SeeMeTeach®

Teacher Exploration and Challenge

Fostering Inclusion, Equitable Learning Opportunities, and Experiences in a Diverse Classroom
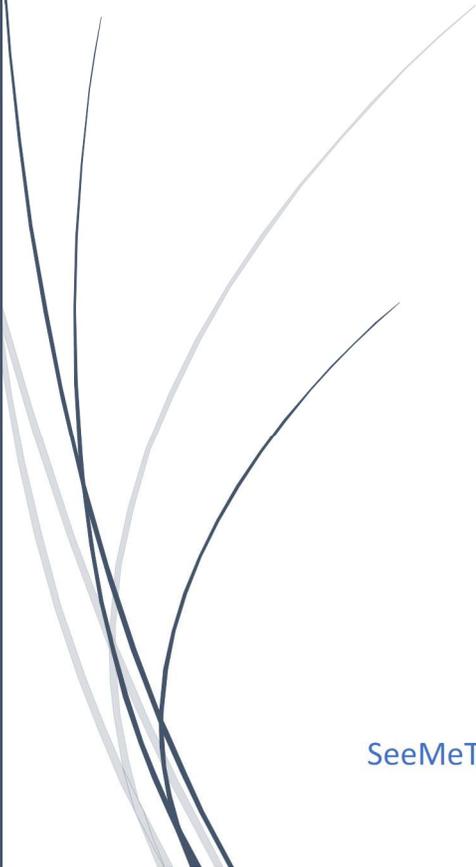
SMT Teacher Exploration and Challenge
Fostering Inclusion, Equitable Learning Opportunities, and Experiences in a Diverse Classroom

The minimal required training to complete this challenge includes:
- Training 1: Setting Up a Lesson Observation in SMT
- Training 2: Qualitative Comments Mode
- Training 3: Quantitative Data and Analysis Mode
- Training 5: Student Actions and Engagement – (S Codes 1-9)

The data collection for this Teacher Challenge will focus on collecting and using L and S codes and the seating chart. ***Note: It is especially important that demographics are designated for this Teacher Challenge.***

Introduction

Classrooms are not a homogenous mass of cookie-cutter students, as each student is unique and different from other learners in multiple ways. The diversity of learners and meeting individual learners' needs make teaching a very challenging enterprise. Yet, maximizing the engagement of all learners is the ultimate target of a good lesson. This module challenges the teacher to examine their classes and explore ways to reach that desirable goal using high-resolution data to guide changes to instruction and measure growth.

Who are the students in our classrooms? According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES), in 2019, 10.4% of students enrolled in the public school system (approximately 5.1 million students) were classified as English learners (ELs). "Students who are identified as English learners (ELs) can participate in language assistance programs to help ensure that they attain English proficiency and meet the academic content and achievement standards expected of all students" (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021). This number demonstrates a growth trend, as in 2010, only 9.2% of students enrolled in the public school system (approximately 4.5 million) were EL students.

In addition, in the 2020-2021 academic year, approximately 15%, or 7.2 million students, received academic accommodations under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). 33% of these students were grouped within the specific learning disability category (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021). Finally, statistics show that in the last decade, the percentage of Hispanic students has increased by 6%, the percentage of white students has decreased by 8%, and the percentage of black students has decreased by 2% (*COE - Racial/Ethnic Enrollment in Public Schools*, 2021).

Looking at these numbers, one can see that the classroom is becoming a more diverse educational environment. As each of these students comes to the classroom with different backgrounds, abilities, and funds of knowledge, all educators must be aware of which students are participating, how much they are participating, and be equipped with the strategies and methods necessary to create and foster a viable learning environment for each of their students to maximize student engagement for all students.

This *Teacher Challenge* includes changing a lesson strategy or teaching model to foster increased opportunities for student engagement in a diverse classroom environment.

Challenge Steps

1) **Teach a Lesson**: First, capture the video and audio of the lesson. Make sure to teach the lesson as you usually would, as this lesson will be used for your baseline data.
   a. **Note**: Set up a seating chart and assign demographics to each student.

