



# Lesson Observation & Coaching Tool

## What is it for?

The FoodCorps Lesson Observation & Coaching Tool is intended to support service members in delivering high quality hands-on learning experiences to students by providing a clear, consistent definition of the basic components of effective lesson planning and teaching. The tool should not be used to grade or assess, but rather as a way to capture and describe what worked well and to guide conversations about what could be improved about how a specific lesson was planned or taught.

## Who should use it?

We strongly encourage service members to use the tool to reflect on their own lessons, and we encourage school advisors and site supervisors to use it when observing a lesson. Service members may also want to ask teachers in their school to observe their lessons and provide feedback using the tool. FoodCorps team leaders and field office staff are required to visit, observe, and provide in-person coaching to the service members in their state multiple times throughout the year using the observation checklist to inform individualized feedback and support.

## How should it be used?

The Observation Checklist should be used during lessons to take low-inference notes related to the Key Look-Fors. The Standards and Key Look-Fors identify the basic elements of effective lesson planning and delivery. They were developed by FoodCorps national programs staff based on several sources<sup>1</sup> and were reviewed by the same team that created the *FoodCorps Program Guide*. Low-inference notes focus on transcribing what the service member and students are saying and doing. This type of note-taking limits bias because it links service member actions directly to student responses without making value judgments. Every observation should include a service member self-reflection and feedback from the observer on Areas of Strength and Actionable Next Steps for improvement. The accompanying Lesson Rubric breaks down the Key Look-Fors and describes different levels of practice demonstrated during the lesson. The levels are identified as Emerging, Proficient, and Exemplary. These are not intended to grade or assess lesson quality; instead, they should inform the reflection and feedback notes and support coaching conversations between the observer and service member. Each Key Look-For is aligned to sections within the FoodCorps Program Guide that can serve as a resource to support improvements.

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<sup>1</sup> References include the “Framework for Teaching” by the Danielson Group and the “InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards”

SERVICE MEMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT GRADE LEVEL: \_\_\_\_\_ OBSERVER: \_\_\_\_\_

OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

STANDARD 1: The service member planned and delivered a high-quality lesson.	
KEY LOOK-FORS	LOW-INFERENCE NOTES
1-A The lesson included an engaging opening.	
1-B The lesson incorporated hands-on learning activities.	
1-C The lesson included active reflection with students synthesizing or demonstrating their learning.	
1-D The lesson plan and materials were well organized and prepared in advance.	
STANDARD 2: The service member fostered a safe, inclusive, and positive learning environment for all students	
KEY LOOK-FORS	LOW-INFERENCE NOTES
2-A The service member created a positive classroom/garden culture and effectively implemented responsive behavior management techniques.	

<p>2-B The service member explained and demonstrated new skills, concepts, or tools clearly, concisely, and in student-friendly terms.</p>	
<p>2-C The service member adapted the lesson to the appropriate season, environment, and cultural context.</p>	
<p>2-D The lesson materials and activities accommodate differences in student learning styles, needs, and levels of readiness.</p>	

**SERVICE MEMBER SELF-REFLECTION**

<p>SPECIFIC AREAS OF STRENGTH</p>	<p>ACTIONABLE NEXT STEPS</p>
<p>Consider: What resources or supports do you need to grow as a FoodCorps educator?</p>	

OBSERVER FEEDBACK

SPECIFIC AREAS OF STRENGTH	ACTIONABLE NEXT STEPS

LESSON RUBRIC

STANDARD 1: The service member planned and delivered a high-quality lesson.				
KEY LOOK-FORS	References in FoodCorps Program Guide	EMERGING	PROFICIENT	EXEMPLARY
<p>1-A The lesson included an effective opening. (Engage)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lesson Structure</li> <li>- The 5 E's: Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, Evaluate</li> <li>- Setting the Tone to Make FoodCorps Time Special</li> <li>- Setting The Tone With Every Lesson</li> </ul>	<p>The service member did not introduce the learning objective, or the objective was unclear, AND the member did not activate prior knowledge. Students seemed disengaged or uninterested in the lesson.</p>	<p>The service member introduced a clear learning objective using one or more modalities. They did not activate students' prior knowledge. Some students showed some excitement about the lesson.</p>	<p>The service member opened the lesson with a clear visual and auditory description of the learning objective AND activated students' prior knowledge. Students showed excitement about the lesson.</p>
<p>1-B The lesson included hands-on learning activities. (Explore)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lesson Structure</li> <li>- The 5 E's: Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, Evaluate</li> </ul>	<p>The lesson didn't include hands-on exploration with students directly engaged in the lesson activities.</p>	<p>The lesson included hands-on exploration, but the activities were not well aligned with the learning objective.</p>	<p>The lesson included hands-on exploration, AND the activities promoted student mastery of the learning objective.</p>

