Competencies for Effective Coaching

Children's Learning Institute at the
University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston

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INTENSITY OF COACHING

COMPETENCY STATEMENT:
Adjust the level of support provided to match teacher needs in a given instructional situation.

COACHING BEHAVIORS	TSR MODEL INGREDIENTS
Corrects misunderstandings in content or pedagogy in the moment rather than waiting until the lesson is over	Coach training covers strategies that vary in intensity of coaching support (e.g., modeling, co-teaching, providing feedback, observing, and side-by-side or in the moment coaching).
Supports teacher to complete actions on his/her own rather than taking over instruction	Written "action plans" include the strategies a teacher can expect a coach to use during the next session.
Only directly teaches parts of a lesson the teacher is unable to handle on his/her own	
Interjects and offers clues/tips for modification	
Rarely misses opportunities to intervene or scaffold teacher	
Focuses on teacher behavior rather than issues unrelated to instruction	
Clearly articulates/thinks aloud about processes and actions	
Builds on what teacher is already doing and pushes for more complex/sophisticated thought/action	
Good (proximal) timing for feedback	

COACHING COMPETENCY IN CONTEXT

During a teacher-coach planning session, a review of recent child progress monitoring results indicates a need for more intensive small group phonological awareness instruction for several children. Based on the teacher's observed weaknesses in this area and lack of experience with small group instruction, the coach determines a co-teaching strategy should provide optimal support (which includes instructional planning, starting off the lesson, and supporting side-by-side once the teacher is ready to take over) . This strategy is documented in an action plan.

2 CONTENT FOCUS

COMPETENCY STATEMENT:
Identify gaps in a teacher's content knowledge and provide accurate guidance regarding skill development and core concepts.

COACHING BEHAVIORS	TSR MODEL INGREDIENTS
References key learning objectives	Coaches master eCIRCLE course content to ensure a shared knowledge base across coaches.
Uses domain-specific language directly linked to observation tools	COT and CEC provide an extensive set of evidence-based teaching behaviors and child skills predictive of child outcomes.
Rarely misses opportunities for content talk	Coaches share annotated videos that call out learning objectives, references to core concepts, and missed opportunities for content-related reinforcement during instruction.
Enough content guidance provided to advance teacher/child learning	
Content reference/guidance is age appropriate	

COACHING COMPETENCY IN CONTEXT

During a coaching session focused on letter-sound correspondence, an interactive writing lesson takes a detour and the teacher is simply recording ideas the children share. The coach jumps in briefly to remind the teacher to have children help her identify the first sound in the word they share and then allow children with letter-sound knowledge to write letters on the chart paper. Once the lesson is back on track, the coach jumps in as needed to scaffold when difficult or confusing letter-sound correspondences occur.

3 ACTIONABLE FEEDBACK

COMPETENCY STATEMENT:
Combine content-related input with specific guidance regarding appropriate pedagogy and teaching behavior.

COACHING BEHAVIORS	TSR MODEL INGREDIENTS
References specific teaching strategies	Data-based coaching cycle drives continuous improvement (i.e., observe, set goals, take action, reflect).
References strategies/practices directly linked to observation tools	Coaches use COT strategies to be explicit about how and when to deliver content or engage in positive interactions with children.
References goal behaviors	Scripted lessons with annotated video demonstrations linked to child progress monitoring ensures immediate, actionable recommendations targeting weaknesses in child skills.
Minimally narrates or summarizes events	
Suggests adaptations/modification/ extensions to improve delivery of instruction/support	
Builds on what teacher is already doing and pushes for more skilled practice	

COACHING COMPETENCY IN CONTEXT

During a coaching session, a teacher is implementing a lesson focused on sorting letters into two groups: letters in the child's name and not in the child's name. Some children have successfully completed the task and are waiting while the teacher helps the remaining children recognize the features that distinguish the letters in their names. The coach suggests a modification to the activity for children who have mastered the objective. She quickly uses specific language from the COT to help the teacher "upward scaffold" by removing children's name cards and encouraging them to sequence the letters in their own name. Coach cues the teacher to bring the name card back for comparison or support when needed.

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REFLECTIVE GUIDANCE

COMPETENCY STATEMENT:
Help teachers recognize connections between teacher behavior, child signals, and content aims across contexts.

COACHING BEHAVIORS	TSR MODEL INGREDIENTS
Uses reflective prompts/language Orients teacher to child signals during instruction Connects specific teacher action(s) to child behaviors/response Connects reflection opportunities to standards, objectives, exemplars, assessment results	Data-based coaching cycle emphasizes self-reflection. During reflective followup sessions, coaches use standardized prompts to encourage teachers to critically evaluate practice. Coaches participate in observation training on recognizing child signals, teacher-child interactions, and scaffolding.

COACHING COMPETENCY IN CONTEXT

During a coaching session, a teacher is reading a book aloud that contains some new and challenging words. The teacher is comfortable pausing and asking comprehension questions, but the children's answers seem random and suggest they are missing something. The coach asks the teacher what she notices about the quality of responses she is getting to her questions and then suggests that she back up a couple of pages and talk about words that may be unfamiliar by providing child friendly definitions. This strategy seems to help. The coach thinks aloud that the children now seem able to provide more meaningful answers, but the book read is starting to stretch on too long and children are becoming restless. The coach tunes the teacher into these behavioral cues and suggests they are a signal to wrap it up.

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SUPPORTIVE PRESENCE

COMPETENCY STATEMENT:
Transmit information and provide support in a non-threatening and collaborative manner.

COACHING BEHAVIORS	TSR MODEL INGREDIENTS
Pleasant tone Positive language (verbal and non-verbal) Encourages collaboration Reinforces existing positive practices Moves on once teacher indicates/shows understanding Recognizes and responds sensitively if teacher shows discomfort/resistance	Coach training emphasizes strategies and prompts used to provide non-biased feedback and reinforce positive behaviors. Coaching sessions are designed to build rapport and foster collaboration. Integration of curriculum and content with assessment results supports teacher-coach relationships by linking improvement goals to standardized criteria rather than personal philosophies.

COACHING COMPETENCY IN CONTEXT

During a coaching session, coach and teacher are reviewing a video of a teacher's own interactions with a group of children during center time. The coach recognizes and reinforces that the teacher is doing a good job of checking in on children in the math center and making sure they have access to meaningful math materials before moving on. However, noticing that the children do not seem to remember what to do with the materials, the coach uses COT language to inform the teacher that it is helpful when checking in to see if children need a model or reminder about how the materials/activities are meant to be used. The coach moves the conversation on once the teacher acknowledges this goal behavior.