

2a Cultivating Respectful & Affirming Environments

Co-creating an environment with students built on respect is a critical element of a teacher's skill in promoting social and emotional wellbeing and students' academic success. In any context, students need to experience safe, supportive, and challenging learning environments where each of them is valued, feels like a full member of the community, and is supported to take academic and intellectual risks. An environment of respect and rapport is essential for learning and development to occur.

Positive relationships between teachers and students and among students provide a foundation for collaborative learning. The nature of learning in today's classrooms is inherently social. When intentional relationships form the foundation of a respectful environment that honors the dignity of each student, students feel a sense of belonging in the classroom community. Teaching depends, fundamentally, on the quality of relationships among individuals, which are built through and reflected in classroom activities and practices. For instance, the way in which teachers engage students in a discussion or an activity speaks volumes about the extent to which they value their students as individuals.

Classroom environments that support learning for each student are co-created with them and characterized by cultural responsiveness and responsibility; they reflect, honor, and sustain shared values and individual identities. Even in the most respectful classrooms, as in all human endeavors, conflict is likely to arise, and positive conflict resolution is a key aspect of maintaining an environment of respect and rapport, as well as repairing harm and restoring justice when necessary. Co-establishing these community agreements or classroom norms for interaction and conflict resolution is as important as establishing standards of conduct or routines for activities such as sharpening pencils—aspects of creating a learning community that experienced teachers focus much attention on at the outset of a school year.

2a Cultivating Respectful & Affirming Environments

CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
	Students do not feel safe and valued; learning environments are characterized by negativity, disrespect, inappropriateness, insensitivity, and/or unresolved conflict.	Learning environments are partially characterized by caring and respectful interactions.	Learning environments are characterized by positive developmental relationships that are intentionally nurtured and celebrated.	Students play an active role in creating learning environments characterized by a sense of community, where each member feels safe, valued, and connected.
	Positive Relationships			
	Classroom interactions, both between the teacher and students and among students, are frequently negative, uncaring, inappropriate, or insensitive to students' identities and developmental levels.	Classroom interactions, both between the teacher and students and among students, are inconsistently caring and respectful, but form a foundation for positive relationships to develop.	Classroom interactions, both between the teacher and students and among students, demonstrate caring and respect that honors students' identities, race, and cultural background.	Patterns of interacting in the classroom are culturally responsive; the teacher's own cultural competence and critical consciousness foster positive relationships and students take an active role in developing and sustaining positive relationships.
	Sense of Belonging			
	Some students' verbal or nonverbal communication indicates that they feel isolated, insecure, or not part of the classroom community.	Verbal and nonverbal communication indicates that many students feel part of a classroom community that welcomes and honors their individual identity.	Verbal and nonverbal participation indicates most students participate in a class community that reflects their collective identity while honoring individual variations.	Student participation indicates they are co-creating a community that reflects their unique collective identity and interests as a class while honoring individual identity.
	Cultural Responsiveness			
	Learning environments do not reflect the individual racial and cultural identities of students.	Learning environments reflect and honor some elements of students' individual and shared racial and cultural identities.	Learning environments reflect elements of students' racial and cultural identities while recognizing, addressing, and honoring differences between students' and teachers' unique identities.	Students have helped create a unique identity for their class that includes all, celebrates each individual's racial and cultural identity, honors diversity, and acknowledges and addresses racial and cultural dynamics at play in the environment.
	Positive Conflict Resolution			
	Conflict and disrespectful interactions occur in the classroom and are neither addressed nor resolved.	Conflict and disrespectful interactions are addressed by the teacher, with uneven results.	The teacher and students effectively use a clear and culturally competent approach to conflict resolution to resolve conflicts and restore trust.	Students in the class are responsible for resolving conflict and actively follow established processes or norms for resolving conflict and restoring trust.

