

sounds that the different instruments make. As another example, when students are playing at a “corn box,” they use the cups, funnels, trucks, and other manipulatives in the box to fully explore the area rather than just distractedly running their hands through the corn.

The teacher effectively focuses students’ attention toward learning objectives and/or the purpose of the lesson. Students in this classroom appear aware of the point of lessons or how they should be focusing their attention during activities. The teacher frequently uses strategies such as *advanced organizers* (e.g., “Okay, let’s look through the pictures in this book before we read it so we know something about what it will be about”), *summaries* (e.g., “So we just talked about how farm and zoo animals are different”), and *reorientation statements* (e.g., “We are getting a bit off track; let’s make sure we are thinking about the differences between farm and zoo animals—not what a zoo is”) to draw students’ attention to learning objectives. During both whole-group and center activities, the teacher keeps his or her questioning and directions clear and targeted on the learning objective. During centers, the teacher focuses his or her questions on the activity in which the students are involved. For example, when students are using different-size squeeze bottles and scoops at the water table, the teacher asks them how they are going to fill the bottles or which bottle will get filled faster. In addition, he asks them questions about what lives in the water. If the students’ attention to the activity begins to wane, the effective facilitator may add some sea animals and plants to the water table to reengage students. His questions may then pertain to the different characteristics of these animals and plants. Students in this classroom should be able to tell the observer in a coherent way what it was they were learning.

rated at the high end of the Instructional Learning Formats dimension even if students do not have direct interactions with the teacher during the observation as long as the teacher has made an effort to distribute his or her attention and facilitate students' involvement. For example, during centers, the teacher may move around to check in on the different areas in the room. He may pause and help students build a block structure, asking questions about which structure is taller or the students' plan for building a village, then move on to a group of students who are playing store and spend some time participating in their play by buying some toys and making change, and finally check in with some students using the computer by asking questions or taking a turn in their game. This participation serves to enhance the students' involvement in the activities.

The teacher uses a variety of modalities including auditory, visual, and movement and uses a variety of materials to effectively interest students and gain their participation during activities and lessons. The teacher appears to be aware that to engage students most effectively he or she needs to use many different modalities; therefore, he or she presents information in a variety of ways with a variety of materials. For example, the teacher may read the students a book and give each of the students a felt picture that corresponds to some event in the story. When the teacher reads about each event, the student with that felt piece gets to come up and put it on the felt board. As another example, during a lesson on place words (e.g., *next to*, *between*, *beside*), the teacher asks students to get up and move somewhere in the room (e.g., "Go stand next to the blocks") and then tell her where they are standing. In addition to using a number of different modalities and materials in her lessons, the teacher makes sure that a variety of materials are available for use by the students during center time. For example, the art area may contain clay, tissue paper, and markers in addition to paper and crayons; the writing center may contain envelopes and a mailbox for students to write letters and mail them; and another center may contain playdough with glitter and different textures mixed into it. For virtually all of the activities and lessons, the students have opportunities to manipulate or explore materials. During the demonstration of a volcano, each student gets to pour the vinegar, the liquid that causes the volcano to erupt. While the teacher is filling the water table, students get to help pour the water. The teacher makes limited use of lectures and presentations in which there is no student participation. However, the teacher may maximize students' learning without manipulatives or materials for active exploration if he or she is effectively engaging students using other methods. For example, a teacher may be reading a book with students without using additional modalities or materials, but she uses such effective questioning, comparisons, and examples with the students that they still display very high levels of engagement and their learning is maximized.

Students are consistently interested and involved in activities and lessons. Students listen to the teacher, raise their hands or volunteer information, respond when asked direct questions, and actively participate in centers or provided seat work. During play time, the students are full participants in the pretend-play process, in making up stories, in talking with peers, in asking adults to come to their restaurant or store, and so forth. Students actively manipulate materials and make full use of the materials that the teacher has provided for them. For example, during an activity in which students are given various musical instruments, the vast majority of students play the instruments and explore the

experiment involving adding food color to water, the teacher conducts all of the steps of the activity herself and does not let the students add drops of food coloring to the water or shake the bottle.

