

Protocol for Debriefing Classroom Demonstrations

After a classroom demonstration, collect all student work resulting from the activity.

1. The facilitator asks the participants to comment on what they noticed about the practice. This takes the form of a descriptive review. Observations should be substantive and presented without judgment. Observations often include what was not present as well as what was. The facilitator calls on everyone to comment, going around the circle to be sure that all voices are heard, but anyone may pass at any time. During this time, the presenting teacher is silent and takes notes on what he or she hears.
2. Distribute the student work to the teachers in a manner that it can be shared. Use the Aspects of Student Work sheet as a resource. If this is the first time you have done this, review it briefly.
3. Take 10 minutes for teachers to examine the work in silence and take notes.
4. Ask teachers what they noticed about the work. This should take the form of a descriptive review. It is helpful to remind teachers at the outset not to pass judgement. The facilitator calls on everyone to comment, going around the circle to be sure that all voices are heard. Again, observations should be substantive and may include what is not there. Anyone may pass at any time. If judgement appears, ask the teacher to refer back to something in the work and help the teacher to rephrase. During this time, the presenting teacher is silent and takes notes on what he or she hears.
5. Ask teachers to pose questions about what they wonder about the work. These should be deeper speculative questions.
6. Ask what common strengths teachers noticed in the set of work as a whole. As before, the facilitator calls on everyone to comment, going around the circle to be sure that all voices are heard. Anyone may pass at any time. If judgement appears, ask the teacher to refer back to something in the work and help the teacher to rephrase. observations about strengths should be supported with examples from the student work.
7. Ask what common weaknesses they noticed in the work as a whole. As before, the facilitator calls on everyone to comment, going around the circle to be sure that all voices are heard. Anyone may pass at any time. If judgement appears, ask the teacher to refer back to something in the work and help the teacher to rephrase. observations about strengths should be supported with examples from the student work.
8. Ask what the student work and the protocol suggest about where we should go next with instruction. Use the results of this conference to think about where the classroom teacher might go next with this activity. All participants, including the classroom teacher and the presenter should be involved this discussion.