

# TESOL Certificate Program UCLA Extension

## Things to Notice

### LEARNER/ENGAGEMENT

Motivated/bored?  
Enthusiastic?  
Group work? Pair work?  
Talk encouraged?  
Teacher centered?

### STRATEGIES

Modeling?  
Clarifying?  
Repetition of words?  
Clear directions?  
Scaffolding?  
Building background?  
Making real life connections?  
Realia?

### HIGH QUALITY LESSON

Lesson plan evident? Objectives & learning goals obvious/ stated?  
Clear understandable opening hook?  
Motivating topic? Phases of lesson evident? Direct instruction? Scaffolding of ideas? Transition between activities?

### MONITOR & ASSESS

Comprehension check?  
Clarity of presentation?  
OK to ask questions?  
Informal understanding assessed? Higher order thinking used? Assessments evident?  
Formal or Informal assessment?  
Ongoing assessments?  
Rubrics?

### CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Work & group work vs. whole class work?  
Seating arrangement & use of walls/space?  
Student centered? Or, teacher centered?  
Transition between activities smooth?  
Students move around class? Or, sit?  
Talk encouraged?  
Physical comfort (temp., air, lights)?  
Support on walls? Low/ High stress environment?

### MATERIALS

Paper?  
Board & markers?  
Interesting realia?  
Visuals?  
Posters?  
Technology?

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## *Classroom Observation*

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### Observation Report

**Observation Guidelines:** An Observation Report from each core class is required. Question #6 on the Observation Sheet will be specific to each class and provided by the instructor.

- Arrange ahead of time with the school and instructor an observation of your choice and level
- Sit quietly and do not disturb the class while observing
- Bring the “**Things to Notice**” sheet to help guide your observation
- Final observations must be typed
- Students must complete a minimum of four (4) observations to include in the final portfolio class
- One observation will be done in EACH core class
- One of the four observations may be done observing an online class (these URL’s will be provided by your teacher)
- A recommended observation time is 25 – 50 minutes

➤ **Name: Mabelette Bermack**

➤ **Class: Technologies**

➤ **Date: 5/4/25**

➤ **In- person or online (include URL if online) In-person**

➤ **Class subject observed: Beginning listening and speaking**

➤ **Class level: Mixed**

➤ **Teacher’s name: Brenda Solis**

➤ **Amount of time in observation: 40 minutes**

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## *Classroom Observation*

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### General Notes While Observing

**Take *notes* during your observation. WRITE YOUR NOTES HERE**

**Use the *Things to Notice* sheet for guidance.**

Pay particular attention to:

- **Learner Engagement:** Learner engagement was inconsistent. It was a mixed level class. There was a wide variance in terms of fluency. The more advanced students tended to dominate class participation. They did try to engage the silent students, but some were reluctant to speak, even when prompted.
- **Monitor & Assessment:** Assessments were informal. The teacher conducted periodic comprehension checks.
- **Strategies:** Directions and objectives were clear. The teacher used a lot of repetition. She also used real life connections to help students relate to the material.
- **High Quality Lesson:** There was a lesson plan derived from a book used by the college program.
- **Teaching:** There was judicious use of error correction or feedback. There did not appear to be any connection with the students. The teacher was fairly neutral.
- **Materials:** An overhead projector and a touch recognition whiteboard was used in concert with a regular whiteboard.
- **Classroom Management:** After the initial discussion, introduction of vocabulary and comprehension checks (at about the 30 minute mark), the class split up into breakout groups and were encouraged to collaborate. The class read a short story during the first 30 minutes. The break-out groups were tasked with creating a follow-up scenario and one person from each group presented the group's work to the class.

### Essay Response

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Answer the questions below in essay form. This paper must be typed. Type below each question.