2b Fostering a Culture for Learning

“A culture for learning” refers to an atmosphere in the learning environment that reflects the importance of the work undertaken by both students and teachers. It describes the norms that govern the interactions among individuals about the activities and assignments, the value of hard work and perseverance, and the general tone of the class. Ideally, this culture supports meaningful engagement and dialogue, joyful inquiry, rigorous learning, and reflection. Purpose and motivation are evident and shared by teachers and students in a classroom with rigorous and joyful learning at its center. There is a clear sense of dedication to learning; both content mastery and personal growth are valued. As part of a culture for learning, emphasis is placed on dispositions (e.g., compassion, curiosity, critical thinking, reasoning, and reflection) that support student success and their social, emotional, and academic development. These dispositions are modeled, encouraged, and explicitly taught and reinforced.

Learning in successful classrooms is not just dictated or directed by the teacher but is characterized by student agency and autonomy; students have choices and assume responsibility for their own learning. A strong culture for learning rests on high expectations accompanied by support. When a strong culture for learning has been established, other aspects of teaching become easier and more rewarding. Students view the classroom as a space for connecting and engaging; they assume responsibility for their learning, they persevere through challenges, and they have confidence in their abilities. Students come to recognize important academic learning, and the intellectual challenges that accompany it, as rewarding. When they master complex material, they enjoy the satisfaction that comes only from demonstrating competence in important and demanding work. Without the components of a culture for learning in place, high-level learning is unlikely to occur.

2b Fostering a Culture for Learning

CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
	The culture of the class is not conducive to learning and does not support development.	The culture of the class is somewhat conducive to learning and development.	The culture of the class is characterized by high expectations and supports students' learning and development.	Students play an active role in establishing a culture that consistently fosters dialogue, reflection, and growth, allowing all students to experience success.
	Purpose and Motivation			
	There is little or no sense of purpose for the work or the reasons for doing it are external demands.	The teacher communicates the importance of content, the ultimate purpose of learning, and the value of personal growth with some success.	The teacher and students demonstrate a belief in the importance of learning and personal growth that motivates them to succeed and flourish.	The teacher and students display dedication to learning the content and a sense of purpose for their learning; both content mastery and personal growth are valued by the teacher and students.
	Dispositions for Learning			
	The teacher ignores or discourages student curiosity and does not ask students to think critically or to reason and reflect.	The teacher occasionally encourages student curiosity, critical thinking, reasoning, and reflection.	The teacher encourages and intentionally develops student curiosity, critical thinking, reasoning, and reflection.	Student curiosity, critical thinking, reasoning, and reflection are clearly evident in the classroom and have a direct effect on instruction, student learning, and development.
	Student Agency and Pride in Work			
	Students have little or no agency in learning experiences or classroom life.	Students are given some opportunities to exercise agency, though they may not be taken up or may be infrequent.	Students have multiple opportunities to exercise agency, and autonomy is intentionally developed and celebrated.	Students clearly exercise autonomy in their learning and actively suggest ways to make the classroom more joyful, rigorous, and purposeful.
	Support and Perseverance			
	The teacher conveys that the work is too challenging for all or some of the students or that they lack the perseverance to succeed; students are allowed or expected to quit.	The teacher encourages confidence, resilience, persistence, and teamwork, promoting a conviction that with hard work and perseverance all students can master the content.	The teacher intentionally develops and celebrates confidence, resilience, persistence, and teamwork that support student perseverance.	Students encourage one another to persevere and use strategies to support each other through challenging work.

2c Maintaining Purposeful Environments

Teaching is a complex activity, and learning spaces are complex ecosystems that can be supported through the design of routines and procedures to support a purposeful environment. Though effective routines and procedures can (and should) take on a variety of forms, establishing and maintaining them is essential to the success of a classroom community. Because teachers' goals for students include intellectual engagement, collaboration, and autonomy—and because there are often 30 students with them at a time – thoughtful routines and procedures can help all members of the classroom community act with purpose.

Routines and procedures are not established for the sake of control; rather, they intentionally support other aspects of learning and development. For instance, routines for purposeful collaboration are modeled, taught, and reinforced so that students work cooperatively within the classroom community to support one another's success. Other routines support student autonomy and responsibility and the development of skills, habits, and mindsets that promote student success. Routines and procedures can also establish equitable access to resources and supports. Finally, though sometimes less obviously, non-instructional tasks must also be handled efficiently to focus time and energy on learning.

