

Tips for Effective Scripting

The purpose of scripting a lesson is to collect a description of observable facts or events, without interpretation. Low-inference data collection is a factual observation, without judgment. Record what you hear and see while you work to increase speed and accuracy. Here are some tips to consider.

Essentials

- **Insert time stamps** (if not done automatically on any software you are using). Places to time stamp include at the start of each new sub-objective, the start of each new activity, and the beginning and end of instructional models.
- **Develop your own shorthand, abbreviating when possible.** Come up with your own abbreviation for words that are said in many lessons. For example, *t* for teacher, *s* for student, *ss* for students, *obj* for objective, and *wbs* for whiteboards.
- **Script what will support non-evaluative feedback in your conversation with the teacher.** Instead of, “Students come in classroom. Total chaos,” write, “SS come in. 1 s walks across desk, 2 ss hitting each other, most ss yelling and running.”
- **Select your method of scripting.** Experiment with various methods and choose the one that works best for you. Some people type in Word or OneNote. Some handwrite. If your computer has a touchscreen, you can switch to handwriting on your screen while walking around during student practice time. Technology can have its glitches, so always have a pad of paper as a backup in case of these emergencies.

Recording Student Actions

- **Capture evidence of student learning while students are practicing.** It can help to have the objective (and sub-objectives) already typed at the top of the script before going in to the lesson so you can keep in mind what students are expected to be learning.
- **Record whether students answering questions were volunteering or were called on without volunteering.** (Can record with *v* and *nv* or *H* for student who was called on after putting up hand and *C* for student who was called on as a non-volunteer.)
- **When you can't hear a student's response type *ia* or ... (for inaudible).** It is better to complete a sentence/statement and miss the following one, rather than have multiple incomplete sentences.

Recording Teacher Actions

- **Record wait time.** When a teacher provides wait time after asking a question, indicate this (*wt* or a plus sign).
- **Collect a seating chart from the teacher or create one.** On the seating chart, number students which you can then identify in your script. On the chart also record teacher

movements around the room. Color code teacher interactions with students by sub-objectives using a different color of marker for each sub-objective. If students are pulled out of class for any reason, record when they leave and return. Record tally marks every time a teacher talks with a particular student or record times when teacher is talking with students and possibly clips of conversation.

- **Look for differentiation at the sub-group and/or individual level.** When told in a pre-conference about a plan for differentiation, look to capture that evidence in the lesson.
- **Record nonverbal movements.** Include movements and gestures such as the teacher pointing to the board, raising hand for quiet signal, or looking at a particular student and raising eyebrows.
- **Write, “T reads aloud.”** When a teacher is reading aloud and you have a copy or picture of the text, there is no need to script. Scan the room to record the percentage of students appearing to be following along, as evidenced by eyes downcast, turning pages appropriately, using fingers to follow teacher’s reading.
- **When a teacher repeats a definition or direction, just type “repeats.”**

Other Considerations

- **Look around the room for artifacts that might be evidence of learning community:** class rules or group/partner work expectations.
- **Make use of artifacts that a teacher gives you.** You can write on worksheets and printed PowerPoint slides.
- **If appropriate, take pictures of student work, anchor charts, and teacher models.** Within your script you can record when each picture was taken.
- **Consider audio recording (with permission) in case you need to replay a part of the lesson.**
- **Consider creating a scripting template.** This might include columns labeled Time, Element (to be used for scoring later), Teacher Actions, Student Actions, RTA.
- **Try to be as unobtrusive as possible.** Sit to the side or back of the room. When students are having student-to-student conversations, working as groups, or practicing individually, get up and walk around and record conversations and work. Sometimes you will want to shadow the teacher as he/she moves around the room. Sometimes you will want to record what students are doing when the teacher is not with them. When the teacher speaks to the whole class again, make sure you are back out of the way. Remember to turn off your phone or radio.