

Learning Walk Tool Guide for Instructional Leaders

Purpose of the Imagine IM Learning Walk Tool for School Leaders

The Learning Walk Tool supports school leaders in conducting classroom observations by focusing on observable teaching behaviors and student engagement. It is designed to encourage reflection, inquiry, and dialogue about instructional practices—not for formal evaluation. The goal is to promote ongoing instructional improvement through reflective conversations and strategic planning.

Use the Learning Walk Tool for Classroom Visits

Familiarize yourself with the key behaviors and practices that support problem-based learning and student engagement. This will help you focus your observations on specific teaching moves, instructional strategies, and how students are engaging with the material.

Use the Learning Walk Tool for Reflection and Coaching

After observations, use the tool to guide reflective conversations with teachers, helping them set meaningful goals and strategies to strengthen their instructional approach and promote problem-based learning.

Imagine IM Learning Walk Tool

Preparation & Resource Use

This section includes activities that may not be observable during the lesson but are critical to the instructional process. Use it to guide a pre-observation discussion.

	Early Implementation	Advanced Implementation
Preparing	<p>Teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Focuses more on physical materials rather than content <input type="checkbox"/> Finds additional resources to replace or add to the lesson 	<p>Teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reads lesson and activity narratives to understand their connection to the unit and section <input type="checkbox"/> Connects the learning goal to each activity and cool-down <input type="checkbox"/> Anticipates student thinking <input type="checkbox"/> Prepares questions and discussion prompts based on anticipated student responses <input type="checkbox"/> Considers cool-down or other assessment data <input type="checkbox"/> Prepares the classroom environment for collaborative learning (e.g., desks in groups, vertical surfaces, space for the teacher to circulate, etc.)
Resources	<p>Teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Substitutes Imagine IM program components with misaligned resources <input type="checkbox"/> Pacing does not match lesson suggestions <input type="checkbox"/> Prioritizes the completion of activities over advancing toward the learning goals 	<p>Teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Imagine IM resources used <input type="checkbox"/> Pacing aligns with lesson suggestions <input type="checkbox"/> Prioritizes meeting the learning goals over the completion of activities

Launch



Early Implementation	Advanced Implementation
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Teacher:

- Prompts students to start tasks without clear directions
- Provides direct instruction on how to think or solve the problem
- Reviews previously taught content
- Asks yes/no questions
- Asks questions that require no thinking

Teacher:

- Uses instructional or math language routines
- Provides clear directions on what to do but not how to do it
- Provides independent thinking time after asking a question
- Asks questions that emphasize thinking and understanding
- Ensures a diversity of voices are heard
- Circulates to listen to partner discussions



Students:

- Follow the provided steps to solve a task
- Expect the same few classmates to respond to questions and prompts

Students:

- Contribute to discussions
- Respond to questions
- Converse with classmates when prompted

Worktime



Early Implementation	Advanced Implementation
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Teacher:

- Focuses on other tasks instead of monitoring student discussions
- Spends the majority of the time with the same student(s)
- Provides direct instruction on solutions or steps
- Points out mistakes without encouraging student reflection
- Asks leading or yes/no questions
- Affirms or corrects answers without probing for explanations
- Intervenes to correct students' work or answers
- Interrupts student thinking

Teacher:

- Uses instructional or math language routines
- Incorporates time for independent and group work
- Circulates to observe and listen as students engage in the task
- Asks probing questions
- Offers suggestions to sustain student thinking (offer and walk away)
- Encourages reflection on mistakes without providing answers or solutions



Students:

- Hesitate to start
- Work independently during group work
- Are reluctant to contribute ideas when engaged in group work
- Follow the provided steps to solve a task
- Share answers but not thinking

Students:

- Get started on the task
- Explain or demonstrate thinking to other students
- Discuss and record ideas (listening and comparing ideas)

Synthesis



Early Implementation

Teacher:

- Skips the synthesis
- Focuses on the correct answer
- Highlights a variety of strategies with no connection to one another
- Asks leading or yes/no questions
- Affirms or corrects answers without probing for explanations
- Praises correct answers (e.g., "That's right!" or "You got it!")
- Calls on the same students who often give the "right" answer
- Summarizes the learning for the students

Advanced Implementation

Teacher:

- Makes student thinking visible
- Connects student ideas to the learning goal
- Supports students to make connections between strategies
- Asks for justification and clarification from students
- Acknowledges student responses without showing overt approval or correction
- Praises thinking (e.g., "That makes sense." or "I appreciate the way you explained your thinking.")



Students:

- Share answers with the teacher and peers without an explanation
- Wait for the same few students or the teacher to do all the talking and answering
- Are concerned about being correct

Students:

- Explain thinking with the teacher and peers
- Make connections between different strategies during partner or whole group share
- Verbalize level of understanding
- Ask clarifying questions

Cool-Down



Early Implementation

Teacher:

- Skips the cool-down
- Replaces the cool-down with a different activity or misaligned resource
- Uses cool-down exclusively as homework

Advanced Implementation

Teacher:

- Provides time in class for students to complete cool-down



Students:

- Ignore the cool-down

Students:

- Respond in a way that shows their understanding of the learning goal

Post-lesson Reflection & Next Steps

This section includes activities that aren't observable during the lesson but are critical to the instructional process. Use it to guide a post-observation discussion.

	Early Implementation	Advanced Implementation
Reflection	<p>Teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Uses cool-down as a summative assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Moves onto the next lesson without pause for reflection 	<p>Teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reviews cool-down responses after class, comparing them to the lesson learning goals <input type="checkbox"/> Analyzes student work to identify common areas of strength or misunderstanding <input type="checkbox"/> (K-5) Answers the reflection question from the 'About This Lesson' tab
Next Steps	<p>Teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ignores cool-down guidance <input type="checkbox"/> Plans for upcoming lessons without adjusting activities for student understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Uses additional resources without aligning them to student needs <input type="checkbox"/> Finds extra materials to reteach before moving on 	<p>Teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Considers cool-down guidance for follow-up support <input type="checkbox"/> Adjusts upcoming lesson activities based on the insights gained from reviewing cool-downs <input type="checkbox"/> Identifies embedded resources that will support or challenge student needs