

## **Ladder of Feedback Guide for Classroom Observations**

The "Ladder of Feedback"\* is a protocol or structure that establishes a culture of trust and constructive support by sequencing feedback in order that is constructive.

**What class is being observed?  
Feedback for?  
Feedback from?**

### **Value:**

*What did you see in the class that you find to be particularly impressive, innovative, strong, or noteworthy?*

1. Valuing builds a supportive culture of understanding and will help your feedback colleague identify strengths in their work that they might not have recognized.
2. Valuing reminds your feedback colleague of the parts of his/her lesson that should be preserved when making improvements.
3. Expressing your appreciation for learners and their ideas is fundamental to the process of constructive feedback.
4. Stressing the positive points and offering honest compliments sets a supportive tone

### **Clarify:**

*Are there aspects of the class or lesson that you don't believe you understood?*

1. **Ensure that you're clear about what your feedback colleague was trying to accomplish in the lesson by asking some questions or stating any assumptions you've made.**

- "I wasn't sure if you meant that students will understand X, but that's what I assumed, so now you can understand where my feedback is coming from."
- If you are approaching your observations from a particular frame or perspective, state that.
- "I was interested in looking at how students were interacting in the lesson, so my feedback is focused mainly on that aspect."
- This form is adapted by Ron Ritchhart from the "Ladder of Feedback" developed by Daniel Wilson, Harvard Project Zero

### **Raise Questions & Concerns:**

*What questions, issues, tensions, or concerns were raised for you within the lesson?*

1. **Share your concerns, not as criticisms, but as honest thoughts and questions, not as absolute judgments of right and wrong.**
- "It might be interesting to explore . . ."

- “I wonder what would happen if . . .”
- “Perhaps you have thought about this, but . . .”
- “A question this raised for me was . . .”
- “One of the things this got me thinking about was . . .”
- “Observing the class made me more aware of the tension between . . .?”
- “A concern raised for me was . . .”

### **Suggest:**

*Do you have suggestions for refining the lesson, moving forward, or on how to address the concerns you identified?*

1. Help your feedback colleague make improvements by sharing your ideas on how he/she might refine or advance the lesson.
  2. Suggestions can also be forward looking by putting forth ideas on where the lesson might go next or how a teacher might build on students’ ideas and work.
- “it might be interesting to follow up on that issue of\_\_\_\_, by...”

### **Thank:**

*How has observing and giving feedback enhanced your own understanding of teaching and learning?*

1. Tell your feedback colleague what you have learned from this experience.
  2. Share the questions and issues you will take away to think more about.
- “This lesson has made me think more about how I might...”