Students may be engaged and/or interested for periods of time, but at other times their interest wanes and they are not involved in the activity or lesson. As a result of the teacher's inconsistent facilitation of instruction, students in one center may appear engaged in an activity or lesson, whereas students at another center are not interested in what the teacher has prepared for them. For example, a group of students at a fingerpainting center may be very engaged and interested in an activity in which they try using different tools with the paint, whereas students at a book center who are passively looking at books appear less engaged.

The teacher orients students somewhat to learning objectives, or the learning objectives may be clear during some periods but less so during others. Students in this classroom sometimes appear aware of the point of lessons or how they should be focusing their attention but at other times seem unfocused on or unclear about the learning objectives. Or, one group of students working with the teacher may be clearly oriented to the lesson at hand, whereas other students who are not working with the teacher are not. The teacher occasionally may use strategies such as *advanced organizers* (e.g., "Okay, let's look through the pictures in this book before we read it so we know something about what it will be about"), *summaries* (e.g., "So, we just talked about farm animals and what they eat"), and *reorientation statements* (e.g., "We are getting a bit off track; let's make sure we are thinking about what farm animals eat and not only what color they are") to draw students' attention to learning objectives but other times fails to do so. The teacher sometimes asks a series of unrelated questions that confuse students but other times keeps her questioning and directions clear and focused on the learning objective. Sometimes the students in this classroom may be able to tell the observer what it was they were learning in a coherent way, but other times they may not.

High Instructional Learning Formats (6, 7)

The teacher actively facilitates students' engagement in activities and lessons to encourage participation and expanded involvement. During centers and seat work, the teacher moves around the room asking students questions, playing with them, participating in their activities, and so forth. His or her participation in the activities allows students to get the most out of the materials that are available. During whole-group instruction, the teacher does not merely go through the motions of asking questions or answering them him- or herself; rather, he or she facilitates students' involvement through open-ended questions and factual questions that allow students to get involved in the activity or lesson and assist in their understanding or participation. The teacher balances his or her involvement with student exploration to maximize students' participation and involvement.

It should be recognized that teachers cannot be everywhere in the classroom and may not interact with every student during an observation period. However, classrooms can be

summaries (e.g., "So we just talked about how different objects have different weights or feel heavier than other things"), and *reorientation statements* (e.g., "We are getting a bit off track; let's make sure we are thinking about how these things are heavier or lighter than other objects, not just about their shape and size") to draw students' attention to learning objectives. The teacher in the classroom that scores low on the Instructional Learning Formats dimension may seem to ask a series of unrelated questions that confuse students rather than keep his or her questioning and directions clear and targeted on the learning objective. It often seems unlikely that students could identify the learning objectives or activity in which they are involved.

Middle-Range Instructional Learning Formats (3, 4, 5)

At times, the teacher actively facilitates activities and lessons to encourage interest and expanded involvement but at other times merely provides activities for the students. The teacher makes some attempts to actively engage students in seat or center work by moving around the classroom, asking questions, getting involved in activities, playing with the students, and so forth; at other times, however, he or she passively monitors students' activities and does not offer opportunities for expanded learning through questioning or involvement. During whole-group instruction, the teacher sometimes works to actively engage students by asking questions to involve students in the activity but at other times merely presents information to the students. During centers, the teacher sometimes goes around to the students' different activities and participates as an active member in their play and activity (e.g., becoming a customer in a store and asking about money and change), but at other times, he or she is not attentive to their activity in centers. The teacher in this range also occasionally may become overinvolved in the activity, asking too many questions of students, answering his or her own questions, or not allowing students to explore. Many other times, the teacher facilitates the activity with some questions and time for students to explore independently.

The teacher is inconsistent in his or her use of a variety of modalities and materials to gain students' interest and participation during activities and lessons. The teacher may sometimes present information through a variety of modalities including vision, hearing, and movement to address students' different learning styles and attention, such as by having students move their bodies into shapes or letters; however, he or she predominantly relies on one modality—often auditory presentation. The teacher appears to have put some thought into creating activities and structuring lessons so that students can actively explore and use materials to facilitate learning, but he or she is not always consistent in doing so. For example, the water table may contain sand with hidden treasures such as fish or balls in it; however, the art center may have crayons and paper but no materials for three-dimensional work (e.g., paper mâché balloons), and the block center may have only one size block and no people, animals, or cars. At times, hands-on materials are available to students to explore and use. For example, the teacher may fill the sand and water table with mulch or water and leaves and allow the students to add other objects to the water to see if they float or sink. At other times, however, the teacher controls the materials or relies on lecture or worksheets. For example, during a science

