Resource 3.2

Pathways to Identifying Types of Data

Once you have an understanding of the basics of evidence collection, it is important to identify specific, critical evidence that will allow you to create more purposeful and impactful feedback. Different pathways can be utilized to accomplish this goal.

As we work with administrators to develop a deeper understanding of the types of data available during an observation, we typically have them begin with their rubric, as we described in Chapter 2. However, teams can advance to conducting observations and analyzing effectiveness through the lens of programs or instructional models in place in your region, district, or within your school. This ensures that teachers are supported within the context of the instructional models (e.g., Readers/Writers and/or Math Workshop) being deployed. Over time, and as observers demonstrate increasing capacity and depth of understanding of classroom needs, we can then begin to support a deeper dive into identifying evidence types that relate directly to teacher, school, or district goals.

Pathway 1: Use your rubric

As described in Chapter 2, all evidence collection should be aligned to the classroom and instructional expectations defined in your teacher-performance rubric, as the "Proficient" or "Effective" level descriptions point to the necessary data to be collected. Therefore, Pathway 1 should serve as the foundation of all of your evidence collection when observing instruction and when utilizing the additional pathways outlined ahead.

Let's look at how Strategy 5 (Identify Key Levers) specifically can help you determine what evidence to collect using an example from an attribute regarding assessment:

	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
Ongoing assessment of student learning	Assesses student learning with focus limited to task completion and/or compliance rather than student achievement of lesson purpose/objective.	Assesses student learning with focus on whole-class progress toward achievement of the intended instructional outcomes.	Assesses student learning with focus on eliciting evidence of learning at critical points in the lesson in order to monitor individual and group progress toward achievement of the intended instructional outcomes.	Promotes students' independent monitoring and self-assess, helping themselves or their peers to improve their learning.

Source: Common Core of Teaching (2014), Connecticut State Department of Education

Look across the levels in this indicator and notice three key levers: what the teacher is assessing, when, and from whom. Table 1 shows possible quantitative and qualitative evidence that could be collected to help an observer determine if a teacher is effectively assessing student learning during a lesson.

TABLE 1   PATHWAY 1: EXAMPLE OF EVIDENCE

Quantitative Evidence	Qualitative Evidence
• Time/time stamp during the lesson when monitoring is occurring • # of Ss questioned, checked on, visited by the T • # of Ss completing/executing assessment (e.g., only one in each group presents to the class)	• Description of assessment method/tasks throughout observation (e.g., exit slip that asked . . .) • Description of critical points (e.g., at the end of the lesson, all Ss completed . . .) • Quotes of T questions as assessments • Description of S self- or S-S assessment

Reflection Question: Looking at the attribute language, why is it critical for the observer to also have collected the stated or posted learning objective in relation to this indicator?

If we have a firm understanding of what it was the teacher wanted students to know or know how to do, when we collect additional evidence such as student work, responses, writing, questions, or answers, we can provide feedback to the teacher about assessment alignment to the task, what he or she is measuring, and how the method provided or did not provide necessary information about the students' understanding.

Pathway 2: Use a program or model

Observations can be conducted through the lens of programs or instructional models that are in place in your region, district, or within your school, as ideally, feedback should be directly aligned to the structure, expectations, research, and teaching guides of those models. This allows teachers the opportunity to immediately understand, reflect on, and implement changes in targeted instructional strategies within the model.

Many schools are using programs or models that teachers follow for unit and daily instruction. A model like Reader's or Writer's Workshop provides teachers with a somewhat formulaic approach with structured tasks and suggested times or durations. Leaders can determine what evidence needs to be collected to support the teacher in understanding and implementing instructional practices aligned with the program/model. For example, consider the architecture of a 10-minute Workshop minilesson in regard to a "teaching point." The teacher should be activating prior learning, "Yesterday, we . . ." and then clearly articulating the day's learning as a bite-sized new strategy or skill, "Today, we will . . ." in the context of what "good writers/readers do . . .." Ideally, you will also hear the teaching point reiterated at the end of the minilesson. If you know the essentials of a design like Workshop, you can then collect evidence of the effectiveness of the minilesson, of student understanding, of the new strategy, and their success with using new strategies once they begin working on their own. Review Table 2 for potential evidence you could collect from a minilesson into independent work.