1-C The lesson included active reflection. (Elaborate and Evaluate)	- The 5 E's: Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, Evaluate - Leading Reflection Sessions	The service member did not ask reflection questions or include another opportunity for students to demonstrate or summarize learning.	The service member asked reflection questions, but only some students were able to share, synthesize, or demonstrate their learning.	The service member asked reflection questions and offered a variety of opportunities for all students to share, synthesize, and demonstrate their learning.
1-D The lesson plan and materials were well-organized and prepared in advance.	- Preparing to Teach - Informing Your Teaching Practice with Child Development Characteristics	Materials were not prepared in advance.	Materials were prepared in advance but were not appropriate to the age or grade level of students or were inaccessible to some students.	Materials were prepared in advance, appropriately leveled for all students, and helped them master the learning objective.
<b>STANDARD 2: The service member fostered a safe, inclusive, and positive learning environment for all students</b>				
<b>KEY LOOK-FORS</b>	<b>References in FoodCorps Program Guide</b>	<b>EMERGING</b>	<b>PROFICIENT</b>	<b>EXEMPLARY</b>
2-A The member created a positive classroom/garden culture and effectively implemented responsive behavior management techniques	- Reframing Classroom Management - Developing Group Agreements - Culturally Responsive Teaching - Setting the Tone	Student behaviors disrupted the learning and/or created an unsafe environment. The classroom was chaotic. The member did not effectively redirect disruptive behavior or reinforce existing school/classroom procedures.	The learning environment was safe, but not always positive. The member did not always effectively address inappropriate behaviors. Students were only engaged or on task for some of the lesson.	The member used group agreements, routines, positive reinforcement, and participation structures to keep students engaged and on task. The member effectively addressed inappropriate behaviors. Students were engaged and on task for most of the lesson.

<p>2-B The member explained and demonstrated new skills, concepts, or tools clearly, concisely, and in student-friendly terms (Explain)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Teaching with Multiple Modalities</li> <li>- Informing Your Teaching Practice with Child Development Characteristics</li> <li>- Safety With Students</li> <li>- Cooking Safety</li> <li>- Gardening Safety</li> </ul>	<p>The member did not appropriately explain/review safe use of garden or kitchen tools. The explanation of new skills or concepts was confusing or used unfamiliar vocabulary. Students were confused and disengaged during the explanation.</p>	<p>The member thoroughly explained/reviewed safe use of garden or kitchen tools AND explained new skills or concepts using multiple learning modalities. Students were actively engaged throughout the explanation.</p>
<p>2-C The lesson was adapted to the appropriate season, environment, and cultural context</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Culturally Responsive Teaching and FoodCorps Lessons</li> <li>- Customizing Lessons to Climate, Culture, and Students' Needs</li> </ul>	<p>The lesson was inappropriate for the season, climate, or environment and did not demonstrate respect for or understanding of cultural context.</p>	<p>The lesson demonstrated respect and affirmed the cultural values and identities of students, their families, and the community AND was seasonally appropriate.</p>
<p>2-D The lesson materials and activities accommodated differences in student learning styles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Customizing Lessons to Climate, Culture, and Students' Needs</li> <li>- Informing Your Teaching Practices with Child Development Characteristics</li> </ul>	<p>Materials were inappropriately leveled: too hard or easy for most students (finished early or had trouble getting started). Some students were unable to access the materials or participate actively. Differences in student ability or learning styles were evident.</p>	<p>Materials were accessible to all learners and activities were appropriately leveled or scaffolded for learning differences. Lesson activities and presentation incorporated multiple learning modalities. All students were engaged and participated meaningfully.</p>