## 2a: Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport

**Level 4**

Classroom interactions between the teacher and students and among students are highly respectful, reflecting genuine warmth, caring, and sensitivity to students as individuals. Students exhibit respect for the teacher and contribute to high levels of civility among all members of the class. The net result is an environment where all students feel valued and are comfortable taking intellectual risks.

### CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES

- The teacher demonstrates knowledge and caring about individual students' lives beyond the class and school.
- There is no disrespectful behavior among students.
- When necessary, students respectfully correct one another.
- Students participate without fear of put-downs or ridicule from either the teacher or other students.
- The teacher respects and encourages students' efforts.

**Level 3**

Teacher-student interactions are friendly and demonstrate general caring and respect. Such interactions are appropriate to the ages, cultures, and developmental levels of the students. Interactions among students are generally polite and respectful, and students exhibit respect for the teacher. The teacher responds successfully to disrespectful behavior among students. The net result of the interactions is polite, respectful, and business-like, though students may be somewhat cautious about taking intellectual risks.

### CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES

- Talk between the teacher and students and among students is uniformly respectful.
- The teacher successfully responds to disrespectful behavior among students.
- Students participate willingly, but may be somewhat hesitant to offer their ideas in front of classmates.
- The teacher makes general connections with individual students.
- Students exhibit respect for the teacher.

**Level 2**

Patterns of classroom interactions, both between teacher and students and among students, are generally appropriate but may reflect occasional inconsistencies, favoritism, and disregard for students' ages, cultures, and developmental levels. Students rarely demonstrate disrespect for one another. The teacher attempts to respond to disrespectful behavior, with uneven results. The net result of the interactions is neutral, conveying neither warmth nor conflict.

### CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES

- The quality of interactions between teacher and students, or among students, is uneven, with occasional disrespect or insensitivity.
- The teacher attempts to respond to disrespectful behavior among students, with uneven results.
- The teacher attempts to make connections with individual students, but student reactions indicate that these attempts are not entirely successful.

**Level 1**

Patterns of classroom interactions, both between teacher and students and among students, are mostly negative, inappropriate, or insensitive to students' ages, cultural backgrounds, and developmental levels. Student interactions are characterized by sarcasm, put-downs, or conflict. The teacher does not deal with disrespectful behavior.

### CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES

- The teacher is disrespectful toward students or insensitive to students' ages, cultural backgrounds, and developmental levels.
- Students' body language indicates feelings of hurt, discomfort, or insecurity.
- The teacher displays no familiarity with, or caring about, individual students.
- The teacher disregards disrespectful interactions among students.

# 2b: Establishing a Culture for Learning

**Level 4**

The classroom culture is a cognitively busy place, characterized by a shared belief in the importance of learning. The teacher conveys high expectations for learning for all students and insists on hard work; students assume responsibility for high quality by initiating improvements, making revisions, adding detail, and/or assisting peers in their precise use of language.

**CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES**

- The teacher communicates passion for the subject.
- The teacher conveys the satisfaction that accompanies a deep understanding of complex content.
- Students indicate through their questions and comments a desire to understand the content.
- Students assist their classmates in understanding the content.
- Students take initiative in improving the quality of their work.
- Students correct one another in their use of language.

**Level 3**

The classroom culture is a place where learning is valued by all; high expectations for both learning and hard work are the norm for most students. Students understand their role as learners and consistently expend effort to learn. Classroom interactions support learning, hard work, and the precise use of language.

**CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES**

- The teacher communicates the importance of the content and the conviction that with hard work all students can master the material.
- The teacher demonstrates a high regard for students' abilities.
- The teacher conveys an expectation of high levels of student effort.
- Students expend good effort to complete work of high quality.
- The teacher insists on precise use of language by students.

**Level 2**

The classroom culture is characterized by little commitment to learning by the teacher or students. The teacher appears to be only "going through the motions," and students indicate that they are interested in the completion of a task rather than the quality of the work. The teacher conveys that student success is the result of natural ability rather than hard work, and refers only in passing to the precise use of language. High expectations for learning are reserved for those students thought to have a natural aptitude for the subject.

**CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES**

- The teacher's energy for the work is neutral, neither indicating a high level of commitment nor ascribing the need to do the work to external forces.
- The teacher conveys high expectations for only some students.
- Students exhibit a limited commitment to complete the work on their own; many students indicate that they are looking for an "easy path."
- The teacher's primary concern appears to be to complete the task at hand.
- The teacher urges, but does not insist, that students use precise language.

**Level 1**

The classroom culture is characterized by a lack of teacher or student commitment to learning, and/or little or no investment of student energy in the task at hand. Hard work and the precise use of language are not expected or valued. Medium to low expectations for student achievement are the norm, with high expectations for learning reserved for only one or two students.

**CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES**

- The teacher conveys that there is little or no purpose for the work, or that the reasons for doing it are due to external factors.
- The teacher conveys to at least some students that the work is too challenging for them.
- Students exhibit little or no pride in their work.
- Students use language incorrectly; the teacher does not correct them.

# 2c: Managing Classroom Procedures

**Level 4**

Instructional time is maximized due to efficient and seamless classroom routines and procedures. Students take initiative in the management of instructional groups and transitions, and/or the handling of materials and supplies. Routines are well understood and may be initiated by students.

**CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES**

- With minimal prompting by the teacher, students ensure that their time is used productively.
- Students take initiative in distributing and collecting materials efficiently.
- Students themselves ensure that transitions and other routines are accomplished smoothly.

**Level 3**

There is little loss of instructional time due to effective classroom routines and procedures. The teacher's management of instructional groups and transitions, or handling of materials and supplies, or both, are consistently successful. With minimal guidance and prompting, students follow established classroom routines.

**CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES**

- Students are productively engaged during small-group or independent work.
- Transitions between large- and small-group activities are smooth.
- Routines for distribution and collection of materials and supplies work efficiently.
- Classroom routines function smoothly.

**Level 2**

Some instructional time is lost due to partially effective classroom routines and procedures. The teacher's management of instructional groups and transitions, or handling of materials and supplies, or both, are inconsistent, leading to some disruption of learning. With regular guidance and prompting, students follow established routines.

**CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES**

- Students not working directly with the teacher are only partially engaged.
- Procedures for transitions seem to have been established, but their operation is not smooth.
- There appear to be established routines for distribution and collection of materials, but students are confused about how to carry them out.
- Classroom routines function unevenly.

**Level 1**

Much instructional time is lost due to inefficient classroom routines and procedures. There is little or no evidence of the teacher's management of instructional groups and transitions and/or handling of materials and supplies effectively. There is little evidence that students know or follow established routines.

**CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES**

- Students not working with the teacher are not productively engaged.
- Transitions are disorganized, with much loss of instructional time.
- There do not appear to be any established procedures for distributing and collecting materials.
- A considerable amount of time is spent off task because of unclear procedures.

# 2d: Managing Student Behavior

## Level 4

Student behavior is entirely appropriate. Students take an active role in monitoring their own behavior and/or that of other students against standards of conduct. Teacher monitoring of student behavior is subtle and preventive. The teacher's response to student misbehavior is sensitive to individual student needs and respects students' dignity.

### CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES

- Student behavior is entirely appropriate; any student misbehavior is very minor and swiftly handled.
- The teacher silently and subtly monitors student behavior.
- Students respectfully intervene with classmates at appropriate moments to ensure compliance with standards of conduct.

## Level 3

Student behavior is generally appropriate. The teacher monitors student behavior against established standards of conduct. Teacher response to student misbehavior is consistent, proportionate, and respectful to students and is effective.

### CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES

- Standards of conduct appear to have been established and implemented successfully.
- Overall, student behavior is generally appropriate.
- The teacher frequently monitors student behavior.
- The teacher's response to student misbehavior is effective.

## Level 2

Standards of conduct appear to have been established, but their implementation is inconsistent. The teacher tries, with uneven results, to monitor student behavior and respond to student misbehavior.

### CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES

- The teacher attempts to maintain order in the classroom, referring to classroom rules, but with uneven success.
- The teacher attempts to keep track of student behavior, but with no apparent system.
- The teacher's response to student misbehavior is inconsistent: sometimes harsh, other times lenient.

