accomplished. This isn’t simply wait time, it’s how the teacher deliberately uses wait time to allow students to think and process prior to communicating.

The last two descriptors in the Distinguished column show us how the pieces are skillfully used together to facilitate student-centered learning. (Read the last two descriptors in this column.)

8. The last thing I’m going to ask you to do, is write the words “Teacher Centered” at the bottom of the Improvement Needed column. Now write the words “Student-Centered” at the bottom of the Distinguished column. Next take your pen and draw an arrow from teacher-center to student-centered. This is telling us that as we move to the left, we are seeing more student-centered, perhaps student-led learning.
9. The “Look For’s” at the bottom of the page below, allow us to see ‘at-a-glance’ what this dimension measures or looks for.

Note: Rubrics should be deconstructed in a manner that allows teachers to see the emphasis for Proficient and what this might mean, along with the differences across performance levels. See example below.

Trainer Handout #2

Examples of verbal and written communication are evident in various aspects of instruction.

There is evidence of two-way communication between the teacher and students, and peer to peer. Messages are sent and received.

		INSTRUCTION				
		DISTINGUISHED The Teacher:	ACCOMPLISHED The Teacher:	PROFICIENT The Teacher:	DEVELOPING The Teacher:	IMPROVEMENT NEEDED The Teacher:
INSTRUCTION Dimension 2.3	<p>Dimension 2.3 Communication The teacher clearly and accurately communicates to support persistence, deeper learning and effective effort.</p> <p>Standards Basis: 1D, 1E, 2A, 3A, 4D</p> <p>Sources of Evidence: Pre-Conference, Formal Observation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes classroom practices that encourage all students to communicate safely and effectively using a variety of tools and methods with the teacher and their peers. Uses possible student misunderstandings at strategic points in lessons to highlight misconceptions and inspire exploration and discovery. Provides explanations that are clear and coherent and uses verbal and written communication that is clear and correct. Asks questions at the creative, evaluative and/or analysis levels that require a deeper learning and broader understanding of the objective of the lesson. Skilfully balances wait time, questioning techniques and integration of student responses to support student-directed learning. Skilfully provokes and guides discussion to pique curiosity and inspire student-led learning of meaningful and challenging content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes classroom practices that encourage all students to communicate effectively, including the use of visual tools and technology, with the teacher and their peers. Anticipates possible student misunderstandings and proactively develops techniques to address obstacles to learning. Provides explanations that are clear and coherent and uses verbal and written communication that is clear and correct. Asks questions at the creative, evaluative and/or analysis levels that focus on the objective of the lesson and provoke thought and discussion. Skilfully uses probing questions to clarify, elaborate and extend learning. Provides wait time when questioning students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes classroom practices that provide opportunities for most students to communicate effectively with the teacher and their peers. Recognizes student misunderstandings and responds with an array of teaching techniques to clarify concepts. Provides explanations that are clear and uses verbal and written communication that is clear and correct. Asks remember, understand and apply level questions that focus on the objective of the lesson and provoke discussion. Uses probing questions to clarify and elaborate learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads lessons with some opportunity for dialogue, clarification or elaboration. Recognizes student misunderstandings but has a limited ability to respond. Uses verbal and written communication that is generally clear with minor errors of grammar. Asks remember and understand level questions that focus on the objective of the lesson but do little to amplify discussion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directs lessons with little opportunity for dialogue, clarification or elaboration. Is sometimes unaware of or unresponsive to student misunderstandings. Uses verbal communication that is characterized by inaccurate grammar; written communication that has inaccurate spelling, grammar, punctuation or structure. Rarely asks questions, or asks questions that do not amplify discussion or align to the objective of the lesson.
		<p>Questions are at these three levels, tied to the objective, and discussion is occurring.</p> <p>Teacher and students use probing questions to clarify content and process throughout the lesson.</p>	<p>the teacher sees misunderstandings based on student difficulties and is responding with different teaching techniques.</p> <p>Look for's: - Two-way communication - Anticipating misunderstandings - Verbal & written communication - Questioning, wait time - Technology & Visual Tools</p>			