### *Learning Strategies*

1. **What did you learn about teaching from this observation? Include at least one in – text citation from the current class readings to support your response.** Is there something that was particularly useful in this lesson? Was there clear evidence of a high quality lesson? Were the learning goals and objectives clearly reviewed and evident? Please give examples and specific details (150-300 words)  
I learned that many techniques can be employed at the same time to increase the learning experience and student engagement. The teacher incorporated pictures to promote dialogue, realia, repetition, real life connections, open-ended questions and simple work choices to implement an effective lesson. I learned the importance of keeping things simple and well-paced. I was also reminded of the importance of speaking slowly and the need for patience. In this case, the student who dominated the class was interfering with what she wanted to do. It took a while, but with patience and a level tone, she was eventually able to take control and redirect. I liked the use of a simple short story to engage the learner in a relatable way. The story is about something that was lost and recovered. This is something everyone can relate to. During the discussion, the teacher asked open-ended questions like, “have you ever lost anything and how did you get it back?”
2. **What have you learned from this observation that relates to your current TESOL class?** Discuss two strategies from your current course work and readings that were evident in this lesson. Was there a section where learner engagement and student understanding could be improved? (150-300 words) There was an integration of reading skills into technology. It was not a high tech class. The reading was done on an overhead so all could engage in the same materials at the same time. The teacher actively and effectively employed the use of open-ended questions . The teacher also identified and attempted to reduce anxiety in students who were reluctant to speak because of self-consciousness. She gave extra time where it was needed to encourage students who seemed reluctant or intimidated. I observed that the ability/opportunity to implement the six principles of effective teaching can be challenging in a real life setting and that it is somewhat dependent on the student independent of the efforts or intentions of the teacher. I also think it is difficult to gauge this in a 25-40 minute session. I think it is difficult for a teacher to know the learner in a class of 15-20 people from various backgrounds and

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### *Classroom Observation*

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development. I did notice that the teacher subtly took back control of the class. I suspect I would have seen more of the principles applied if I had stayed for the entire three hour class.

#### *Connecting to TESOL Classwork*

3. **Discuss in detail the classroom management of this particular lesson.** (100-200 words) The objectives of the days' session were clearly stated and written on the board at the start of class. Vocabulary was discussed before the start of class. The class was somewhat teacher-centered. The teacher did most of the talking. It was a low stress environment. There were smooth transitions between parts of the lessons and more time allowed when needed. The students moved around the class to form break-up groups and went then went to the front to present the work done in the breakout sessions. The room was well-lit and open but not particularly engaging. There was no real use of wall space for learning materials. This was likely due to the fact that the class was conducted in what appears to be a shared classroom space used by other teachers and other subjects. It was a neutral space and kind of uninspiring.
  
4. **Were there informal assessments during this lesson that prove understanding and clarity on the part of the student?** Describe these assessments in detail. Were they stressful? What additional assessments could you add if you were the teacher? (100-200 words) Informal assessment was employed infrequently. One student dominated the discussions. She corrected his pronunciation but seemed reluctant to correct more obvious errors made by other students. I got the impression that she held back as a way of encouraging them to speak more freely and make the situation less stressful. The dominant student was confused by "whose" and "who's" in regards to ownership as it related to the story. This prompted him to give a mini-lesson on possessives in the English language. I think she could have benefited by having clearly stated/posted expectations for class involvement. You don't want to discourage an enthusiastic student, but it is hard to gauge how the class on the whole is doing when only one voice is being heard. Since the people were sitting in naturally occurring small groups, I think it would have been helpful to say "Let's work our way around the class. Anyone from group A: what is pictured here?" and say something like "OK group B, be ready because you are next".

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### *Classroom Observation*

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#### ***Things to Remember***

5. **Is there something from this observation that really stands out?** Give two or more examples and justify your reasoning. (100-250 words). The thing that stood out to me the most was the lower than expected student engagement. I would think that any student who would pay for and go to a Saturday morning class in a downpour would be more invested in the experience. I first thought this was due to different levels of fluency but noticed that several of the students who spoke during the presentation section were more fluent than their silence implied. I think this is indicative of a problem with classroom management, but appreciate that the teacher is in a difficult position. I was also surprised to learn that the lesson plan was also entirely based on a workbook provided by the school. Based on this and other coursework, I was under the impression that teachers wrote their own individual lesson plans.

#### ***Current Classwork- Technology***

6. **What if any technology did this instructor use in this lesson? What technology would you use to enhance this lesson? Draw upon class materials and readings. Describe in detail one or more technology resources you could use to teach this lesson.** (100- 250 words) It was a fairly low tech class. She used the kind of projector teachers used when I was in high school. She also used a whiteboard recognition screen. I did not know what that was until I reviewed the materials for week five (I completed the observation last weekend) and recognized what it was only in retrospect. I think the technology used was appropriate given the class level and materials. Some of the students were using translation apps during the breakout session. This was discouraged by the teacher. She asked them to be present. I agree that individual translation apps are inappropriate in the classroom and would only serve to put additional psychological distance between students, the teacher and each other. I think in-person classes should be low tech. The purpose of learning English is to communicate and connect. I think language apps interfere with the process.