As with other components of instruction, it is important to remember that routines and procedures are not established in a vacuum but must reflect the students and their needs. Teachers committed to valuing and affirming students are especially thoughtful about the routines and procedures and the ways in which they are chosen, established, and maintained. They look to their students, families, the school, and community to learn more about how shared norms and values can be reflected in the classroom's routines. Routines and procedures that are “effective” because they are efficient or suggest choice where none exists, may not always honor the dignity of students and, in the end, may not actually be effective at all.

2c Maintaining Purposeful Environments

CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
	Student learning and development are hindered by a lack of routines or inefficient classroom procedures.	Classroom routines and procedures, established or managed primarily by the teacher, support opportunities for student learning and development.	Shared routines and efficient procedures are largely student-directed and maximize opportunities for student learning and development.	Students have a voice and play an active role in designing and adjusting routines and procedures that actively create a respectful learning environment and support the growth of each community member.
	Purposeful Collaboration			
	Students are not engaged during group work.	Students are partially engaged in group work.	Students are productively engaged during small group work, working purposefully and collaboratively with their peers.	Students play an active role in ensuring their time in groups is used purposefully and meets their individual and group needs.
	Student Autonomy and Responsibility			
	Routines do not support student autonomy or assumption of responsibility.	Routines and procedures partially support student autonomy and assumption of responsibility.	Routines and procedures allow students to operate autonomously and take responsibility for their learning.	Students take responsibility for routines and procedures and take initiative to suggest adjustments that would further support their learning and development.
	Equitable Access to Resources and Supports			
	Resources and supports are not deployed efficiently, effectively, or equitably.	Resources and supports are managed somewhat efficiently and effectively, though students may not have equitable access.	Resources and supports are deployed efficiently and effectively; all students are able to access what they need.	Resources and supports are deployed equitably; students take initiative in accessing resources and identifying additional supports they need.
	Non-Instructional Tasks			
	Non-instructional tasks are not completed or completed inefficiently, resulting in loss of instructional time or potential danger to students.	Non-instructional tasks are completed with some efficiency, but instructional time is lost.	Most non-instructional tasks are completed efficiently, with little loss of instructional time.	Non-instructional tasks are completed seamlessly with no loss of instructional time.

2d Supporting Positive Student Behavior

In order for learning to occur and for students to feel safe and valued, teachers must attend to supporting a climate of respectful behavior in ways that affirm the dignity of each student. Learning is not supported in an environment characterized by disengagement, apathy, resistance, or bullying. At the same time, the aim of the effective teacher is not to control students or use authority or punitive approaches to eliminate “misbehavior,” but rather to support motivation, compassion, and other positive behaviors within the classroom. Purposeful classroom rules and norms – alongside engaging instruction – combine to support an optimal learning environment that allows students to grow and thrive.

Classrooms, no matter what form they take, are crowded and busy places. Successful learning environments have established expectations to support the common good that are culturally responsive and reflect shared norms and values. Within these environments, it is the teacher’s responsibility to support students by modeling and teaching habits of character (such as compassion and respect) that lead to high-quality learning environments and ultimately help students to act ethically in a variety of settings. Excellent teachers do not simply dictate and then reinforce positive behavior; they work with students to promote them by encouraging self-monitoring, reflection, and collective responsibility.

While ground rules for expected behavior are important, teachers who excel in “classroom management” focus on fostering positive behavior that ultimately results in purposeful selfmanagement as students develop the dispositions and traits they need to make good choices and successfully navigate a variety of contexts. They help students develop and maintain shared norms and expectations, provide opportunities for students to reflect on their interactions with one another, and approach student behavior with community-mindedness—the idea that building a better classroom community is a shared endeavor.

