

Planning a Classroom Demonstration

First, know your practice, your theory and your purpose. What learning outcomes is your practice designed to achieve? Why did you select this practice? Be sure to focus on the practice and not your personal teaching style. How does the practice most effectively demonstrate the ideas or principles you would like the teachers to understand?

Either through the on site TC or directly with the classroom teacher, the consultant should find out what the classroom teacher has been doing in the class relative to the area of the demonstration.

Adapt your demonstration as much as possible to fit with the classroom teacher's curriculum. The consultant should be aware of what will be a challenge for the students and work to eliminate unnecessary procedural challenges. Some questions you might want to consider: How do the students normally write during the day? What experience do they have with the content being presented during the demonstration? What tools does the classroom teacher normally use? Do they have writer's notebooks for example, where they record responses or quick writes? How are these usually set up? The idea is to blend as much as you can with the normal procedures of the classroom so that the teachers and the students are less likely to see the demonstration as some kind of special presentation and more likely to see it as part of what they do in school.

Review your plan with her and ask for feedback on what she might see as possible problem areas. Take note of these, and consider if they are procedural issues that can be addressed. adjust your lesson as you see fit. Remember, however, that It might not always be appropriate to adjust to accommodate lowered expectations, for example. If your variation in routine is likely to open the teacher up to new possibilities, you don't want to preclude that possibility. One of the great advantages of the consultant coming in to teach the class is the potential for the classroom teacher to see what her students are capable of doing.

Run your final plan by the classroom teacher and address any resource or classroom set up needs.

Remember that although you may be very comfortable teaching students at this age, you are not a familiar teacher for them. Consider if your materials or process would work as well with a group of students who do not know you.

Not sure if these ideas would belong in a different document but they were worth noting:

The coordinator should consider past demonstrations up to this point and how this demonstration will fit in with the overall message. Consider the perspective of teachers attending demonstrations for the entire professional development.

Are there ways to include past practices without confusing the purpose? For example a previous consultant used two column notes with a 3rd grade class. Is this a possibility during the 5th lesson you will be demonstrating? The students will be different but the teachers observing the lesson are working to connect the demonstrations to their own classrooms. We want to expose them to many practices but at the same time show how the demonstrations are highly adaptable and work within each other.