

Teaching and Learning Essential Practices

Explicit Skill and Strategy Instruction

Teachers choose intentional methods to make “invisible” thinking skills and processes visible and accessible to all learners.



Discussion-based Classroom

Teachers prioritize opportunities for learners to use talk to stimulate and expand their knowledge and thinking in community with frequent use of discussion, reasoning, relating, and questioning to advance understanding and promote critical thinking and reflection.

Student-led Inquiry and Problem Solving

Teachers facilitate opportunities for learners to pose and pursue their own questions, and solve problems through inquiry and action.

Differentiation and Student-centered Supports

Teachers plan for and provide just-right, culturally responsive structures and supports to meet learners where they are, while helping learners build metacognitive awareness.

Coaching: Conferencing and Feedback

Teachers provide timely, specific, affirming, and actionable feedback as learners engage in authentic tasks throughout the learning cycle and process.

Classroom Look-Fors

Explicit Skill and Strategy Instruction

Teacher uses **metacognitive modeling, demonstration, explanation,** and/or **think-alouds.**

Learners have ample opportunity to **practice** and **apply** specific skills and strategies ("I do, we do, you do").

Discussion-based Classroom

Teacher leverages **grouping, space, time** to promote learning talk.

Teacher prompts learners to **verbalize thinking processes.**

Teacher prioritizes **student talk** (wait time, teacher:student talk ratio).

Learners use talk for **imagining, expressing, deliberating, interrogating, explaining, reasoning, relating, questioning,** and **evaluating.**

Learners engage in discussion to advance **understanding** and promote **critical thinking** and **reflection.**

Differentiation and Student-centered Supports

Teacher uses **scaffolding, flexible grouping,** and **responsive supports.**

Teacher **implements** learning support plans and **accommodations.**

Teacher **includes and activates** learners' prior knowledge, culture, and interests.

Learners access supplementary or multimodal **content** resources.

Learners have choices or options for **processes** and **demonstrations** of learning.

Student-led Inquiry and Problem Solving

Teacher **centers** and **pursues** learners' emergent wonderings, theories, and avenues of interest.

Teacher "**problemetizes**" learning scenarios so learners can generate and act on ideas for inquiry and problem-solving.

Learners are **posing and pursuing** authentic questions.

Learners make decisions and **choices** about learning processes and materials.

Learners **practice** apply new skills and concepts.

Coaching: Conferencing and Feedback

Teacher gives **concrete feedback** related to learning process and established goals.

Teacher uses **feed up, feedback, feed forward.**

Teacher models specific skills or strategies in the **context of feedback.**

Learners **participate** in feedback by **asking** questions, **focusing** feedback areas, and **sharing** about **process** and **product.**

Learners demonstrate that they know what the **next steps** for learning are.