TABLE 2   PATHWAY 2: EXAMPLE OF EVIDENCE

Quantitative Evidence	Qualitative Evidence
• Length in minutes of a minilesson • # of Ss who participated in turn-and-talk • Length in minutes of the transition to independent work • # of T-S conferences and how long those lasted • # pulled in small group and length of instruction • # of Ss utilizing the day's new strategy successfully/# of students, pairs, or groups working successfully • # of Ss using the anchor chart for support • # who can share with the observer how the day's strategy helps them as a writer or reader	• Quotes T said to introduce new learning • Quotes Ss were saying to each other during the turn-and-talk • What Ss were doing during the transition • What feedback the T provided during conferences • Quotes T said was the task/learning for the group, what they would be doing or typing • Quotes Ss are doing, writing, saying, asking, responding to T and to observer • Description of how group was working • How Ss are using quotes and quotes of explanation to the observer • Quotes from the Ss

Pathway 3: Use core skills and goals

A third pathway that can be utilized involves the examination of instructional skills and student behaviors and outcomes as they relate to teacher, school, or district goals. For example, perhaps your high school is working on increasing engagement by ensuring students see relevance and connections. Before observing instruction, you can locate one or two indicators or attributes on your framework that directly relate to these goals and identify aligned evidence. For example, in this case, we might look deeply at the indicators identified in the example indicators on instructional purpose and flexible grouping to support our goals. You can use these as the foundation for your evidence collection.

	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
Instructional purpose	Does not clearly communicate learning expectations to students.	Communicates learning expectations to students and sets a general purpose for instruction, which may require further clarification.	Clearly communicates learning expectations to students and sets a specific purpose for instruction and helps students to see how the learning is aligned with Common Core State Standards and/or other appropriate Connecticut content standards.	Students are encouraged to explain how the learning is situated within the broader learning context/curriculum.
Instructional resources and flexible groupings	Uses resources and/or groupings that do not cognitively engage students or support new learning.	Uses resources and/or groupings that minimally engage students cognitively and support new learning.	Uses resources and flexible groupings that cognitively engage students in demonstrating new learning in multiple ways, including application of new learning to make interdisciplinary, real world, career, or global connections.	Promotes student ownership, self-direction and choice of resources and/or flexible groupings to develop their learning.

Source: Common Core of Teaching (2014), Connecticut State Department of Education

Let's look at some examples in Table 3 of what can be collected based on these indicators.

TABLE 3 PATHWAY 3: EXAMPLE OF EVIDENCE

Quantitative Evidence	Qualitative Evidence
• # of students who can explain how the learning is relevant/what the context is • Time/time stamp when T established/reestablished learning expectations • # of groups, # of Ss in groups • # using resources	• Quotes from T when stating or explaining learning expectations • Description of how the teacher shared • Quotes from Ss restating/explaining for T or to each other • Description of the task connection to global or real-world applications • Quotes from Ss answering observer questions about relevance or applications • Description of how Ss are grouped • Description of how Ss are using the resources

Regardless of the pathway you choose, your evidence collection should result in the following:

- Focus on the teaching *and* learning

- Coherence across district and personal goals and previous coaching

- Connections to your district framework

- A big picture understanding of the lesson

"Simply walking through classrooms without a unifying theory of action that both focuses the walkthrough and promotes critical assessment of collected information is unlikely to inform efforts to raise student achievement" (Moss & Brookhart, 2015, p. 15).

References

Common Core of teaching (CCT) rubric for effective teaching [online pdf]. Retrieved from http://www.connecticutseed.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/CCT_Rubric_for_Effective_Teaching-May_2014.pdf

Moss, C., & Brookhart, S. (2015). *Formative classroom walkthroughs: How principals and teachers collaborate to raise student achievement.* Alexandria, VA: ASCD.