2d Supporting Positive Student Behavior

CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
	There is little evidence of explicit modeling, instruction, or guidance related to positive student behavior.	Positive behavior is modeled by the teacher and occasionally taught explicitly.	Students display positive behaviors, which are modeled by teachers and reinforced to promote reflection and recalibration rather than compliance.	Students consistently and independently display positive behaviors and seek opportunities to build a better classroom community.
	Expectations for the Learning Community			
	The teacher does not communicate expectations or address negative behavior.	The teacher establishes expectations to promote positive behavior but with uneven success.	The teacher and students have successfully established and agreed upon expectations.	Students play an active role in establishing and maintaining expectations, with regular opportunities for critical reflection both individually and as a group.
	Modeling and Teaching Habits of Character			
	The teacher does not explicitly model or teach habits of character.	The teacher models and teaches habits of character but with uneven success.	The teacher models, explicitly teaches, and reinforces habits of character to promote learning, ethical behavior, and citizenship.	Students take initiative in explicitly discussing and reinforcing habits of character that contribute to a safe and productive learning environment.
	Self-Monitoring and Collective Responsibility			
	Students take no responsibility for their own behavior and do not display awareness of their impact on others.	The teacher encourages students to monitor their own and one another's behavior and emphasizes collective responsibility but with uneven success.	Students successfully monitor their own behavior and attend to their impact on other students.	Students successfully monitor their own behavior and appropriately support one another in demonstrating positive behavior.

2e Organizing Spaces for Learning

What constitutes a classroom space is evolving rapidly and may be different from school to school or teacher to teacher. Some teachers teach in a standard classroom, some travel from classroom to classroom, some teach primarily online, and others teach in a gym or on a stage. Regardless, teachers are responsible for working with their students to create a joyful environment that promotes learning. As part of the work of organizing the space, teachers must attend to safety and equitable accessibility for all students. Beyond this necessity, excellent teachers prioritize design for learning and development. In other words, their classes are not simply arranged for efficiency or based on personal preferences but are thoughtfully designed to support learning and the work that students do with one another.

Though arrangement of objects and resources may vary greatly from space to space, the best spaces for learning reflect shared ownership – a space where all members of the community feel safe, belong, and can learn. When a classroom is a true community of learners, students themselves become involved in the creation of a beautiful and joyful environment and take initiative in ensuring it meets their needs. They may, for example, plan a display of work, move furniture to facilitate a group project, or shift supplies to improve traffic flow. They may lower the shades to block the sun from a classmate's eyes or shut the door to keep out hall noise. It is their space, and they make it work to promote learning. Naturally, such student involvement can only occur when the teacher cultivates and encourages student participation in establishing the environment as a shared space from the outset.

2e Organizing Spaces for Learning

CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
	Learning spaces are unsafe, inaccessible, and/or not conducive to learning and development.	Learning spaces are safe and accessible; the arrangement and use of resources partially supports student learning and development.	Learning spaces are thoughtfully designed to address the needs of individual learners within the context of shared experiences.	Learning spaces are thoughtfully co-designed and modified as needed by members of the learning community to address the needs of individuals and create collaborative, joyful spaces for all to learn and grow.
	Safety and Accessibility			
	The space endangers student safety or is not accessible to all students.	The space is generally safe and accessible with some issues that need to be addressed.	The space is safe and accessible to all students.	Modifications are made to the environment as necessary by students and teachers to accommodate individual needs.
	Design for Learning and Development			
	The design of the space is an impediment to learning and development.	The design of the space is not an impediment to learning but does not enhance it.	The design of the space supports student learning and development and is appropriate for the goals and activities.	The design of the space optimizes learning and development and is appropriately adjusted to align to goals and activities.
	Co-Creation and Shared Ownership			
	Students do not help create or arrange the space for learning and demonstrate little pride or ownership in the space.	Students have some voice in creating the space and demonstrate some ownership of it.	Students have a voice in creating the space and demonstrate shared ownership of it.	Students take initiative in designing the space, demonstrate a sense of pride and ownership, and adjust the space as necessary to create a more beautiful and joyful environment.

3a Communicating About Purpose & Content

Teachers communicate with students constantly and for a variety of purposes. While any communication with or between students has a direct connection to many of the components of learning environments, communication related to the purposes of learning, the expectations for activities, and the content itself are essential aspects of instruction that support (or hinder) students' intellectual engagement and academic success.

