The Classroom Check-Up | **Observational Definitions**

The following provides definitions of the frequency and engagement data to gather during CCU classroom observations. Examples and non-examples are provided.

Overall Praise Definition: A verbal statement or gesture that indicates approval of a desired student academic or social behavior. On occasion, a teacher may use a pleasant tone when conveying disapproval. Praise occurs when the interaction is based on approval of the student's behavior—not the overall tone. Praise can be provided to an individual student, group of students, or whole class.

Behavior-specific Praise: Teacher provides specific feedback about the behavior they want to see more of.

Examples	*Non-examples*
• **Teacher:** "*Thank you for raising your hand.*"	• **Teacher:** "*James, thank you.*" (General)
• **Teacher:** "*Everyone has their eyes on me. Good.*"	• **Teacher:** "*Keep it up.*" (General)
• **Teacher:** "*You are all working so hard on math.*"	• **Teacher:** "*Good work!*" (General)
• **Teacher:** "*Table 3 has been listening and working hard.*" Teacher gives the table a point toward a reward. (specific statement and nonverbal equals one behavior-specific praise)	• **Teacher:** "*Remember to raise your hand before you answer.*" (Precorrection)
	• **Teacher:** "*That is incorrect.*" (Not praise)

General Praise: No specific feedback about student behavior is provided.

Examples	*Non-examples*
• **Nonverbals:** Thumbs up, high five, pat on the back, points, tokens, stickers	• **Teacher:** "*Shannon, thank you for putting your things away quietly.*" (Specific)
• **Teacher**: "*Kennedy, thank you.*"	• **Teacher:** "*Super. You guys finished your work.*" (Specific)
• **Teacher:** "*Super job.*"	• **Teacher:** "*Please do your best.*" (Not praise)
• **Teacher:** "*Good work!*"	• **Teacher:** "*China and Kenadi are ready to share!*" (Specific)
• **Teacher:** "*Nice work, everyone!*"	
• **Teacher:** While giving a point to Table 3, "*Table 3, you are doing a great job!*" (nonverbal and general verbal count as one general praise)	

Reprimand/Correction Definition: Verbal comments or gestures made by the teacher indicating disapproval of student behavior. The tone may be pleasant, but the interaction indicates disapproval of a behavior. On occasion, you may observe harsh, critical, or sarcastic reprimands (take note to share these instances during feedback).

TIP: In most instances, if you code a reprimand, a disruptive behavior occurred right before this. In rare cases, you may observe a reprimand of a disruptive behavior that occurred outside of the classroom (e.g., reprimand from teacher to students after recess because of misbehavior on playground).

Examples	*Non-examples*
• **Teacher:** "*Jenn, that's talking out. Please raise your hand before you speak.*" • **Teacher:** "*Christian, please have a seat.*" (When Christian gets out of his seat) • **Teacher:** "*I am talking, eyes on me.*" (When group of students are talking) • **Nonverbal:** Use of proximity, finger to lips when students are talking. • **Teacher:** "*Class, your voices are loud. Use an inside voice.*" • **Nonverbal:** Teacher writes point on board for the class toward losing recess. • **Nonverbal:** Teacher gives a warning point to a student who talks out. • **Teacher** (**in sarcastic tone):** "*Wow, Kent finally joined us.*" (Harsh)	• **Teacher:** "*No, the answer is 8.*" • **Teacher:** "*Kennedy is sitting quietly waiting for directions.*" (When Lauren is talking to peer) (Specific praise used to get other student on task) • **Teacher:** "*I am looking for students who are showing me they are ready to work.*" • **Teacher:** "*If you are finished, you may read a book without talking.*" • **Teacher:** "*Heads down on your desk when you are done.*" • **Teacher:** "*Caroline, when you are done, turn in your work.*" • **Teacher (walks around room praising students who are working to try and get others on-task):** "*I see Colleen working. I see Christa working.*" (Specific praise)

Opportunities to Respond (OTRs) Definition: An instructional question, statement, or gesture made by the teacher that seeks an academic response. OTRs must have an academic response component to them and do not include statements or directives that relate to behavior only (i.e., "*Pick up your pencil*"). Record one OTR for each question, even if the teacher repeats the same question to a different student. If one OTR is provided to the full classroom, this counts as one OTR. If an OTR is provided to a group of students and they all respond at once, this is one OTR. However, if a table of students each provide an answer one after the other, this is considered an OTR for each student.

