

Resource F

Language for Coaching

TOOL: LANGUAGE THAT CREATES A SENSE OF BELONGING AMONG STUDENTS

- When you envision your classroom community, what do you hope it will feel like for each of your students?
- What specific steps will you take to engage students who haven't felt a sense of belonging in school?
- If school is held virtually or on a hybrid schedule, how will you build community so that all students feel connected?
- How will each student's voice be invited, honored, and valued by you and fellow students?
- What norms will be created and monitored to ensure that the students' voices are heard and honored?
- What routines will you create to allow all students to participate in the classroom community?
- As the coach, how can I support you in creating this community with your students?

TOOL: LANGUAGE FOR DETERMINING PRIORITY STANDARDS

- Let's look at the standards and decide which one is most relevant for your learners right now.
- Do we have any student evidence that could provide insights into what the students need?
- If we were to map the year, would this standard be revisited or only taught once?
- Is this standard used in more than one curricular area?
- Is this prerequisite learning for a future concept?
- Is this learning for all your students or a smaller group within your class?
- If you had to choose what matters most, what would it be?
- By the end of the year, what do you feel is most important for your students to know and do?

TOOL: LANGUAGE FOR GAINING CLARITY

- What is the intended learning for this unit or lesson? What standard(s) does it address?
- What will it look like if students are successful in this learning?
- How can students demonstrate their understanding, either digitally or in person?
- Is there anecdotal evidence we can collect?
- What is the purpose of the work students are creating? How will it be used?
- If students are receiving feedback, will it be descriptive or evaluative (such as a letter grade)?

TOOL: LANGUAGE FOR STAYING ASSET-BASED WHEN LOOKING AT STUDENT EVIDENCE

IF I HEAR OR NOTICE ...	THEN I CAN SAY OR DO ...
A teacher says, "I don't know what kind of math these kids learned in their home country, but they sure don't get the way we do it here."	You can respond, "It's so fascinating that sometimes different approaches and strategies are taught in different countries. I wonder if we could ask them to show their approach in a Flipgrid to the rest of the class. That would give us insight into what they already know, and it might give the other kids some new ways of approaching the problem. It would also give these newcomers a great way to shine."
When looking at student work, a teacher complains that a student doesn't know "anything" about the concept that's being taught.	You can remind the teacher that all kids come to school with a variety of schema and that part of our job is to uncover what they already know and to build on their strengths.
A teacher says, "I just get depressed looking at my students' work because it's a reminder of how far behind they are and how much ground I have to try to make up with them."	You might say, "Even though many students in your class are below grade level, it will be helpful to figure out what each one is bringing to the learning. That way, we can address the specific things they each need, which will help accelerate their learning."

TOOL: LANGUAGE FOR KEEPING PLANNING CONVERSATIONS FOCUSED ON LEARNING

IF I HEAR OR NOTICE ...	THEN I CAN SAY OR DO ...
When engaged in planning conversations, teachers immediately share activities that they found online.	Begin by thanking the teachers for researching and sharing their lesson ideas. Then nudge the conversation by saying, "What if we create a list of the learning targets? Then we can come up with some fun ideas for lessons. This way we'll be sure we are aligned with the standard."
Teachers aren't on the same page with their units. This is creating variations in the level of rigor that students are experiencing from classroom to classroom.	Meet with the principal to determine how to pull teachers together to do some unit planning. It would be up to the principal to frame why this is important and what the expectations are for teachers.
Sometimes it's hard to keep up in coaching conversations, and it feels embarrassing to ask someone to repeat themselves. This is especially hard when meetings are online.	Use a protocol for lesson and unit planning. This will provide a structure for the planning conversations. This can be as simple as a series of questions to guide you through the process.

TOOL: LANGUAGE FOR CO-PLANNING

- What needs to be in place so that every student can be successful in this lesson?
- Do we anticipate any misconceptions among students? If so, how will they be addressed?
- In what aspects of the lesson should scaffolds be added?

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- In what aspects of the lesson should scaffolds be removed?
- How will we support language development?
- How will students demonstrate understanding?
- What student evidence can we use for the next planning session?

TOOL: LANGUAGE FOR CO-ASSESSING

Noticing and Naming	“Which learning target would you like me to focus on when I’m collecting student evidence?”
	“What points in the lesson will allow us to collect the most evidence?”
	“Is there any specific language you’d like me to listen for?”
	“Have we planned enough opportunities for the students to demonstrate what they know using the available technology?”
You Pick Four	“Are there any specific students you’d like me to focus on when I’m Noticing and Naming?”
	“Can you tell me more about these students?”
	“Would you like me to listen in during whole-group, small-group, or one-on-one instruction?”
	“Let’s be sure we come together to co-plan after I collect this evidence.”
Co-conferring	“There’s so much we can learn by doing conferences together. How about if I join you in some, so that we can really get a good sense of where your students are in their learning?”
	“What learning target would you like to focus on?”
	“How can we structure the conversation so that it’s both efficient and informative?”
	“How would you like to take notes during the conferences?”