Successful teachers consistently and effectively communicate that learning is a purposeful activity and make the goals and objectives of specific learning experiences clear to students. They emphasize the purpose of these goals, both in relation to the larger curriculum and students' own interests and purposes, and communicate the why behind the goals in a way that makes them meaningful and relevant. Effective teachers also explain how students will learn and what it will look like when they are successful. Specific learning activities require clear directions and expectations so that students can engage successfully. Constructivist teachers often facilitate experiences that guide students to develop insights and discover underlying principles or ideas on their own. In such cases, there may initially be more focus on explaining how students will engage rather than exactly what they will learn, but explaining the insights and learning that develop as a result of these experiences is critical work for students and teachers.

When teachers present concepts and information, they do so accurately and clearly, using precise, academic language. They often do so imaginatively as well, embellishing their descriptions, using multiple means of representation to explain content, employing analogies or metaphors to support understanding, and linking the content to students' own lives and prior knowledge. They use vivid, rich, and appropriate academic language and support and encourage students to do the same.

3a Communicating About Purpose & Content

CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
	Communication about purpose and content is unclear or confusing and hinders student learning.	Communication about purpose and content is mostly clear and accurate; it partially supports learning.	Communication about purpose and content is accurate and clear to students; it supports their active engagement in learning experiences and models effective use of language.	Communication about purpose and content is rich, nuanced, and relevant to students inviting them to think critically and contribute intellectually; it encourages curiosity and supports student autonomy.
	Purpose for Learning and Criteria for Success			
	The teacher does not convey to students what they will be learning.	The teacher partially explains the purpose of learning but with little elaboration or specificity.	The teacher clearly explains what students will be learning and why, how it is situated within broader purposes, how they will learn it, and what success will look like.	Students are able to explain the purpose and value of what they are learning and connect it to broader purposes, both within the curriculum and their own lives.
	Specific Expectations			
	The teacher's unclear or incomplete explanation of the learning activities hinders student engagement.	Expectations for the learning activities are somewhat clear to students.	The teacher clearly explains and models, if appropriate, the learning activities, consistently supporting and reinforcing student engagement.	The teacher and students anticipate and address possible challenges within the learning activities; students use or suggest other strategies, approaches, or processes for learning.
	Explanations of Content			
	The teacher makes significant content errors or fails to provide clear explanations, affecting student understanding of the content.	The teacher makes minor content errors or provides explanations of the content that are somewhat confusing and only invite minimal participation or engagement by students.	The teacher's explanations of content are accurate, appropriately scaffolded, and relevant to the experiences of students; content is explained in multiple, engaging ways to support conceptual understanding.	Students discuss and explain content clearly and precisely; their communication about content and its application demonstrate critical thinking, curiosity, and understanding of its purpose and relevance.
	Use of Academic Language			
	The teacher's communications include incorrect or imprecise use of academic language.	The teacher's use of academic language is generally correct but may need further explanation or be too simplistic to support student learning.	The teacher's content-specific language and vocabulary are accurate, academically rigorous, and well-suited to students and lessons, providing a model to support student development.	Rich and rigorous language and vocabulary are consistently and effectively used by the teacher and students

3b Using Questioning & Discussion Techniques

Questioning and discussion, when used effectively during learning experiences, engage students in the exploration of content and deepen student understanding. Before teachers have mastered the skill of questioning and discussion, the questions they ask are often quick, low-level questions with one right answer that only elicit responses from a few students or lead to discussions between the teacher and one student at a time. Skillful teachers frame questions that have multiple answers and invite students to formulate hypotheses, make connections, or challenge previously held views. They are especially adept at valuing students' responses, building on them, and making use of their ideas to help students arrive at new understandings of complex material.

When a strong culture for learning and a respectful, safe environment are present, classroom discussions engage all students in important issues, provide opportunities for critical thinking, deepen and extend understanding, and promote the use of precise language. Discussions may be based on questions formulated by the teacher or the students. Through questioning and discussion during learning experiences, students are challenged to explain and justify their reasoning, citing specific text or other evidence, and are given opportunities to reflect on learning. Skills and dispositions related to critical thinking, logical reasoning, and reflection are critical to all disciplines and essential to student success in school and beyond.

