

Directions for a Literacy Walk

LITERACY WALK/OBSERVATIONS

Each team visits four classrooms for about 20 minutes, focusing mainly on these questions:

- What are the students being asked to do?
- What are the teachers saying and doing?
- What are the students saying and doing?

PART I: ON YOUR OWN (ABOUT 15 MINUTES)

- Read through your notes.
- Highlight pieces of evidence that seem relevant to the school focus, or team goal.
- Select 8–10 pieces of evidence. Write down only ONE piece of evidence per sticky note.

PART II: WITH YOUR SMALL GROUP (ABOUT 30 MINUTES)

- Share evidence of each classroom you visited (taking turns). Everyone speaks once before someone speaks twice. Help each other stay in the descriptive voice. What did you see/hear? What makes you think that?
- On chart paper, group the evidence in ways that make sense to each person in the group. Single pieces of evidence can also be a “group.” If a piece of evidence belongs in more than one group, copy it onto multiple sticky notes. In essence, the small groups are making categories, but the whole team needs to make the decisions together.
- Label your groupings.
- Identify patterns/trends.
- Identify other relevant or important evidence.
- Write one or two statements on the chart paper about what was noticed during the walk, in relation to the problem of practice, and how implementation is furthering student learning. The group also writes a statement about the extent to which students were engaged in reading, writing, speaking, listening, thinking, and discussing their thinking.

PART III: DEBRIEF AS A WHOLE GROUP (ABOUT 30-40 MINUTES)

- Merge teams into one large group. Have a representative from each team share statements.
- Ask the whole group to work together to write a summary statement. Write a summary statement on the chart paper about what literacy practices are implemented, to what degree things are implemented, and how implementation is furthering student learning (this should relate to the school’s problem of practice). Then, organize the statements into one summary statement.
- Ask the group to also make a statement about how students were engaged in reading, writing, and discussing their thinking.
- Set a new goal for the group based on the statement(s).
- Ask, *What is the next step to implement relating to the new goal? What professional development is needed for group learning regarding the new goal?* Record suggestions on chart paper.

(Adapted from Bernhardt, 2017; City, Elmore, Fiarman & Teitel, 2009)