Low Instructional Learning Formats (1, 2)

The teacher does not actively facilitate activities and lessons to encourage students' interest and expanded involvement. At the low range of the Instructional Learning Formats dimension, the teacher makes few, if any, attempts to facilitate students' engagement in activities or lessons. For example, the teacher may give students an activity to complete, such as having them walk around the room to find letters or objects, but does not ask questions about their progress and/or the decisions they are making or offer additional information to assist them in participating in the activity. Or, the teacher may set up a water table with boats in it for the students to explore and manipulate; however, the teacher passively sits by the table merely monitoring the students and does not become involved in the activity or provide guidance for students' expanded participation. The teacher may not ask any questions to facilitate students' involvement or may ask so many questions (sometimes answering them herself) or participate so much that students are not able to take ownership or be maximally involved in the activity.

The teacher does not use a variety of modalities or materials to gain students' interest and participation during activities and lessons. The teacher relies on one presentation modality (e.g., listening) without attending to the other modalities (e.g., movement, vision, nonverbal expression, behavior) through which information can be communicated. Or, if a teacher does attempt to use other modalities, he or she is ineffective. For example, a teacher may use a dry erase board to write down students' ideas, but because her writing is so small or messy the communication value is minimal and her actions do not serve to increase students' involvement in the activity. Or, a teacher may have picture cards to go along with a book, but the cards are so small they serve as more of a distraction than a contribution to the students' involvement in the lesson. In addition, there is little or no evidence that the teacher has planned exciting, creative activities for the students using a variety of materials and different types of activities. The teacher does not provide hands-on materials. The teacher controls the materials or relies on lecture or worksheets.

The students do not appear interested and/or involved in the lessons or activities. The students generally do not volunteer, raise their hands, or participate in the activity or lessons presented by the teacher. Instead, they appear bored or disengaged. The teacher does not make efforts to facilitate students' attention to the activities of lessons. During free play or centers, for example, the teacher sits by the students at the art table but does not make an effort to facilitate their participation in creating party hats. As a result, a large group of students simply rip the paper into little pieces. In addition, the teacher may walk around and monitor students in different centers but not facilitate students entering into play or changing centers; consequently, many students wander around or merely watch their peers play.

The teacher makes no attempt or is unsuccessful at orienting and guiding students toward learning objectives. Students in this classroom appear unaware of how they should be focusing their attention in the lesson or activity. The teacher fails to use strategies such as *advanced organizers* (e.g., "Okay, let's think about which objects are heavier; hold a ball and a rock and think about which one feels heavier to you"),

Instructional Learning Formats

Focuses on the ways in which the teacher maximizes students' interest, engagement, and ability to learn from lessons and activities

Low (1,2) Mid (3,4,5) High (6,7)

Effective facilitation

- Teacher involvement
- Effective questioning
- Expanding children's involvement

The teacher does not actively facilitate activities and lessons to encourage students' interest and expanded involvement.

At times, the teacher actively facilitates activities and lessons to encourage interest and expanded involvement but at other times merely provides activities for the students.

The teacher actively facilitates students' engagement in activities and lessons to encourage participation and expanded involvement.

Variety of modalities and materials

- Range of auditory, visual, and movement opportunities
- Interesting and creative materials
- Hands-on opportunities

The teacher does not use a variety of modalities or materials to gain students' interest and participation during activities and lessons.

The teacher is inconsistent in his or her use of a variety of modalities and materials to gain students' interest and participation during activities and lessons.

The teacher uses a variety of modalities including auditory, visual, and movement and uses a variety of materials to effectively interest students and gain their participation during activities and lessons.

Student interest

- Active participation
- Listening
- Focused attention

The students do not appear interested and/or involved in the lesson or activities.

Students may be engaged and/or interested for periods of time, but at other times their interest wanes and they are not involved in the activity or lesson.

Students are consistently interested and involved in activities and lessons.

Clarity of learning objectives

- Advanced organizers
- Summaries
- Reorientation statements

The teacher makes no attempt or is unsuccessful at orienting and guiding students toward learning objectives.

The teacher orients students somewhat to learning objectives, or the learning objectives may be clear during some periods but less so during others.

The teacher effectively focuses students' attention toward learning objectives and/or the purpose of the lesson.