In the most successful discussions, all students are engaged. A few students do not dominate the conversation, nor is it a back-and-forth between a teacher and students. Rather, all students are drawn into the conversation because members of the classroom community seek the perspective of all students, and all voices are heard. While successful teachers are adept at asking questions that lead to fruitful and purposeful discussions, they have also established routines, created safe spaces with their students, and taught and modeled skills that allow them to gradually move from the center to the side so students can maintain the momentum.

3b Using Questioning & Discussion Techniques

CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
	Questioning and discussion are absent or do not support learning and development.	Questioning and discussion, primarily framed and led by the teacher, are used to support student learning and development.	Questioning and discussion, framed or led by the teacher and students, effectively support critical thinking, reasoning, and reflection.	Students intentionally use questioning and discussion to develop their own and others' thinking, reasoning skills, and habits of reflection.
	Critical Thinking and Deeper Learning			
	Questioning and discussion do not invite student thinking, are of little cognitive challenge, and often have a single correct response.	The teacher frames questions to promote critical thinking and deeper understanding but with uneven success.	Open-ended and higher-level questions and genuine discussions allow students to think critically and offer multiple perspectives, challenging them to deepen understanding.	Students initiate higher-order questions and extend discussions with confidence, applying and developing critical thinking, curiosity, and deeper understanding.
	Reasoning and Reflection			
	Questioning and discussion do not invite or require students to explain their thinking.	Questioning and discussion invite students to explain their thinking and reflect on their learning, but students are only somewhat successful at doing so.	Through questioning and discussion, students have the opportunity to reason, reflect on learning, and justify their thinking, and successfully do so.	Students use questions and discussions to challenge one another's thinking with respect and humility, successfully justify their reasoning, and collaboratively generate new ideas and lines of inquiry.
	Student Participation			
	Questions and discussions are between teacher and select students; students do not engage in dialogue with one another or ask each other questions.	The teacher calls on many students or invites them to respond directly to one another, but only some students answer or participate in the discussion.	The teacher successfully engages students in discussion; students actively participate and ask questions of one another.	Students formulate questions, initiate discussion, and assume responsibility for ensuring that all voices are heard.

3c Engaging Students in Learning

Ultimately, teachers are responsible for the learning and development of students, which requires students' active, intellectual engagement in learning experiences. When teachers arrange for ambitious instruction with each of their students in mind and cultivate safe, supportive, and challenging learning environments, the conditions exist for this type of engagement to occur. As such, all other components of the Framework for Teaching contribute to this one, and many have referred to it as the “heart” of the Framework. This designation reinforces the fundamental principles and constructivist foundation of the Framework, especially the idea that it is the learner who does the learning.

True engagement is present when students are intellectually active and emotionally invested in learning important and challenging content, not simply when they are “busy” or “on task.” The critical distinction between experiences in which students are compliant and those in which they are engaged is that in the latter, students are developing their understanding through rich learning experiences, collaboration and teamwork, and thinking and reflection. They are not simply completing an assignment or passively receiving content. When students engage at a deeper level, they are encouraged to be curious, supported to assume responsibility for their learning, and motivated to increase the challenge, complexity, and relevance of learning experiences themselves.

Successful teachers provide multiple ways for students to engage with the content and represent their ideas. Even so, engaging learning experiences typically have a discernible, coherent structure that teachers have carefully prepared. Tasks and activities provide cognitive challenge and students are encouraged to reflect on what they have learned. That is, the experience has closure, in which teachers encourage students to derive the important learning from the tasks, discussion, or materials. The best evidence of engagement is not what teachers are saying or doing (or even what they have planned) but what students are saying and doing as a result.

