

Planning For Small Group Instruction, Observation & Documentation

According to of Component 3b of the the Danielson Framework For Teaching, Proficient and Distinguished teachers:
-use discussion techniques enable students to engage each other in authentic and rich text-based investigations or complex dialogue of the content under study.

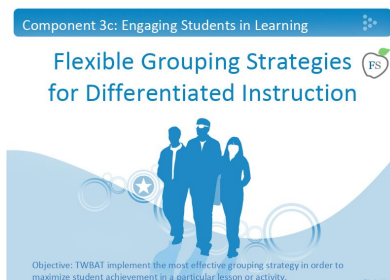
-provide structures for students to initiate questions and respond to one another with evidence of their thinking, using viable arguments based on evidence.

-employ various techniques of grouping students...designed to lead to student mastery of the content.

So how can we plan groups that allow us to observe and document students' learning while engaging them in high-quality discussions ? Follow these steps to get started!

Creating Small Groups

Use [this](#) excellent resource to understand how to create and use small groups:



Documenting student learning

Watch [this](#) video for ways to record and show what your students know to families, admin and students themselves:



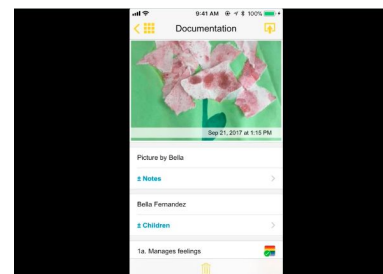
Observation

Watch [this](#) video to understand the importance of and techniques for planning observation of young children:



Entering documentation into My Teaching Strategies

For a video tutorial on using the My Teaching Strategies App go [here](#):



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Discussions

To get a better understanding of how a child is thinking, use open-ended questions. Help extend experience and promote meaningful conversations with children by using them throughout the day and in all areas of the classroom. While teachers should make an effort to engage children in feedback loops, it's also important to take cues from the children themselves. Consider this: "While using open ended questions it is important to really listen to (or watch) the child's response to the questions and see where the conversation might go. Is the child interested in the conversation and ready for more questions or challenges? Or is the child more interested in engaging in play without interruptions?"

-Adapted from *One Page Resources: Open Ended Questions, New Mexico Pre K*

Objective: Teachers will be prepared to integrate open-ended question techniques into daily practice.



Teachers are being encouraged to offer students more chances to engage in conversation exchanges to develop communication skills. How can you insure that your environment supports these conversations? Start simply...

Set up your schedule

Create opportunities for conversation give and take, being mindful of appropriate timing for such conversation. In some classrooms, Choice, Work or Small Group times may be better for feedback loops than whole group times where children may lose focus.

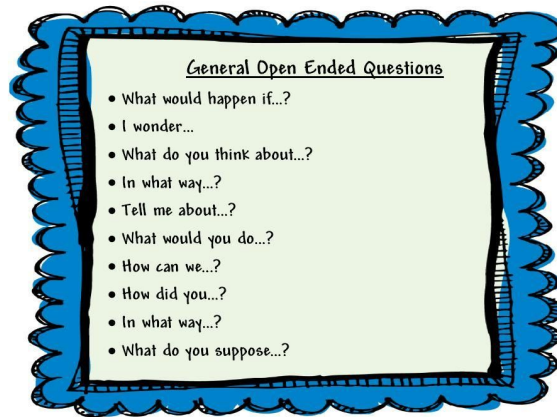
Set up your environment

Create a space where children know you're accessible for conversation. Sitting on a low stool near active areas like Blocks or Dramatic Play invites sharing of ideas during play. You can also set up an area specifically intended for "chats" between teachers and students.



Set up your questions

Create a bank of thought/conversation provoking questions and hang them on a wall where you can easily see them. You can also hang area specific questions in your classroom centers.



Use the links below for sample questions to get you started!

How To Use Open-Ended Questions With Children

<http://storiesandchildren.com/open-ended-questions/>

Open-Ended Questions: Stretching Children's Academic and Social Learning

<https://www.responsiveclassroom.org/article/open-ended-questions>

Why Ask Open-Ended Questions?

<http://journeyintoearlychildhood.weebly.com/1/post/2013/08/open-ended-questions.html>

Teacher Tips: Asking Open-Ended Questions

<http://www.teachstone.com/blog/2013/12/06/teacher-tips-open-ended-questions/>

Developing Listening and Speaking Skills

http://www2.ed.gov/teachers/how/early/teachingouryoungest/page_pg6.html

Small Group Assessment

Activity:

Content Area:

Date:

Name:	Name:	Name:
Name:	Name:	Name:
Name:	Name:	Name:
Name:	Name:	Name:
Name:	Name:	Name:
Name:	Name:	Name:

Notation Key:

M-showing mastery

N-showing a need

R-revisit

(TSG)-add to checkpoints

*-see notes

PIC-related photo

Formative Assessment Observation

Activity/Content Goal	Date	Student /Score	Setting	Notes

<p>1 = still working on standard Child is still working on this skill, rarely or never displays this disposition, can't or doesn't discuss it</p>	<p>2 = meeting standard Child is on target with this skill sometimes shows this disposition, can express thoughts or feelings about it</p>	<p>3 = exceeding standard Child has surpassed what is expected for this skill often or always shows this disposition, can articulate specific thoughts or feelings about it</p>
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<p>Discussion questions to ask in each setting: What's happening? What were you trying to do when...? What's going to happen now that you...? How did you decide to...? Who made the plan for...? How will you get...done together?</p>	<p>Whose job is it to...? What can you do to make...better? What will you do now? What will you do next time to make...better? How do you know...will make it better? How can you tell...?</p>	<p>What's next?</p>
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