

Classroom Observation Study

West Seattle Elementary School

Seattle Public Schools

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Classroom Observation Study

Prepared by



BAKER ■ EVALUATION ■ RESEARCH ■ CONSULTING

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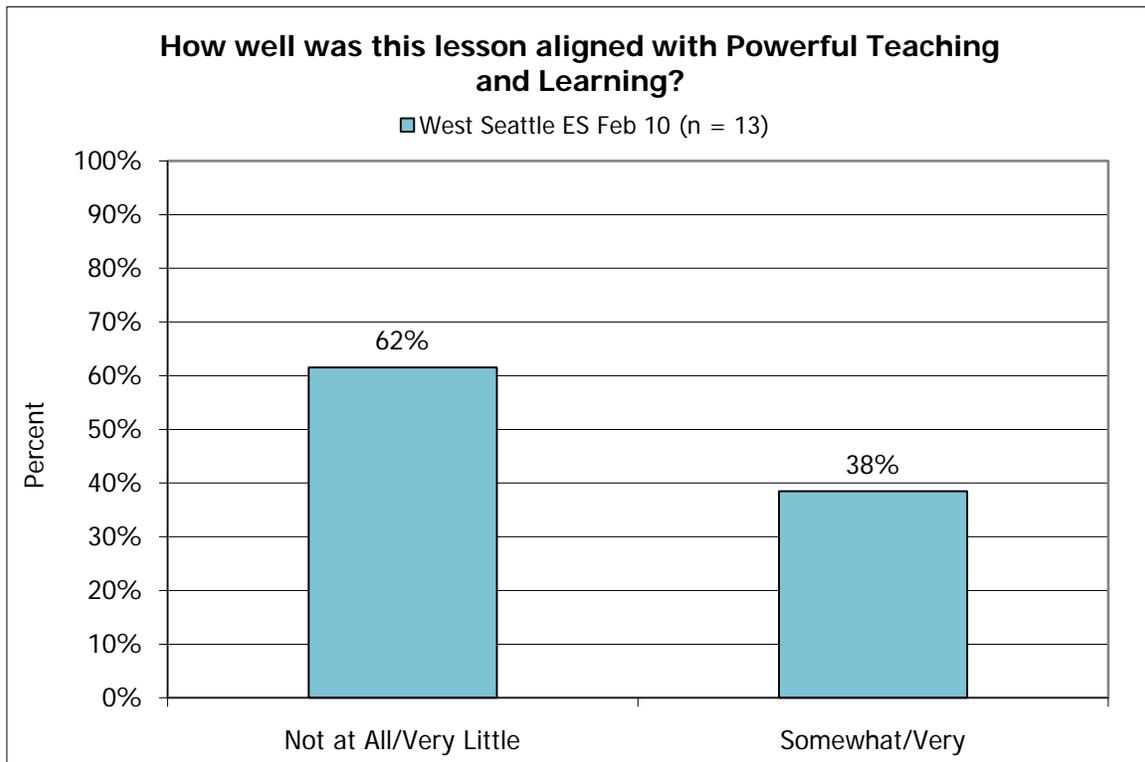
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STAR Classroom Observation Study