3c Engaging Students in Learning

CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
	Learning experiences do not require active intellectual engagement by students.	Learning experiences partially engage students intellectually; the activities require students to do some thinking.	Learning experiences support curiosity and exploration and encourage higher-order thinking; students engage in multiple ways and represent their ideas and responses through multiple means.	Students take initiative to increase the challenge or complexity of learning experiences and make suggestions for modifications that increase meaning and relevance.
	Rich Learning Experiences			
	Tasks are inappropriate for students in the class, many students are not engaged in them, or they may only require recall or use a single approach.	Students are partially engaged in tasks that require thinking as opposed to only recall; some tasks have multiple correct responses or approaches.	All students engage in activities that support agency and require critical thinking; tasks require high levels of intellectual engagement and students explain their thinking.	Through choices provided by the teacher or their own initiative, students modify learning tasks to make them more meaningful or challenging.
	Collaboration and Teamwork			
	Students do not collaborate, they do not engage with one another effectively, and/or instructional groupings are inappropriate for the task.	Students collaborate during the lesson in ways that are mostly suitable to the activities and outcomes and partially support learning for each student; they work well together during group activities.	Student collaboration is a key component of learning and engagement in the class, instructional groupings are strategically arranged to support learning and engagement, and effective teamwork is explicitly taught and celebrated.	Students take initiative to collaborate in new or unplanned ways that further their learning; they actively serve as resources for one another and focus on making their learning more engaging and meaningful.
	Use of Instructional Materials and Resources			
	Instructional materials and resources are not used correctly or effectively by the students, are not supportive of their learning, and/or are not equitably available.	Instructional materials and resources are used by the students with some success to support learning, and students have equitable access to them.	Instructional materials and resources are used effectively to support intellectual engagement and deep learning of the content; they are varied and used to support equitable access to the content.	Students take initiative in using instructional materials and resources by adapting them appropriately for their own needs; they suggest modifications or additions to make them more relevant or challenging.
	Opportunities for Thinking and Reflection			
	The pace of the lesson is too slow or is rushed, or opportunities for thought and reflection are poorly implemented; students do not have time to reflect or consolidate understanding.	The pacing of the lesson provides opportunities for some thought and reflection, allowing students to engage and develop understanding.	The pacing of the lesson supports high levels of intellectual engagement and deeper learning; students have multiple and effective opportunities to think, reflect, and consolidate understanding.	Through opportunities provided by the teacher or their own initiative, students demonstrate autonomy and effective use of strategies for reflection; they are able to identify and advocate for their own need to engage in further processing or reflection in order to consolidate understanding and solidify new learning.

3d Using Assessment for Learning

While assessments of learning are essential and have often been more heavily emphasized by policymakers, teachers have long known that assessment for learning is a powerful and important tool. Assessment is an integral part of learning experiences themselves, not just a signal of the end of a lesson, unit, or course. Summative assessment has always been and will continue to be an important aspect of teaching, allowing teachers, students, and their families to know whether students have learned and progressed toward their goals. But when formative assessment is a key component of learning experiences, teachers and students are able to gauge whether they have learned the content or mastered skills, as well as where they are on the path to meeting their learning goals, making them ultimately more likely to be successful in achieving their purposes.

Assessment for learning provides essential feedback to students and teachers on successes and challenges. Successful teachers are constantly monitoring student progress, and also encouraging and supporting students to monitor their own understanding. In order for assessment during learning to provide useful feedback, there must be standards and criteria for success that are aligned to the goals and clear to students and those supporting them. Successful opportunities to assess learning, no matter their form (they may be formal or informal, planned or organic), allow teachers to determine the degree of understanding of every student in the class and for each student to monitor their own learning against clear standards and collaborative goals determined by both students and teachers.

In the most successful learning experiences, feedback comes from a variety of sources (including other students). It is specific, useful, timely, and focused on improvement or further learning. While it may prioritize addressing gaps or misunderstandings, it should also provide encouragement and identify strengths that students can leverage in this or future challenges.

