**SPIRAL Educators**

**Observation “Look Fors”**

**Professional Learning #3**

Following the third Professional Learning, you chose a focus for your next SPIRAL coaching cycle. Use this document to see what your coach might “look for” during your scheduled observation.

*Note:* This tool is a **supportive** measure, *not an evaluative one.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **If you are focusing on...** | **Your coach might look for...** |
| **Computation with Fractions and Decimals** | **Systematic Presentation and Practice:** * The teacher provides a clear and deliberate progression (e.g., subtracting decimals to the hundredths place after subtracting decimals to the tenths place).
* The teacher incorporates a range of examples that increase in complexity after ensuring that students are successful at the current level of complexity.
* Students participate in practice that includes several opportunities for success.
* There is evidence of repeated practice across days or weeks.
* The teacher incorporates **multiple representations** (e.g., concrete manipulatives or pictorial representations).

**Classroom artifacts:*** Anchor charts depicting various methods of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of fractions or decimals.
* Manipulatives available for students’ use (e.g., fraction tiles, Cuisenaire rods, etc.).
 |
| **Multi-Step Word Problems** | * The teacher models multi-step word problems using an attack strategy.
* The teacher models how to solve multi-step word problems using schemas.
* The teacher uses schema gestures and questioning throughout word-problem instruction.
* There is evidence that prior to solving a multi-step word problem, students have solved single-step word problems with the same schemas (e.g., before solving a multi-step Total and Difference problem, students have solved single-step Total problems and single-step Difference problems).
* Students participate in guided-practice opportunities for solving multi-step word problems.
* Students receive immediate specific feedback on solving multi-step word problems.
 |
| **Single-Step Word Problems (e.g., gesturing and student-generated word problems)** | Evidence that the teacher has:* Taught students to use an attack strategy to solve word problems.
* Taught students to use schemas (i.e., Total, Difference, Change, Equal Groups, and Set/Comparison).

The teacher **avoids:*** Tying keywords to operations (e.g., total means to add).
* Presenting problems by operation (e.g., “Today we are going to solve multiplication word problems”).

When teaching students to use an attack strategy, the teacher:* Models writing down the attack strategy and checking off the steps as they go.
* Emphasizes the importance of FIRST reading and understanding the word problem.
* Encourages students to write the attack strategy on the side of their papers and use the attack strategy EVERY time they solve a word problem.
* Ensures that each student has the mnemonic memorized and can recall each step of the attack strategy with ease. And/or, the attack strategy is visible/available for students to refer to as needed.

When teaching schemas, the teacher:* Explicitly teaches schemas and introduces them systematically (not all at once).
* Incorporates multiple methods for helping students understand schemas (e.g., gesturing, graphic organizers, manipulatives, equations).
* Provides guided-practice opportunities in which students must differentiate between the schemas (e.g., solving a set of word problems with various schemas or using the schema sorting cards).

**Gesturing*** The teacher uses gestures and questioning every time they discuss schemas.
* Students are taught the question *(e.g., “Are parts put together for a total”)* and accompanyinggesture *(e.g., hold two hands out; clasp hands together)* whenever a new schema is introduced.
* When modeling how to set up and solve a word problem, the teacher uses questioning and gesturing to determine the schema of a word problem.
* Students know the question and accompanying gesture for any schema that has been formally introduced.
* The teacher encourages students to use gestures and questioning during whole-group lessons, small-group interventions, and during independent practice.

**Student-Generated Word Problems*** The teacher introduces student-generated word problems one schema at a time (e.g., “Today I am going to teach you how to write your own Total problems”).
* First, the teacher models how to write a [schema] problem from beginning to end.
	+ The teacher engages in think alouds to make thinking and steps transparent.
	+ The teacher elicits students’ ideas while modeling.
* Next, the teacher provides guided-practice opportunities.
	+ The teacher may provide sentence stems or pre-made graphic organizers.
* Lastly, the teacher provides independent-practice opportunities.
* There is evidence that the teacher uses student-generated word problems to gauge students’ understanding of the schemas, which influences instruction.
 |