## Level 1

There appear to be no established standards of conduct, or students challenge them. There is little or no teacher monitoring of student behavior, and response to students' misbehavior is repressive or disrespectful of student dignity.

### CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES

- The classroom environment is chaotic, with no standards of conduct evident.
- The teacher does not monitor student behavior.
- Some students disrupt the classroom, without apparent teacher awareness or with an ineffective response.

# 3a: Communicating with Students

**Level 4**

The teacher links the instructional purpose of the lesson to the larger curriculum; the directions and procedures are clear and anticipate possible student misunderstanding. The teacher's explanation of content is thorough and clear, developing conceptual understanding through clear scaffolding and connecting with students' interests. Students contribute to extending the content by explaining concepts to their classmates and suggesting strategies that might be used. The teacher's spoken and written language is expressive, and the teacher finds opportunities to extend students' vocabularies, both within the discipline and for more general use. Students contribute to the correct use of academic vocabulary.

**CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES**

- If asked, students are able to explain what they are learning and where it fits into the larger curriculum context.
- The teacher explains content clearly and imaginatively, using metaphors and analogies to bring content to life.
- The teacher points out possible areas for misunderstanding.
- The teacher invites students to explain the content to their classmates.
- Students suggest other strategies they might use in approaching a challenge or analysis.
- The teacher uses rich language, offering brief vocabulary lessons where appropriate, both for general vocabulary and for the discipline.
- Students use academic language correctly.

**Level 3**

The instructional purpose of the lesson is clearly communicated to students, including where it is situated within broader learning; directions and procedures are explained clearly and may be modeled. The teacher's explanation of content is scaffolded, clear, and accurate and connects with students' knowledge and experience. During the explanation of content, the teacher focuses, as appropriate, on strategies students can use when working independently and invites student intellectual engagement. The teacher's spoken and written language is clear and correct and is suitable to students' ages and interests. The teacher's use of academic vocabulary is precise and serves to extend student understanding.

**CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES**

- The teacher states clearly, at some point during the lesson, what the students will be learning.
- The teacher's explanation of content is clear and invites student participation and thinking.
- The teacher makes no content errors.
- The teacher describes specific strategies students might use, inviting students to interpret them in the context of what they're learning.
- Students engage with the learning task, indicating that they understand what they are to do.
- If appropriate, the teacher models the process to be followed in the task.
- The teacher's vocabulary and usage are correct and entirely suited to the lesson, including, where appropriate, explanations of academic vocabulary.
- The teacher's vocabulary is appropriate to students' ages and levels of development.

# 3a: Communicating with Students

**Level 2**

The teacher's attempt to explain the instructional purpose has only limited success, and/or directions and procedures must be clarified after initial student confusion. The teacher's explanation of the content may contain minor errors; some portions are clear, others difficult to follow. The teacher's explanation does not invite students to engage intellectually or to understand strategies they might use when working independently. The teacher's spoken language is correct but uses vocabulary that is either limited or not fully appropriate to the students' ages or backgrounds. The teacher rarely takes opportunities to explain academic vocabulary.

## CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES

- The teacher provides little elaboration or explanation about what the students will be learning.
- The teacher's explanation of the content consists of a monologue, with minimal participation or intellectual engagement by students.
- The teacher makes no serious content errors but may make minor ones.
- The teacher's explanations of content are purely procedural, with no indication of how students can think strategically.
- The teacher must clarify the learning task so students can complete it.
- The teacher's vocabulary and usage are correct but unimaginative.
- When the teacher attempts to explain academic vocabulary, it is only partially successful.
- The teacher's vocabulary is too advanced, or too juvenile, for students.

**Level 1**

The instructional purpose of the lesson is unclear to students, and the directions and procedures are confusing. The teacher's explanation of the content contains major errors and does not include any explanation of strategies students might use. The teacher's spoken or written language contains errors of grammar or syntax. The teacher's academic vocabulary is inappropriate, vague, or used incorrectly, leaving students confused.

## CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES

- At no time during the lesson does the teacher convey to students what they will be learning.
- Students indicate through body language or questions that they don't understand the content being presented.
- The teacher makes a serious content error that will affect students' understanding of the lesson.
- Students indicate through their questions that they are confused about the learning task.
- The teacher's communications include errors of vocabulary or usage or imprecise use of academic language.
- The teacher's vocabulary is inappropriate to the age or culture of the students.

# 3b: Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques

**Level 4**

The teacher uses a variety or series of questions or prompts to challenge students cognitively, advance high-level thinking and discourse, and promote metacognition. Students formulate many questions, initiate topics, challenge one another's thinking, and make unsolicited contributions. Students themselves ensure that all voices are heard in the discussion.

### CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES

- Students initiate higher-order questions.
- The teacher builds on and uses student responses to questions in order to deepen student understanding.
- Students extend the discussion, enriching it.
- Students invite comments from their classmates during a discussion and challenge one another's thinking.
- Virtually all students are engaged in the discussion.

**Level 3**

While the teacher may use some low-level questions, he poses questions designed to promote student thinking and understanding. The teacher creates a genuine discussion among students, providing adequate time for students to respond and stepping aside when doing so is appropriate. The teacher challenges students to justify their thinking and successfully engages most students in the discussion, employing a range of strategies to ensure that most students are heard.

### CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES

- The teacher uses open-ended questions, inviting students to think and/or offer multiple possible answers.
- The teacher makes effective use of wait time.
- Discussions enable students to talk to one another without ongoing mediation by the teacher.
- The teacher calls on most students, even those who don't initially volunteer.
- Many students actively engage in the discussion.
- The teacher asks students to justify their reasoning, and most students attempt to do so.

**Level 2**

The teacher's questions lead students through a single path of inquiry, with answers seemingly determined in advance. Alternatively, the teacher attempts to ask some questions designed to engage students in thinking, but only a few students are involved. The teacher attempts to engage all students in the discussion, to encourage them to respond to one another, and to explain their thinking, with uneven results.

### CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES

- The teacher frames some questions designed to promote student thinking, but many have a single correct answer, and the teacher calls on students quickly.
- The teacher invites students to respond directly to one another's ideas, but few students respond.
- The teacher calls on many students, but only a small number actually participate in the discussion.
- The teacher asks students to explain their reasoning, but only some students attempt to do so.

**Level 1**

The teacher's questions are of low cognitive challenge, with single correct responses, and are asked in rapid succession. Interaction between the teacher and students is predominantly recitation style, with the teacher mediating all questions and answers; the teacher accepts all contributions without asking students to explain their reasoning. Only a few students participate in the discussion.

### CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES

- Questions are rapid-fire and convergent, with a single correct answer.
- Questions do not invite student thinking.
- All discussion is between the teacher and students; students are not invited to speak directly to one another.
- The teacher does not ask students to explain their thinking.
- Only a few students dominate the discussion.

# 3c: Engaging Students in Learning

**Level 4**

Virtually all students are intellectually engaged in challenging content through well-designed learning tasks and activities that require complex thinking by students. The teacher provides suitable scaffolding and challenges students to explain their thinking. There is evidence of some student initiation of inquiry and student contributions to the exploration of important content; students may serve as resources for one another. The lesson has a clearly defined structure, and the pacing of the lesson provides students the time needed not only to intellectually engage with and reflect upon their learning but also to consolidate their understanding.

**CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES**

- Virtually all students are intellectually engaged in the lesson.
- Lesson activities require high-level student thinking and explanations of their thinking.
- Students take initiative to adapt the lesson by (1) modifying a learning task to make it more meaningful or relevant to their needs, (2) suggesting modifications to the grouping patterns used, and/or (3) suggesting modifications or additions to the materials being used.
- Students have an opportunity for reflection and closure on the lesson to consolidate their understanding.

**Level 3**

The learning tasks and activities are designed to challenge student thinking, inviting students to make their thinking visible. This technique results in active intellectual engagement by most students with important and challenging content and with teacher scaffolding to support that engagement The lesson has a clearly defined structure, and the pacing of the lesson is appropriate, providing most students the time needed to be intellectually engaged.

**CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES**

- Most students are intellectually engaged in the lesson.
- Most learning tasks have multiple correct responses or approaches and/or encourage higher-order thinking.
- Students are invited to explain their thinking as part of completing tasks.
- Materials and resources require intellectual engagement, as appropriate.
- The pacing of the lesson provides students the time needed to be intellectually engaged.

