

Pre-training task

Class Observation using the Diversity Responsive Assessment tool by Taylor and Sobel (2007)

Important! This task is to be completed before the training to help us have a fruitful discussion and share thoughts. You will practise close, evidence-based observation using the Diversity Responsive Assessment (DRA) tool. The task builds skills in accurately observing classroom interactions, identifying how teaching and assessment respond to learner diversity, and reflecting on possible next steps for inclusive practice.

Where to find the tool? The tool is on page 62 of your Paperback training pack, or on the project website: CPD Programme » Module 2 » Unit 4
(<https://blog.westminster.ac.uk/englishincentralasia/forum/module-2/>)

After completing the task, you will be able to:

- Read and interpret the DRA tool carefully and apply it to a live class observation.
- Take detailed, objective observational notes that map to the five sections of the tool.
- Provide evidence-based judgments and reasoned suggestions for improvement.
- Share findings in a short debrief and reflect on the limitations of an observation in class and on the website.

Please read the instructions below very carefully:

Before the observation

1. Find/download the observation tool. Read the whole tool once to get a sense of the five sections, then read it again slowly and highlight key prompts/criteria.
2. Familiarise yourself with the five sections. Make sure you know what evidence each section requires.
3. Prepare your materials:
 - A printed copy of the DRA tool or an electronic copy that you can edit.
 - A separate notebook or digital document for raw observational notes.
 - A method for time-stamping observations (watch, phone).
4. Brief the class teacher/colleague: explain that you are observing for developmental purposes and will not judge individual pupils. Confirm any confidentiality. The names of the people you observed will not be named during the workshop.



During the observation

1. Sit where you can see most of the class without disrupting learning. Note the lesson context (date, time, year group, class size, topic, seating layout).
2. Read the first section of the tool again. Begin taking raw notes in a separate notebook. Alternatively, feel free to take your notes in the observation tool under the comments section.
3. Use time stamps (e.g. 00:04, 00:12) and short labels (e.g. Q&A, group work, modelling).
4. Capture short quotes from the teacher and pupils (no more than a sentence per quote is ideal). These comments are valuable evidence.
5. Note observable behaviours and interactions. For each significant event, write:
 - What happened? (behaviour/interaction)
 - Who was involved? (teacher, individual student, small group)
 - When? (time stamp)
 - Why might it matter? (brief analytic note)
6. Map evidence to the five sections. As you observe, match the evidence to the appropriate section of the DRA tool. If something relates to several sections, note it under each relevant heading in your notes.
7. Be specific and objective. Avoid assuming motivations or intentions. Describe what you see and hear first, then add a short interpretation prefaced with phrases such as "This suggests..." or "This may indicate...".
8. Pay attention to diversity cues. These include language use, access to resources, grouping patterns, teacher checks for understanding, differentiated questioning, physical access, and cultural references.

After the observation

1. Fill out each of the five sections in full. Use your raw notes to write clear and concise entries for each section.
2. Ensure entries are objective, jargon-free, and focused on practice (not students' or teachers' character). These notes are for you; you may be asked to briefly show them to the trainer, but do not worry about the grammatical mistakes.



Reflective Task

After completing your classroom observation with the DRA tool, write a 250 - 400-word reflection on your experience and post it on the project website (<https://blog.westminster.ac.uk/englishincentralasia/reflections/>)

Deadline: Anytime before the training session

This reflection will help you connect your observations to principles of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) and prepare for group discussion during the training session. In your reflection, you may want to cover the following questions:

- How helpful was the DRA tool in guiding your observation?
- Which parts were most or least useful, and why?
- Did using the tool change what you noticed about the lesson?
- Describe one example of inclusive or diversity-responsive practice you observed.
- What did you learn about your own approach to teaching?
- Identify one practical action you will take to make your future practice more inclusive.