2) **Complete the Required SMT Training:** If you still need to do so, complete the required training to learn how to collect the specific data required for this challenge. The minimal required training recommended includes:
   a. Training 1: Setting up a lesson observation in SMT
   b. Training 2: Qualitative Comments Mode
   c. Training 3: Quantitative Data and Analysis Mode
   d. Training 5: Student Actions and Engagement – (S Codes 1-9)

Note: The cheat sheet accompanying each training provides an excellent summary of the training and are valuable resources to keep on hand while you code your recorded lessons.

3) **Collect Data**: Use the SMT teacher observation app to collect baseline data, specifically focusing on student engagement.
4) **Document and Analyze Data**: After you have collected your baseline data, plot the pertinent data on the *Data Summary and Change Chart*.
5) **Revamp Your Teaching:** Implement one change to how you approach student engagement in your classroom. It is recommended to:
   a. Only implement one change or one strategy at a time to determine what is making the difference in student engagement.
   b. Fill out the "My Plan of Action" google form to document your observations and progress through this teacher challenge. This can be used for personal development or as evidence for a yearly observation or pre-service teacher certification program.

Note: See the Implementing Growth and Change section in this Teacher Challenge for suggestions on implementing specific changes to your teaching.

6) **Repeat Challenge Steps 1, 3, 4, and perhaps 5:** One cycle through this process might achieve the desired results, but more than likely, it might take more than one cycle. Teaching is complex, with many variables in play, but know that sometimes a tiny change can have a noticeable and sometimes substantial effect on the learner or the learning environment.

General Student Engagement: Start by looking at how involved your students are as a whole class. The data required to fill in the table below can be found in the *Student Engagement* data analysis section.

Date				
Data	**1st Observation**	**2nd Observation**	**3rd Observation**	**4th Observation**
S Code Total Time %				
Code Summary: S total time %				
S Codes: Total Amount				
St. Engage Sum: S1-S5 # Events				
St. Engage Sum: S6-S9 # Events				
St. Engage Sum: S1-S9 # Events				

Equitable Contributions and Engagement (General Distribution): Next, look at the involvement of ESL, ELL, minority, and special education students. Specifically, look at the *Heat Map* and toggle the demographics to highlight the specific data you are looking for. Compare the contributions of each subset of students' contributions to the entire class's overall contributions. The data to fill in the table below can be found in the *Code Summary* and *Student Engagement* data analysis sections.

Date				
Data	**1st Observation**	**2nd Observation**	**3rd Observation**	**4th Observation**
Overall S Codes *(Code Summary)*				
ESL/ELL Student Contributions *(Student Engagement Heat Map – Toggle Demographics)*				
Minority Student Contributions *(Student Engagement Heat Map – Toggle Demographics)*				
Special Education Student Contributions *(Student Engagement Heat Map – Toggle Demographics)*				

Equitable Contributions and Engagement (Specific Patterns): Next, look at general patterns of how involved the ESL, ELL, minority, and special education students are. For example:
- Are certain students within these subsets of students contributing more than others?
- Are certain students within these subsets of students not contributing during class?

Specifically, look at the *Heat Map* and toggle the demographics to highlight the specific data you are looking for. The data required to fill in the table below can be found in the *Student Engagement* data analysis section.

Observation 1	
Observation 2	
Observation 3	
Observation 4	

Guiding Thoughts: Lessons and possibilities for optimizing student engagement vary. However, there are many things to consider when modifying the learning environment to allow for the potential to increase student engagement of minorities, ESL/ELL students, students with special needs, and reluctant learners.