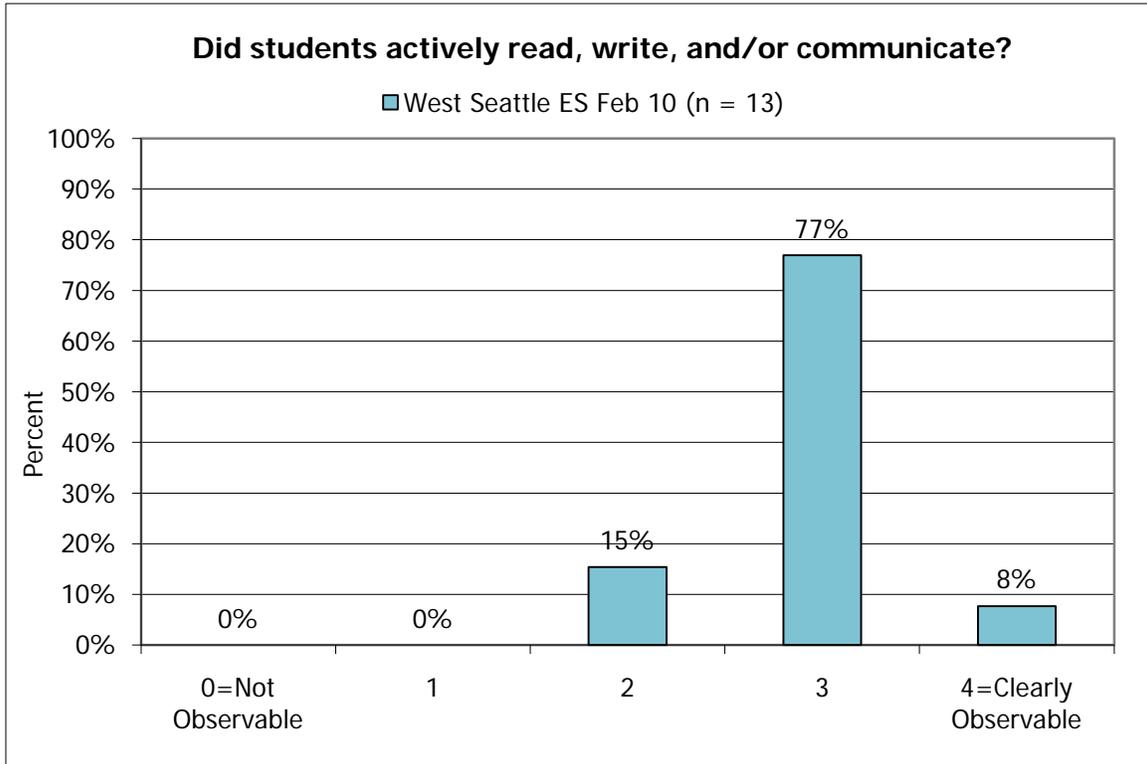
The STAR Classroom Observation Protocol™ is a research-based instrument designed to measure the degree to which Powerful Teaching and Learning™ is present during a classroom observation. As part of the design of the STAR Protocol, only the most significant and basic indicators are used to determine the presence of Powerful Teaching and Learning™. Thus, the STAR protocol allows for ease of use with any classroom observation and aligns with the educational improvement goals and standards for effective instruction. The STAR Protocol helps participants view Powerful Teaching and Learning™ through the lens of 5 Essential Components and 15 Indicators.

The goal of this data collection is to determine the extent to which general instructional practices throughout the school align with Powerful Teaching and Learning™. Findings within this report highlight West Seattle Elementary School's STAR classroom observation results for 2010. The results for the Essential Components are shown on pages 2 through 4, and the results for the Indicators are on page 5. A summary and recommendations are included at the end of the report.

