

eMINTS Classroom Visit Reflections

On an eMINTS classroom visit, many different things will happen and teachers will have much to consider. Look for items that fit the categories outlined below to help organize the visit experience and think about some of the components.

With the hosting teacher's permission, talk to students, sit next to them and watch what they do and how things work in their classroom. Assist the teacher where appropriate and encouraged. Remember to thank the host teacher.

Make a few notes during the visit. All visiting teachers will receive an e-mail copy of the eMINTS Classroom Visit Reflection form. Using notes and observations from the visit, complete the form, save it as a Word document and e-mail it to the eMINTS facilitator as an attachment or print it and give it to the eMINTS facilitator at the professional development session following the visit.

1. Teacher-facilitated learning

- Student input visibly important (choice built into units and student displays, rules made with student input).
- Variety in the grouping of students (may be observed or discussed).
- Level of participation in groups.
- Variety of teacher questions reflecting higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy.
- Teacher comfort with learning from the students as well as teaching.
- Students encouraged to find information rather than teacher providing it.
- Ties made to past study units.

2. Student-centered learning

- Rich resources available and in use by students (not just computers, but books and other hands-on equipment).
- Classroom displays showing authentic learning.
- Students involved in effective time-management.
- Student questions (on topic? curious?).
- Student behavioral choices (positive and negative).

3. Unique teaching pedagogy and learning strategies used to implement a standards-based curriculum

- Is the goal of an activity evident by listening to the teacher or asking students?
- Is there evidence that activities are meeting curricular standards?
- What use of cooperative groups is happening?
- What learning projects are the students involved in (WebQuests, online projects, cross-curricular projects)?

4. Community of learners

- Is there meaningful student-to-student communication?
- What is the atmosphere of the classroom? Do students seem to feel free to take risks?
- Are there observable action plans, rubrics or checklists that students can use to track their own learning?

5. Classroom Management

- How does the teacher manage conflicts between students?
- How does the teacher manage questions and technical problems?
- How does the teacher manage groups and keep everyone on task?
- How does he/she get the entire class's attention and maintain it?
- What method or strategies were used to manage technology resources? (taking turns using the computer, driver/navigator, determining which software will be used for learning, etc.)

6. Technology richness

- Technology use: games? time-fillers? rewards? instructional enhancements?
- Care of the equipment: Do students show pride and ownership?

7. Assessment of student performance

- Evidence of a variety of assessment procedures: rubrics, checklists, observations, quizzes.
- Assessment as a regular part of the day: Do students reflect on what they are doing?
- Are the expectations for student performance obvious and at a reasonably high level?

8. The physical classroom

What is noticeable about the classroom environment? Pay particular attention to the following:

- Student-work displays
- Storage of student belongings
- Noticeable items around the room
- Seating arrangements
- Class gathering space
- Rules or expectations.

9. Overall impressions

Reflect on overall impressions of the eMINTS classroom visit. All teachers should think about their own teaching and their beliefs about their roles as teachers.