**Level 2**

The learning tasks and activities require only minimal thinking by students and little opportunity for them to explain their thinking, allowing most students to be passive or merely compliant. The lesson has a recognizable structure; however, the pacing of the lesson may not provide students the time needed to be intellectually engaged or may be so slow that many students have a considerable amount of "downtime."

**CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES**

- Some students are intellectually engaged in the lesson.
- Learning tasks are a mix of those requiring thinking and those requiring recall.
- Student engagement with the content is largely passive; the learning consists primarily of facts or procedures.
- Few of the materials and resources require student thinking or ask students to explain their thinking.
- The pacing of the lesson is uneven—suitable in parts but rushed or dragging in others.

**Level 1**

The learning tasks/activities, materials, and resources require only rote responses, with only one approach possible. The lesson has no clearly defined structure, or the pace of the lesson is too slow or rushed.

**CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES**

- Few students are intellectually engaged in the lesson.
- Learning tasks/activities and materials require only recall or have a single correct response or method.
- Instructional materials used are unsuitable to the lesson and/or the students.
- The lesson drags or is rushed.

# 3d: Using Assessment in Instruction

**Level 4**

Assessment is fully integrated into instruction, through extensive use of formative assessment. Students appear to be aware of, and there is some evidence that they have contributed to, the assessment criteria. Questions and assessments are used regularly to diagnose evidence of learning by individual students. A variety of forms of feedback, from both teacher and peers, is accurate and specific and advances learning. Students self-assess and monitor their own progress. The teacher successfully differentiates instruction to address individual students' misunderstandings.

### CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES

- Students indicate that they clearly understand the characteristics of high-quality work, and there is evidence that students have helped establish the evaluation criteria.
- The teacher is constantly "taking the pulse" of the class; monitoring of student understanding is sophisticated and continuous and makes use of strategies to elicit information about individual student understanding.
- Students monitor their own understanding, either on their own initiative or as a result of tasks set by the teacher.
- High-quality feedback comes from many sources, including students; it is specific and focused on improvement.
- The teacher's adjustments to the lesson, when they are needed, are designed to assist individual students.

**Level 3**

Students appear to be aware of the assessment criteria, and the teacher monitors student learning for groups of students. Questions and assessments are regularly used to diagnose evidence of learning. Teacher feedback to groups of students is accurate and specific; some students engage in self-assessment. If impromptu measures are needed, the teacher makes a minor adjustment to the lesson and does so smoothly.

### CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES

- The teacher makes the standards of high-quality work clear to students.
- The teacher elicits evidence of student understanding.
- Students are invited to assess their own work and make improvements; most of them do so.
- Feedback includes specific and timely guidance at least for groups of students.
- When improvising becomes necessary, the teacher makes adjustments to the lesson.

**Level 2**

Students appear to be only partially aware of the assessment criteria, and the teacher monitors student learning for the class as a whole. Questions and assessments are rarely used to diagnose evidence of learning. Feedback to students is general, and few students assess their own work. Adjustment of the lesson in response to assessment is minimal or ineffective.

### CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES

- There is little evidence that the students understand how their work will be evaluated.
- The teacher monitors understanding through a single method, or without eliciting evidence of understanding from students.
- Feedback to students is vague and not oriented toward future improvement of work.
- The teacher makes only minor attempts to engage students in self- or peer assessment.
- The teacher's attempts to adjust the lesson are partially successful.

**Level 1**

Students do not appear to be aware of the assessment criteria, and there is little or no monitoring of student learning; feedback is absent or of poor quality. Students do not engage in self- or peer assessment, and the teacher makes no attempt to adjust the lesson even when students don't understand the content.

### CRITICAL ATTRIBUTES

- The teacher gives no indication of what high-quality work looks like.
- The teacher makes no effort to determine whether students understand the lesson.
- Students receive no feedback, or feedback is global or directed to only one student.
- The teacher does not ask students to evaluate their own or classmates' work.
- The teacher makes no attempt to adjust the lesson in response to student confusion.