

Reflective Teacher Education Through University Writing Centers  
TESOL  
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## **Facilitating an effective debriefing session** *for master teachers*

### **Planning a debriefing session:**

- Schedule debriefing sessions at least one day after the lesson so that the novice teacher has time to reflect. (Watson & Williams)
- Ask the novice teacher to prepare her response to the lesson before you meet. Preparation might include a freewrite, guided journal entry, or short answer worksheet.

### **Beginning a debriefing session:**

- Start asking the novice teacher to summarize what was taught the day of the observation. If possible, this should be available to refer to; if not, work together to reconstruct it.
- Ask the novice teacher open-ended questions about her general opinion of/reaction to the lesson.
- Share your overall response to the lesson, focusing first on something that you think was successfully accomplished or a teaching strategy that was especially effective.

### **Giving specific feedback:**

- Encourage the novice teacher to initiate the topics during your debriefing session by asking her what she would like to focus on. (Watson & Williams)
- Make sure discussions are two-sided: give the novice teacher lots of suggestions, but listen to her ideas as well.
- Focus on aspects of the lesson that are “unique or containing an element of surprise,” as well as parts of the lesson that are more “routine.” (Griffiths)
- Discuss “missed opportunities” within the lesson.
- Help the novice teacher make connections between theory and practice by explaining the rationale behind strategies that you or she are using.
- Share your own experiences, both as a more experienced teacher and as a novice.

### **Ending a debriefing session:**

- Suggest that the novice teacher make one or two specific goals related to the session help her make a plan to accomplish these.
- Make sure that the novice teacher has notes on your meeting to take with her.

## **Questions to encourage reflection in novice teachers for master teachers**

### **Overview:**

- *How do you think the lesson went?*
- *Do you feel I/ you met the objectives I/ you had in mind?*
- *How do you think students related to the lesson?*
- *What seemed more challenging than you expected?*

### **Successful aspects of the lesson:**

- *What was successful about the lesson and why?*
- *What was the benefit of doing it that way?*
- *How did I/ you make that work out for me/ you?*
- *What about this activity made it go so smoothly?*

### **Unsuccessful aspects of the lesson:**

- *What do you think would be a better way to do that?*
- *Why do you think that wasn't successful?*
- *How could I/ you change my/ your strategy to make it work better?*
- *Why didn't students seem engaged in this part?*

### **General teaching style:**

- *Were there any missed opportunities in the lesson?*
- *What tools could I/ you have used?*
- *How could I/ you have appealed to a variety of learning styles?*
- *How much did you talk compared to the students?*

### **Rationale:**

- *Why did I/ you make that decision?*
- *How did that help to accomplish the objective(s)?*
- *How does this activity engage students?*
- *What strategy did I/ you use here?*

### **Goal Setting:**

- *What new strategies do you want to try?*
- *What are your goals for the rest of the semester?*
- *How can I help you make a plan to accomplish these goals?*
- *What obstacles do you foresee?*

## **Post-lesson reflection worksheet**



### *for novice teachers*

**Goal:** to help you grow as a teacher through practice, reflection and discussion

#### **Types of observations**

**Modeling:** Master teacher works with novice teacher's students while novice teacher observes

**Co-teaching:** Master teacher and novice teacher work together/take turns working with novice teacher's students

**Observation:** Master teacher observes novice teacher working with students

#### **Scheduling**

Decide on what type of observation you'd like and schedule a time to be observed. After your observation, schedule a time for discussion with the master teacher, and time in between to reflect. Each semester, plan to schedule two types of observation.

#### **Reflection**

You will naturally want to think about what you saw/did and what might have been done differently. We ask you to formalize this process by taking notes on what you thought about as a springboard for discussion.

#### **Receiving feedback**

The purpose of discussing your session is to learn more about what went well, what your strengths are, what didn't go so well, why, what missed opportunities there were, what routines, approaches, strategies you could make it your goal to learn. The master teacher will help you focus on one or two goals and discuss ways to follow-through with these goals.

#### **Tips on preparing for observation** *for novice teachers*

- Review Observation Information sheet and Reflection sheet.
- Review notes on previous lessons.
- Have a thorough understanding of the material you plan to cover.
- Plan your lesson carefully, including sketching out boardwork, predicting possible problems, figuring out several stopping points if things take longer than you expected.
- Anticipate what questions students might have and think through potential answers.
- Articulate your own strengths and weaknesses and plan around them.
- Be early.

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**Tips on note-taking for observation**  
*for novice teachers*

You will be observing \_\_\_\_\_  
on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.

Remember to take notes on the yellow sheet.

- Watch for strategies being used that make the lesson more effective.
- Check to see if the tutor/teacher is using new or unfamiliar strategies.
- Write down each strategy in the “what” column.
- Explain the steps taken in the “how” column.
- Reflect on the tutor’s/teacher’s rationale in the “why” column (we will also talk about this in our meeting).

Be sure to bring all your notes to our next meeting.

**Observation Sheet 1: Tutoring Session**  
*for novice teachers*

- Use this sheet to write notes about the following categories.
- Immediately after the session observation, on the back of this sheet, freewrite about what made the session successful and any questions you have.

Establishing/Maintaining Rapport	Assessment/Establishing Goals
Doing Task	Making an Action Plan

**Observation Sheet 2: Tutoring Session**  
*for novice teachers*

<b>What</b> Content, Focus, Activity	<b>How</b> Strategies, Routines, Tools	<b>Why</b> Purpose, Theory, Rationale