
Observation Guide

Source: Silicon Valley Mathematics Initiative – David Foster

Tools: Successful Coaching/Teaching and Learning

DESCRIPTION

The Silicon Valley Mathematics Initiative (SMVI) Observation Guide is a coaching tool which draws heavily on the vision of math teaching. The guide can be used to help focus classroom observations and as a discussion guide to help focus pre- and post-conferences between teacher and coach.

The questions in the guide are divided into three categories: mathematics/content knowledge, learning/pedagogy, and environment/creating a culture. For each of these categories there are questions about what students are thinking and doing on one side and questions about what the teacher is thinking and doing on the other side of the guide. It is not meant to be used as a checklist.

STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The questions are meant to help the coach (and teacher) think about good mathematics teaching through observation of practice. During any one observation cycle (pre-conference, observation, post-conference) the focus will most likely be on only one of these categories. And, although the coach may collect evidence about all the questions in a category, he or she may choose to discuss a more limited number of them during the post-conference.