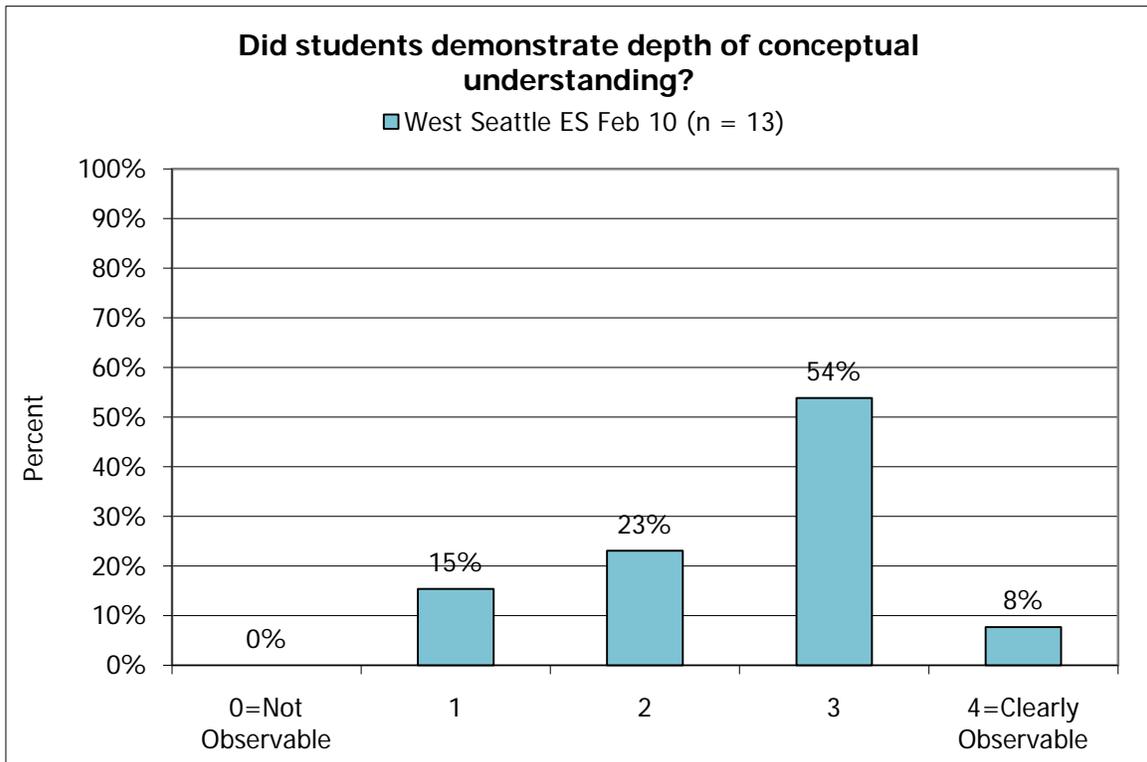
OVERALL RESULTS



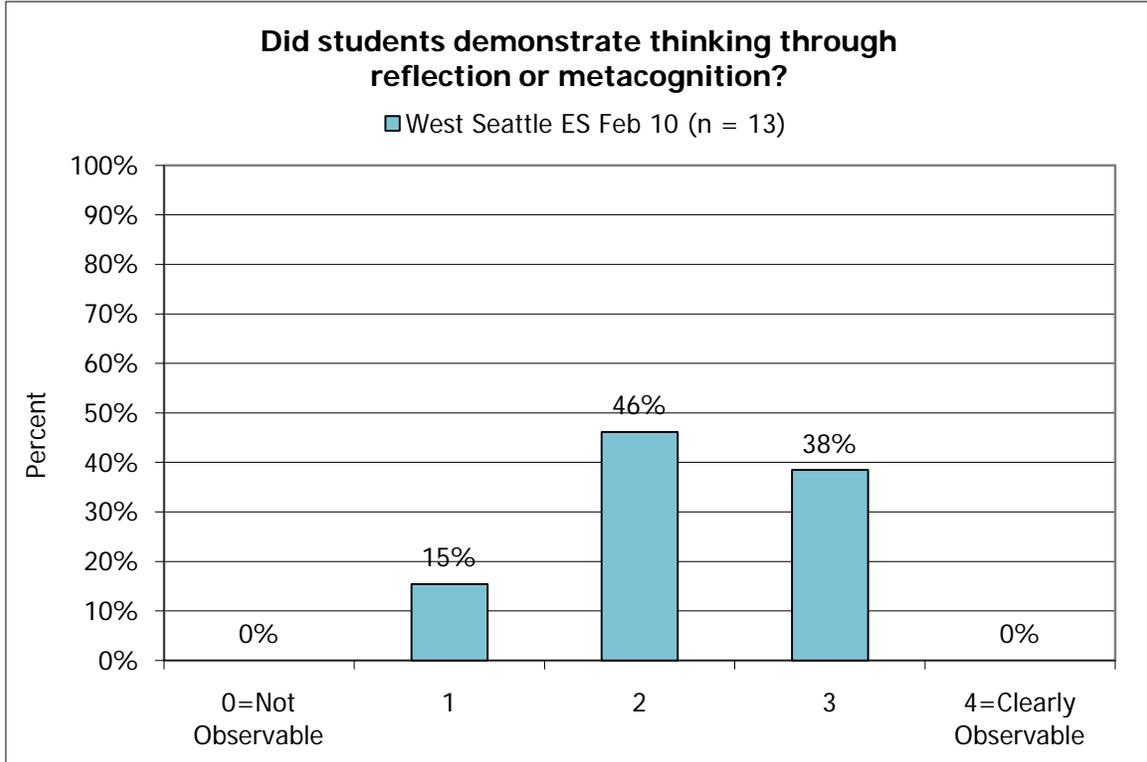
SKILLS



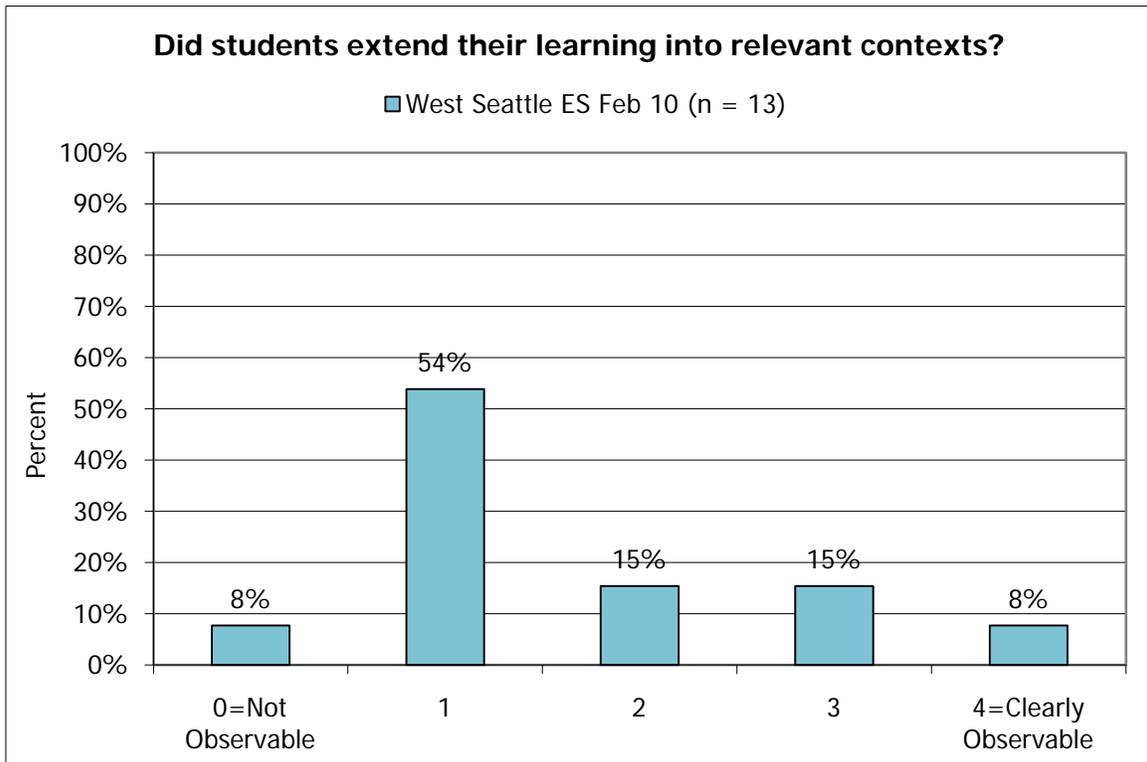
KNOWLEDGE



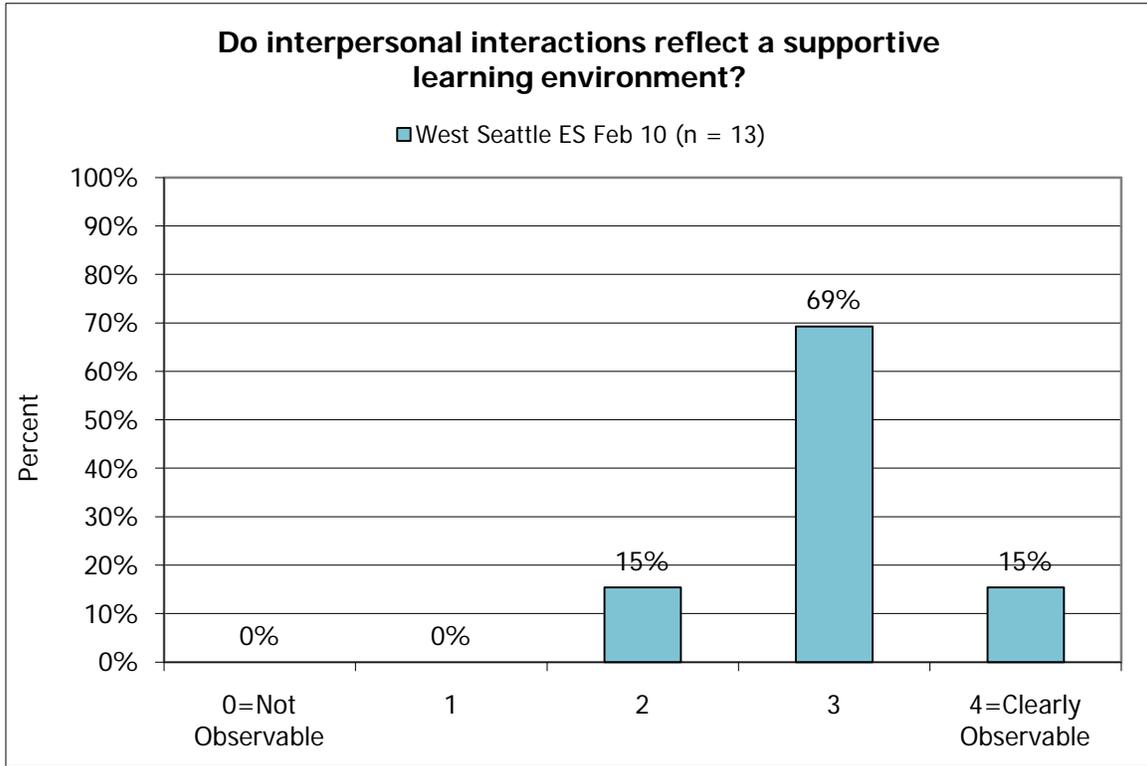
Thinking



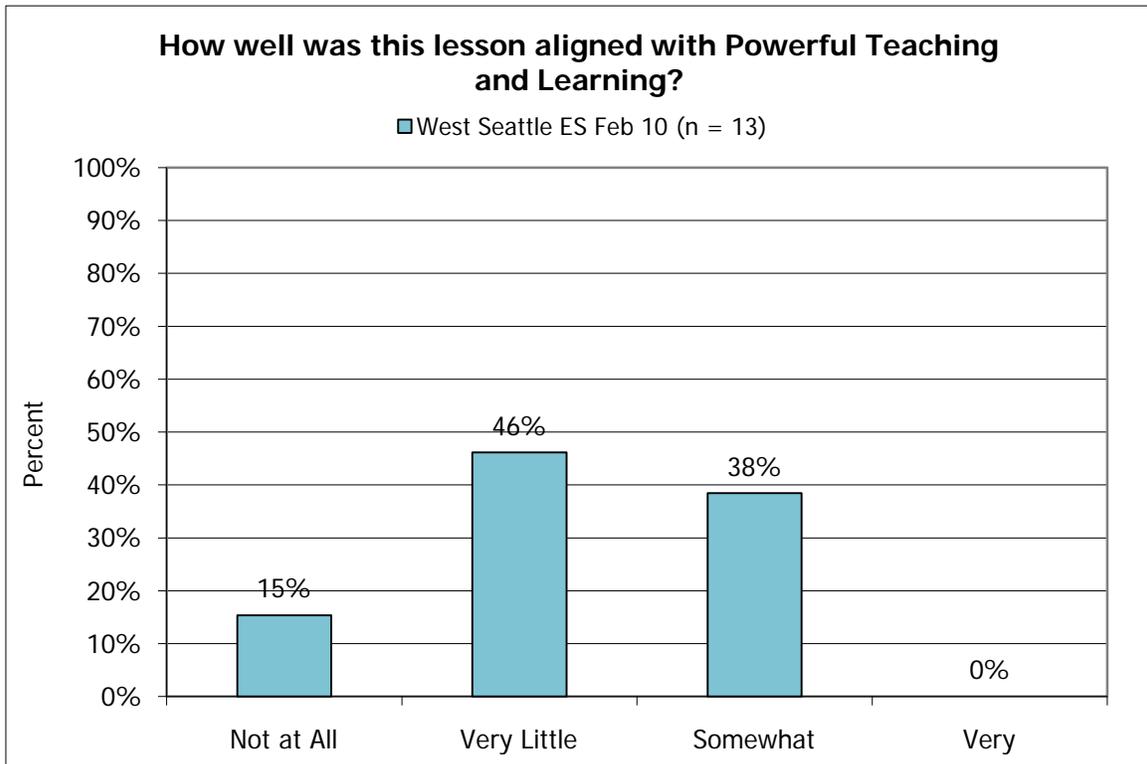
APPLICATION



Relationships



OVERALL (SCALES 1-4)



Disaggregated STAR Indicator Results

<i>Skills Indicators</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
1. Teacher provides an opportunity for students to develop and/or demonstrate skills through elaborate reading, writing, speaking, modeling, diagramming, displaying, solving and/or demonstrating.	0%	0%	8%	77%	15%
				92%	
2. Students' skills are used to demonstrate conceptual understanding, not just recall.	0%	15%	38%	46%	0%