TIP: Sometimes teachers repeat themselves, (e.g., "So, what is the main theme of this story? What is the main topic that we see throughout? The theme here is what? James, what do you think?). This is one OTR, although the teacher asked a few questions, because the teacher may have repeated the question, but in the end only one response was requested.

Examples	*Non-examples*
• **Teacher:** "*What is the capital of Missouri?*"	• **Teacher:** "*Please put your books in your desk.*"
• **Nonverbal:** Teacher points to a student for a response.	• **Teacher:** "*How many people got all of the problems correct?*"
• **Teacher:** "*Kennedy, what is 4 x 4?*"	• **Teacher:** "*Tyler, do you need help?*"
• **Teacher:** "*Class, give me a thumbs up if you hear the sound 'a' in 'cat.'*"	• **Teacher:** "*Class, eyes on me.*"
• **Nonverbal:** Teacher nods (gestures) to a student for a response.	• **Teacher:** "*Remember, 4 x 4 = 16.*"
• **Teacher:** Asks a rhetorical question, but students answer anyway.	• **Teacher:** "*Did everyone have a nice weekend?*"
• **Teacher:** Gives a problem and students write their answers on white boards.	• **Teacher:** Modeling of problems/activity is NOT coded as an OTR unless the teacher asks for a response during the modeling.
	• **Teacher:** Asks a rhetorical question that does not elicit a student response.

Correct Academic Responding: When observing, take notice of whether or not students are responding correctly to the OTRs. This is important because if students are not answering them correctly, the content may be too challenging, which can lead to student disengagement and disruptions. If they are getting everything correct, this could mean the content is too easy, which can lead to student disengagement and disruptions. Also, notice if only one or a few students are getting information correct. This will be important feedback to the teacher.

Student Disruptive Behavior Definition: Student displays a behavior that violates the classroom expectations, which interferes with instruction. Typically, the teacher must reprimand the behavior for it to be considered disruptive. This helps to avoid a situation where you are counting actions such as students talking out when the teacher doesn't view this as problematic. Aggressive physical or verbal behavior is considered disruptive with or without a teacher reprimand. The following are some specific possible disruptive behaviors.

> **TIP:** *If something seems as though it has disrupted instruction or other students, then it probably is a disruption.*

Talking Out: Any vocalization made by a student that was not solicited or violates the classroom rule for making a comment or speaking that results in a teacher reprimand.

Examples	*Non-examples*
• Student cries out "*Me. Me. Me!*" when teacher provides an opportunity to respond.	• Coughing, sneezing, appropriate clearing of throat, or hiccups.
• **Teacher:** "*Please raise your hand before talking, Caroline.*"	• Noises made by blowing of nose or any noise associated with a stuffy nose.
• Student asks a question or makes a comment unrelated to the academic task (e.g., Teacher calls on student for a response to "*What is 2+2?*" Student replies, "*I saw a movie this weekend.*" (No reprimand because this disrupts instruction)	
• Rather than answer a question, a student tattles on another student. ("*He isn't working.*") (No reprimand needed)	
• Humming, singing, whistling, deep sighs, clucking of tongue or other noise made with mouth that results in a reprimand.	

Noncompliance/Defiance: Not following a teacher directive and/or refusing to participate in classroom activities.	
Examples	*Non-examples*
• Student refuses to complete assigned work or answer question asked by teacher. • Student cries, "*No*," or puts his head down following a teacher request to come to the board.	• Teacher asks student to come to the board to complete a math problem. The student gets up from their seat, comes to the board, but answers the question incorrectly. • A student leaves the room to use the restroom with permission when a new activity begins.

Negative Verbal/Physical Interactions: Displaying physical or verbal aggression toward another person or toward objects, including using profanity.	
Examples	*Non-examples*
• Student slams a book on their desk and leaves the room. • Student hits, pokes, bites, kicks, chokes, or throws an object at a peer or teacher.	• Student touches the arm of a peer to gain their attention. • Student accidently drops a book or other object, making a loud noise.

Student Engagement Definition: Student is demonstrating the assigned/approved activity in the absence of disruptive behavior. Signs of engagement include (a) attending to the material and the task; (b) making an appropriate motor response such as writing or looking at the teacher; (c) asking for assistance or waiting for assistance in an acceptable manner (i.e., raising hand quietly); and (d) waiting appropriately for the teacher to begin or continue with instruction.

> *TIP: If you are not sure if a student is engaged (e.g., seems to be staring off), it is best to give them the benefit of the doubt. You are just giving your best estimate of the percentage of students who seem engaged versus not to determine if this is an area for improvement for the teacher. Classrooms with a high level of disruptive behavior will also have lower engagement.*