

Helpful Language to Use in Coaching Conversations

1. It's wonderful to step into this classroom and see [point out specifics].
2. I noticed that . . .
3. The children were [engaged, working, etc.] except for . . . Why do you think this was happening?
4. What were you hoping would happen when . . .?
5. When I was watching, I was excited about . . .
6. What has happened lately that you felt really excited and pleased about?
7. They were enjoying . . .
8. They were really learning actively when . . . Does that fit with your sense of what was going on?
9. What let you know that they were understanding?
10. Can you help me understand what was happening when . . .?
11. Maybe this will help. Try [a specific action or technique] and let me know how it works for you.
12. Try this [book idea] and give me some feedback on how it went.
13. What are your priorities for these children?
14. What do you want these children to be able to do in [time period]?
15. Did they perform as you expected today?
16. Talk about [child, book, event].
17. I was impressed with the children's [independence, enjoyment, oral discussion, reading, writing, etc.].
18. You look like you are really enjoying these children.
19. I was listening to the respectful way children talk to one another. What did you do to help achieve this?
20. You seem concerned about [event, child, time, etc.] Can you talk about it?
21. I thought [child] was [attitude, behavior, etc.] Is that right? Can you tell me more?
22. How can I help you in your teaching? [I have a suggestion. Tell me what you think.]
23. They were [behavior]. Is that typical?
24. You [teacher action]. Can you talk about your decision?
25. Was this typical [morning, reading group, lesson, etc.]?

Lyons, C. & Pinnell, G. S. (2001). *Systems for change in literacy education: A guide to professional development*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, p. 143.

Ways to Facilitate Socially Constructed Dialogue

- Clarifying- use student artifacts to clarify interpretation
- Challenging- call for teachers to give evidence
- Eliciting- asking for more information
- Extending- take teachers from their current understandings to new understandings
- Shaping Language- develop shared understandings
- Linking- to other PD sessions, resources, experiences, etc.
- Reinforcing/affirming- agreement and emphasis
- Summarizing- a quick check with the group to sum up what has been said
- Restating-clarifying language or understandings

Forbes, S. & Briggs, C. (2006). Fostering teacher learning through dialogue in training sessions. *Journal of Reading Recovery*. Columbus, OH: RRCNA.