3d Using Assessment for Learning

CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
	Formative assessment is not used during instruction or does not support student learning and development.	Formative assessment partially supports student learning and development.	The teacher and students use formative assessments to elicit evidence of understanding, analyze progress, and provide constructive feedback.	Students take initiative to analyze their own progress against a clear standard in order to achieve the outcome and identify new opportunities and challenges.
	Clear Standards for Success			
	The teacher does not share assessment criteria, describe what high-quality work looks like, or explain how students will know they are successful.	Students partially understand how they will know they are progressing successfully and how their work will be evaluated.	The standards of high-quality work and success are clear to students and provide the opportunity for self-assessment.	Students and those who support them clearly understand how their progress is being assessed; they have an active voice in establishing standards for success that are relevant and ambitious.
	Monitoring Student Understanding			
	The teacher does not determine whether students are progressing toward mastery of the goals and provides no structured opportunities for students to monitor their own progress.	The teacher's attempts to monitor student understanding and support self-assessment are limited or only partially effective.	The teacher uses questions and assessments to elicit accurate evidence of student understanding and models strategies for self-assessment, allowing students to successfully analyze their own progress toward goals.	Students take initiative to monitor their own understanding through planned tasks, assessments, and strategies of self-assessment to understand their progress, make adjustments, and identify new or alternative pathways and goals.
	Timely, Constructive Feedback			
	Students receive no feedback, or the only feedback given is global or for only a few students.	The teacher provides some feedback, but the feedback is unclear or not oriented toward improvement or mastery.	Students receive timely, constructive feedback from the teacher or others that advances learning.	Students make decisions and assume responsibility for their learning using high-quality, improvement-focused feedback from many sources.

3e Responding Flexibly to Student Needs

Teaching is an incredibly complex and demanding activity that requires ongoing, often consequential decision-making. In the course of learning experiences, teachers are making decisions almost constantly. These decisions might include whether to shift approach (or not) based on evidence of student engagement; how to respond to and build upon student inquiries; what to do when one, some, or all students are struggling; and how to acknowledge students' emotional wellbeing or respond to events in their lives, communities, or the broader society. While some of these decisions might be made in advance, successful teachers are particularly skilled in making adjustments during the course of learning experiences in response to changing conditions.

With experience, teachers develop skills in accurately predicting how a lesson will go and being prepared for different possible scenarios. However, even the most skilled, and best prepared, teachers will occasionally find either that a lesson is not proceeding as they would like or that students are encountering unanticipated difficulties. Additionally, student inquiries or unanticipated events might create new and unexpected learning opportunities that are worth pursuing in the moment. In either case, successful teachers are able to make both minor and (at times) major adjustments to better address the needs of students and ensure their success. Such adjustments are supported by teachers' expertise, confidence, and sense of efficacy.

When teachers demonstrate flexibility and responsiveness, they also model mindsets and skills for their students. For instance, committed teachers don't give up easily. Their determination and persistence in supporting students who encounter difficulties or experience failure has a direct impact on students' own mindsets and the culture for learning in the classroom. A learning experience, even one that goes according to plan, will include moments of struggle, and the determination of students and teachers and the adjustments they make during those times further their success.

3e Responding Flexibly to Student Needs

CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
	The teacher makes no adjustments to learning experiences, even when warranted, and is not responsive to student needs.	The teacher makes some adjustments to learning experiences and is responsive to student needs with partial success.	The teacher's adjustments and responsiveness lead to deeper understanding for students and/or new learning experiences.	Based on self-monitoring and reflection, students voice their needs, ask questions, and make suggestions that lead to adjustments and modifications or spark new learning opportunities.
	Evidence-Based Adjustments			
	The teacher does not recognize, or ignores, evidence of low engagement or lack of student understanding.	The teacher attempts to adjust learning experiences based on evidence but is only partially successful.	The teacher effectively adjusts learning experiences based on real-time evidence and students' individual and specific needs.	Students voice their needs and assume responsibility for their own learning by making necessary adjustments to the learning experiences with the support and encouragement of the teacher.
	Receptiveness and Responsiveness			
	The teacher brushes aside or does not fully address students' questions or difficulties.	The teacher attempts to incorporate students' questions and respond to their interests but only minimally or with limited success.	The teacher incorporates students' interests and questions into learning experiences to deepen understanding and encourage curiosity and autonomy.	Students identify new learning opportunities and take the initiative to pursue them on their own, with their peers, or with the support of the teacher or others in the school and beyond.
	Determination and Persistence			
	The teacher does not convey a level of responsibility for student learning and success or is uncertain about how to assist students.	The teacher conveys responsibility and commitment to efficacy but lacks certainty or is only partially successful in responding to student difficulties.	Drawing on a broad repertoire of strategies, the teacher persists in seeking alternative approaches and pathways when students experience difficulty.	Students demonstrate determination and persistence when they experience difficulties; they seek and receive effective support from the teacher and others.