				46%	
3. Students demonstrate appropriate methods and/or use appropriate tools within the subject area to acquire and/or represent information.	0%	0%	54%	46%	0%
				46%	
<i>Knowledge Indicators</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
4. Teacher assures the focus of the lesson is clear to all students.	0%	15%	23%	54%	8%
				62%	
5. Students construct knowledge and/or manipulate information and ideas to build on prior learning, to discover new meaning, and to develop conceptual understanding, not just recall.	0%	15%	23%	54%	8%
				62%	
6. Students engage in significant communication, which could include speaking/writing, that builds and/or demonstrates conceptual knowledge and understanding.	0%	15%	46%	31%	8%
				38%	
<i>Thinking Indicators</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
7. Teacher uses a variety of questioning strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and/or communication skills.	0%	15%	46%	38%	0%
				38%	
8. Students develop and/or demonstrate effective thinking processes either verbally or in writing.	0%	8%	46%	46%	0%
				46%	
9. Students demonstrate verbally or in writing that they are intentionally reflecting on their own learning.	0%	38%	31%	31%	0%
				31%	
<i>Application Indicators</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
10. Teacher relates lesson content to other subject areas, personal experiences and contexts.	8%	54%	15%	15%	8%
				23%	
11. Students demonstrate a meaningful personal connection by extending learning activities in the classroom and/or beyond the classroom.	8%	38%	31%	15%	8%
				23%	
12. Students produce a product and/or performance for an audience beyond the class.	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
				0%	
<i>Relationships Indicators</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
13. Teacher assures the classroom is a positive, inspirational, safe, and challenging academic environment.	0%	0%	15%	54%	31%
				85%	
14. Students work collaboratively to share knowledge, complete projects, and/or critique their work.	15%	15%	38%	31%	0%
				31%	
15. Students experience instructional approaches that are adapted to meet the needs of diverse learners (differentiated learning).	8%	15%	31%	31%	15%
				46%	

