

Questions for Data Team Leaders to Use when Facilitating Data Team Meetings

The following questions are intended to serve as a resource to assist the Data Team leader during the meeting. Select questions based on the needs that arise during your Data Team meeting.

Step 1. Collect and chart data and results: What do the data say?

- What are we attempting to measure/monitor?
- Did our assessment measure the skills and/or concepts that we need to monitor?
- Did we notice anything unusual during the assessment that should be addressed?
- Did we include too many items on the assessment, or was it the right length?
- Did the assessment questions require rigorous thinking? (higher levels on Bloom's Taxonomy: evaluation, synthesis, analysis)
- Should we revise any questions for the post-assessment? (Remember that we want to compare pre- and post-assessment results.)

Step 2. Analyze strengths and obstacles: Analyze, then prioritize

- What are the strengths of the student responses we have collected?
- Do any responses stand out?
- What is a sample of an ideal/proficient response? (Do we know what we consider proficient? Do we agree on what proficiency looks like?)
- Which questions had a high number of correct responses?
- Which questions were left blank or had a very low response rate? (We will consider these for targeted instructional/learning objectives.)
- What question or questions seem most difficult for students? On which concepts will we need to give focused and direct instruction?
- What learning needs are evident?

Step 3. Establish goals: set, review, revise

- Is our goal a SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely) goal?
- Specific: students, group, content area, objective(s)
- Measurable: can be measured with an assessment
- Achievable: is our goal within our reach? We need to consider increases in proficient students, advanced students, and students who showed growth.
- Relevant: are these concepts and skills stated in the Power Standards?
- Timely: how much time do we expect to spend focusing on this topic? Three weeks? Six weeks? Not all goals are monthly. Short-term goals often encourage teachers because progress is measured more frequently and teachers see results more quickly.
- Did we complete all the details related to a powerful goal?
- Are we all committed to helping students reach their learning goal?
- What obstacles stand in the way of reaching our student learning goal? (This question could also be asked in step 2. This way any obstacles or reservations are addressed during the meeting.)

Step 4. Select instructional strategies

- What specific best practices and effective teaching strategies will we emphasize during this teaching/learning cycle? (The strategies listed on the template are from *Classroom Instruction That Works* by Marzano, Pickering, and Pollack (2001)).
- Do we need any resources to learn more about the strategies?
- Does everyone know what the strategies look like in action?
- Do we need to model application of the effective teaching strategies during this meeting?
- What does the research say about the effectiveness of the strategies we have chosen?
- Let's revisit the daily strategies that we will use/implement on a daily basis.
- Let's review the strategies we will focus on for a specific skill, process, or concept.
- Do we need to improve our environment for optimal learning?
- Does any aspect of the physical environment have to be addressed (desks, centers, access to materials, cooperative learning, etc.)?
- Do we need to improve the classroom environment to increase the motivational level for all students? How do we encourage risk-taking? How do we motivate students who don't care? How do we invite students who have been disconnected for too long?
- What is our anticipatory set?
- What materials do we need for instruction?
- What materials do students need to accomplish the tasks they must complete?
Do we need materials to provide opportunities for additional practice?
- How many days will we focus on students learning [name specific] concepts/content?
- How many days will we focus on students learning [name specific] skills/processes?
- How many days will we focus on practicing the knowledge?
- What will the assessments and assignments be for all students, and on what days will we assign them?
- After three days of focused instruction, what will confirm to us that the required learning has occurred?
- How will we monitor progress and rigor?
- What exactly will tell us if proficiency has been achieved? Define proficient for a given skill/concept/process.
- How will we prioritize our actions to address these learning needs? Based on these priorities, how should we align and plan instruction?
- How long do we need to spend on the various concepts, skills, and processes we EXPECT students to master by the end of the overall learning time (chapter, unit, time period)?
- What strategies will we implement for those students who lack the foundation necessary to be successful on the new material we will present? (Intervention strategies are usually discussed here.) What short-term intervention should occur? What short-term, flexible grouping is needed for targeted learning to occur? (These small, flexible groups may last for only 20 minutes a day for 4 days, and must not be viewed as permanent groups.) When we prioritize the instructional needs of our students, we focus our efforts and increase the likelihood of their success.

Step 5. Determine results indicators

Results indicators can include teacher and student behaviors, and can use both qualitative and quantitative data.

- How will we know if students are learning as a result of our specific instructional strategies?
- Exactly what should we see students applying after 5 days of instruction, 10 days of instruction, 15 days of instruction?
- What will directly link learning with specific strategies? (For example, teachers use the *flow map* (a nonlinguistic representation) during instruction of concepts and ideas. Teachers then assess student learning by giving students a flow map to complete, noting the important information of cause/effect.)
- In our quick-writes, administered at the end of each day/session/period, what questions will reveal specific but on-target learning?
- What overall application behaviors will we be able to see/note if the desired learning is occurring as a result of our focused instruction and use of instructional strategies?
- How will we confirm that the entire team has implemented the strategies that were collaboratively and collectively agreed upon? To what degree will we know whether the strategies are being implemented as *intended* and *described* during our team meeting? (This is the teacher-to-teacher accountability key.)

Suggested Resources

Ainsworth, L., & Viegut, D. (2006). *Common formative assessments: How to connect standards-based instruction and assessment*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Introductory Level

Piercy, T. (forthcoming). *Compelling conversations*. Englewood, CO: Advanced Learning Press.

Advanced Level

White, S. (2005). *Beyond the numbers*. Englewood, CO: Advanced Learning Press.

White, S. (2005). *Show me the proof!* Englewood, CO: Advanced Learning Press.