TOOL: LANGUAGE FOR CO-DELIVERING LESSONS

Thinking Aloud	“I noticed _____. What I’m thinking is _____.”
	“I think we might want to _____.”
	“I’m wondering about _____.”
	“When I see _____, it makes me think _____.”
Teaching in Tandem	“What would you like to teach together?”
	“What parts of the lesson should each of us deliver?”
	When teaching online: “How can we use technology during the lesson?”
	“What if we _____?”
Micro Modeling	“I’m happy to micro model that part of the lesson. What pieces would you like to teach?”
	“I value what you bring to the lesson. Let’s start there.”
	When teaching online: “Can you tell me a little more about the videos we need to create for this unit?”
	When teaching online: “Are there tech tricks you need modeled? Like using breakout rooms or other features?”

TOOL: LANGUAGE FOR COACHING INTO SELF-ASSESSMENT

- Let's be sure we are crystal clear on what we want students to know and do and that we state everything in a way that students can understand on their own.
- How will we share the learning intention and success criteria with students?
- What kinds of supports need to be in place for students who aren't there yet on a target?
- What would we hope to see from students who have met each of the targets? Do we want to create exemplars for this?

TOOL: LANGUAGE FOR COACHING INTO DEEP LEARNING

IF I HEAR ...	THEN I CAN SAY OR DO ...
"I found this fun activity on Teachers Pay Teachers. I think the kids are really going to love it!"	"This definitely looks like a lot of fun, and our students need that right now with being stuck at home. Let's look at this checklist to see if the activity has the qualities we would want to see, so that we can be sure it's asking them to do some deep thinking and problem solving."
"I'm really struggling to keep up with this hybrid learning format, so I'll add some easy lessons to the LMS to keep the virtual learning students busy while I'm teaching the students who are face-to-face."	"Wow, concurrent instruction is really demanding a lot, and I appreciate all the hard work you're putting in. Maybe if the two of us can partner and work together on this, I can help you structure some meaningful learning for the asynchronous portion. That will help keep kids challenged and engaged, and they will come to the in-school lessons with you even better prepared."
"I know it's important to get kids to 'struggle,' but I worry about my students who will be doing this work on their own at home. They have such low skills, and I just don't know if they can handle it."	"I know how much you care about your students, and I agree that we need to give them work that they are capable of doing on their own without getting too overwhelmed and throwing in the towel. How about we look at some of these problem-solving tasks that are open-ended and have multiple entry points? That would allow all kids to access the material but still be challenged at their own level."

TOOL: LANGUAGE FOR DEFINING COACHING RIGHT NOW

IF WE HEAR OR NOTICE ...	THEN THE PRINCIPAL CAN SAY OR DO ...
The coach is teaching two sections of ELA to keep class sizes low. This has led many teachers to believe that the coach is no longer coaching. They are asking her to do all sorts of things, from covering classes to distributing hand sanitizer to classrooms.	The principal can explain to the staff that the coach is taking on these teaching duties temporarily, and the expectation is that the rest of the coach's time will be spent coaching.
Teachers are reaching out to the coach for a lot of tech help, but no one seems interested in moving into deeper work.	The principal may say, "Our coach has been spending a lot of time helping you get comfortable with the LMS, which has been a great asset. Don't forget that he's also available for mini and full coaching cycles. Many of you seem ready to jump into that, so be sure to let him know if you're interested."

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Teachers are working hard to figure out how to deliver high-quality instruction online, but many are finding it to be a challenge. Because they feel so vulnerable and stressed, few have thought to reach out to the coach for help.	The principal may say, "I know it's hard to imagine how our coach could partner with you in a virtual lesson, but she was just sharing some of her experiences with me yesterday, and it sounds really powerful. Definitely reach out to her if you want to learn more."

TOOL: LANGUAGE FOR PARTNERING WITH A TEACHER

- Would you like to co-plan a lesson or unit or engage in a mini coaching cycle?
- What learning will we focus on?
- Is this being taught synchronously or asynchronously?
- Is there anything you want me to know about your students, circumstances, and so on?
- Is there anyone else you'd like to include in the work (special ed, ELL, district coach, tech coach)?

TOOL: LANGUAGE FOR PARTNERING WITH ANOTHER COACH

- As a district coach, how can I collaborate with the coaching that's happening in your school?
- I would like to coordinate with you and the principal to make sure we're all on the same page. When would be a good time to join one of your meetings?
- How can we support each other's coaching work?
- What is your plan for messaging coaching? Is there a way to include both of us in this?
- When does it make sense to partner in a cycle?
- What is our plan for communication?

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