Summary and Recommendations

Overall, researchers observed instruction that was aligned with Powerful Teaching and Learning™ in 38% of the lessons. The *Skills* and *Relationships* indicators scored highest on the Protocol. Researchers observed supportive learning environments in which, in the majority of the classrooms, students were actively reading, writing, and communicating. When reviewing data it is important to remember that researchers observed on a day where many students, sometimes more than half of a class, were being pulled out for ESL testing. To ensure continuous improvement, we recommend that staff members explore three specific Essential Components of the STAR Classroom Observation Protocol™ :

Knowledge: The *Knowledge Component* scored at a moderate level on the Protocol, 62% of lessons scored showed evidence (scored a 3 or 4) of the Component. In most classrooms, teachers conveyed high standards of performance for all students, made lesson objectives clear, and organized lessons around essential questions. However, many of the observations recorded teaching and learning that focused on *recall*-level knowledge or simple copying of correct information. Researchers observed some classes in which learning was teacher-led rather than student-centered, and classes in which lessons were not very rigorous or challenging. We recommend staff members increase their efforts to provide students with opportunities to develop and/or use conceptual knowledge and develop critical thinking skills. Lessons should be reexamined in terms of the extent to which they allow students to engage in substantive communication that builds conceptual knowledge.

Thinking: The *Thinking Component* scored at a moderate level on the Protocol, with 38% of the lessons scoring a 3 or 4. Researchers observed several instances where teachers were using a variety of questioning strategies to probe student thinking and reflection. However, the majority of questions were focused on obtaining the “correct” answer or were answered by the teacher before students could respond. Questions such as “How did you get that answer?”, “Why do you think that?” and “Do you agree? Why or why not?” promote critical thinking and reflection. We recommend teachers focus their efforts on developing higher-order questions that allow students to articulate their thinking strategies, to express their opinions, and to make connections to text or to self. Two techniques that are likely to make a big difference are (1) probe correct responses with two to five follow-up questions, and (2) if more than half of the students raise their hands to respond to a question, have them turn and talk to a partner for one minute before taking answers from the whole class. This allows multiple responses to a single question and gives students an opportunity to explain their thinking to peers.

Application: The *Application Component* scored the lowest on the Protocol, with 23% of lessons scoring a 3 or 4. Researchers observed some lessons where students were making personal connections to texts, discussing school wide behavioral issues, and writing personal letters to characters in stories. Students benefit from such experiences, and it is recommend that teachers find more ways to connect learning within and beyond the classroom to make lessons relevant for students. Increased relevance also increases student conceptual knowledge and higher-level thinking skills. We recommend staff members work together to generate additional ideas for extending student learning. Referring to the three Indicators, it is a reasonable strategy to incorporate Indicators 10 and 11 in each lesson and Indicator 12 every month.

STAR Classroom Observation

Reflection Page

Use this page to take notes, synthesize information, draw conclusions, and make plans

General observations, comments, questions regarding the data

What is/are the highest scoring Essential Component(s)? _____

What is/are the lowest scoring Essential Component(s)? _____

What is/are the highest scoring Indicator(s)? _____

What is/are the lowest scoring Indicator(s)? _____

What are some areas that we could all focus on? _____

What should we do next? _____

Additional Notes