1. **Student Popsicle Sticks**: Sometimes, teachers habitually call on specific students or only a handful of students raise their hands to participate. Using the Student Popsicle Stick strategy helps educators diversify whom they call on during class and ensure that all students are asked to participate.
   a. To make a set of Student Popsicle Sticks, take a set of wooden popsicle sticks and write out the names of all the students in the class, one per popsicle stick. When the teacher asks a question, instead of calling on a student who raises their hand, they choose a random popsicle stick from the bunch. After the student answers the question, the popsicle stick gets put in a separate pile until each student answers at least one question.
      i. Note: Many students have spent much of their education passively sitting in the classroom and have developed the expectation that they do not need to participate. Therefore, allowing students to "pass" once a month or once a quarter takes a little pressure off of students not used to being called and asked to participate and helps them adjust to assuming the role of an active learner.

2. **Think Pair Share**: For students who may be too shy to speak in front of the group, strategies like Think-Pair-Share are a great way to engage all students and feel more confident since they have a buddy to bounce ideas off of before sharing with the group.
   a. In Think Pair Share, the teacher poses a question. Then prompts students to think about their response. After students are allowed to think individually, the teacher prompts them to turn to their partners and share their ideas. Once they are done sharing with their partners, the teacher can elicit responses from specific students or pairs of students. This easy activity engages all students since each student works with a partner.

3. **Exit Slips**: Exit slips are a great way to engage all students, summarize what they learned at the end of a lesson, and ask any questions they may still have. It also gives the teacher great feedback that can easily be scanned in about 5 minutes or less.
   a. An easy layout is the 3-2-1 exit slip. Students list three concepts they learned, two questions they still have, and one concept they want to learn more about. A scale can also be added where students rate their comprehension of the material on a scale of 1-5. (5 means they could teach it to the next class, three means they understand but need a little more practice, while a rating of one means they didn't understand the lesson.)

4. **Digital Response Systems**: Studies have shown that digital response systems like Kahoot not only increase student engagement in the classroom but also help to improve specific language skills among ESL and ELL students (Mohd Muhridza et al., 2018). In addition, some of these platforms offer subscriptions that provide a data analysis of each session, allowing the teacher to see which students got what questions wrong. This additional insight into student comprehension can allow the teacher to facilitate small group remediation for specific students easily.

5. **Whiteboards**: Whiteboards are a simple yet powerful technique that will engage all students in the classroom. As each student has their whiteboard, all students are responsible for answering any question the teacher asks. In addition, the teacher can easily and quickly scan the room to see which students understand the material, which students need help with the concept, and what misconceptions remain.
   a. See *Resource 1* below for more information.

6. **Choosing an Engaging Strategy**: Dialogues are a powerful learning tool that allows all students to participate and learn at their own pace with a partner. Each dialogue is written as a two-person play, centered around specific content such as mitosis, Jamestown, or similes and metaphors. Dialogues are another great strategy to engage those students who are more hesitant to contribute in front of the whole class. Because each pair is only involved with each other, and the entire class is acting out their version of the play, individual students do not feel like they are the center of attention.
   A. *See Resource 2* below for more information.

Resources That May Help Modify Instruction and Specific Interventions to Increase Checks for Understanding

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Resource 1: Maximizing Student Engagement in the Classroom
- Using whole-group response tools and strategies to learn about students' understanding and provide maximum feedback to the teacher.

Resource 2: Dialogues for the Science, English, Social Studies, or Health Education Classroom
- Dialogues are both a strategy and an extensive set of teacher-written resources to foster reading, listening, and writing that ultimately engages all students in the lesson.

References:

COE - Racial/Ethnic Enrollment in Public Schools. (2021, May). Nces.ed.gov. https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cge

Dialogues for the Classroom. Moose Moss Press. www.moosemosspress.com

Mohd Muhridza, N. H., Mohd Rosli, N. A., Sirri, A., & Abdul Samad, A. (2018). Using Game-based Technology, KAHOOT! for Classroom Engagement. LSP International Journal, 5(2). https://doi.org/10.11113/lspi.v5n2.77

National Center for Education Statistics. (2021, May). COE - English Language Learners in Public Schools. Nces.ed.gov. https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cgf

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