

Mentor SUPPLEMENT

Beginning Teacher Seminar 3
SPRING 2020



Reflective Practice

Charlotte Danielson points to the power of cognition, and the importance of professional conversations focused on the thinking behind the teaching, saying, “If one acknowledges, as one must, the cognitive nature of teaching, then conversations about teaching must be about cognition” (Danielson, p. 7).

Effective mentors facilitate reflection and sustain a beginning teacher’s thinking about thinking—or metacognition within professional conversations. The following strategies promote reflective practice within feedback conversations with beginning teachers and colleagues:

- **Use conversation prompts that elicit a change in thinking.** Ask, “How has your thinking about...evolved over the year?”
- **Participate in interactive journaling:** Invite your mentee to participate in interactive journaling. Start by journaling about a shared experience you’ve had with the teacher. Model reflection with margin notes and

questions that prompt the beginning teacher to make connections to, and reflect on their practice. Allow them to keep the journal until the next meeting to read, respond, and complete an entry of their own to share with you.

- **Practice Silence.** As the year closes, be conscious of the amount of time you lead discussion with your mentee and intentionally decrease lead time. Turn the conversation over to the mentee giving them space to talk, and using as few coaching prompts as possible. Ask them to set the meeting agenda, and identify desired outcomes to build capacity and ownership in their growth.

Danielson, C. 2016. “Talk about Teaching: Leading Professional Conversations”. Corwin Press. Thousand Oaks, CA.



All links and resources in this Supplement may be accessed via the online PDF:

<https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/educator-development-support/pdf/beginning-teacher-seminar-3-mentor-supplement.pdf>

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FfT Components

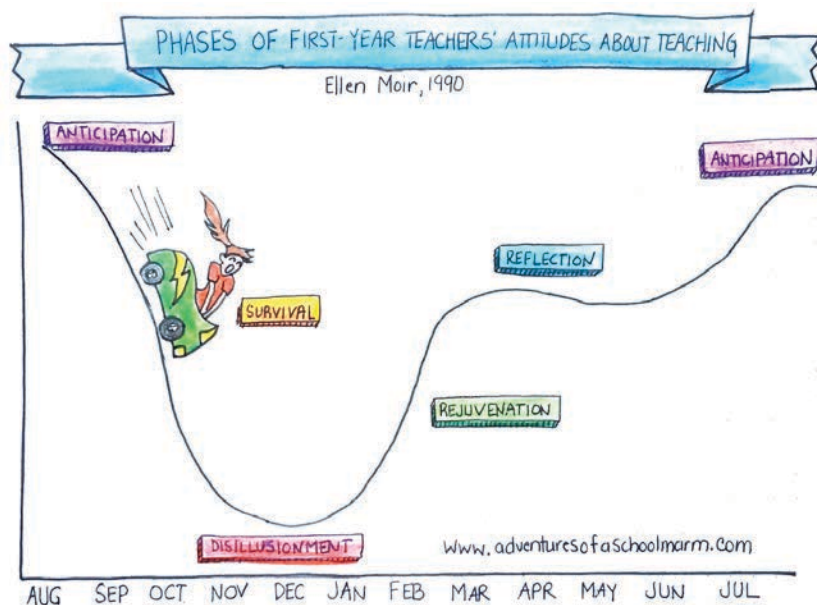
- Component 3c Engaging Students in Learning
- Component 3d: Using Assessment in Instruction
- Component 4a: Reflecting on Teaching

Student-Centered Practice

- Encouraging students to explain their thinking
- Students assess their own work and make adjustments

“We do not learn from experience. We learn from reflecting on experience.”

— John Dewey



Timely Support for Beginning Teachers

Reflection is ongoing and part of the continuous improvement process. The months of April through June are the perfect time to focus professional conversations on reflection. It's during this time that teachers begin reflecting on what's worked, what's challenged them, and how they might address challenges going forward. They can anticipate what their second year might look like and feel a sense of accomplishment and pride as they note all they've accomplished. Mentoring conversations that highlight accomplishments can add to the beginning teacher's sense of accomplishment and support the identification of potential goals for the next school year. Present specific evidence of the year's growth to help the beginning teacher reflect and prepare for end-of-year professional conversations with their peers and evaluator.

Mentor Reflective Practice

Ongoing reflection is important to mentor professional growth. As the year closes, consider the following reflective strategies to inform your practice:

- Review the reflective practice coaching competencies identified within DPI's [Coaching Competency Practice Profile](#). Three components are central to reflective practice: developing coaching capacity through professional learning, developing emotional and intellectual resistance, and seeking and applying feedback for self-improvement.
- Use [New Teacher Center Mentor Practice Standards](#) to assess areas of strength and areas for improvement related to foundational, structural, and instructional mentor practices.

Coaching Corner

Effective mentoring relationships require trust. As the year closes, there is a final step to solidifying the trust you've built with beginning teachers -- Turn over records of your conversations to the beginning teacher.

Meeting logs, artifacts of evidence (to include observation notes, goals, journals and other records of the work) belong with the beginning teacher. If this makes you uncomfortable, collaborate with the district Human Resources Coordinator to establish a process that maintains confidentiality such as a badge, or certificate of completion.

Using the Framework for Teaching

The Framework for Teaching (FFT) is a common, research-based framework of practice. It supports a mentor's assessment of reflective practice and provides language for practical, applicable feedback. Look to the critical attributes of Component 4a of the Framework for Teaching to assess and provide feedback related to reflective practice:

- The teacher accurately assesses the effectiveness of instructional activities used.
- The teacher identifies specific ways in to improve lessons.
- The teacher's assessment of the lesson is thoughtful and includes specific indicators of effectiveness.
- The teacher's suggestions for improvement draw on an extensive repertoire.

TOOLS, READS, & RESOURCES

- Danielson, C. (2016). *Talk about teaching! Leading professional conversations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- New Teacher Center. (n.d). [The Basic Toolbox for Mentors](#)
- Aguilar, E. (2013). [Prompts for Daily or Weekly Reflection](#)
- WI Department of Public Instruction. (2020). [Coaching Competency Practice Profile](#)

