

Teacher Reflection Questions: The Post-Lesson Card

Eight questions for the ten minutes after a lesson, while you can still remember the room. A question earns its place when it names evidence and ends in a decision.

The eight questions

1. What did students actually produce?

Not what they did. What exists now that did not exist at the start of the period.

2. Who did the thinking?

Count it roughly. If the answer is you, that is the finding.

3. Where did the lesson lose time, and to what?

Transitions, directions, the technology, a question you did not expect.

4. Which students did I never ask anything?

Write the names. Uncomfortable on purpose, and the question most likely to change next period.

5. What did the exit evidence say — as opposed to what I think it said?

If you have no exit evidence, that is the first fix.

6. What would I cut if I taught this again with ten fewer minutes?

What you would cut first was probably not doing any work today either.

7. What did I assume students already knew?

Then check whether that assumption held for the bottom third of the class.

8. What is the one change for tomorrow?

One. Written down. With the period it applies to.

Start with three, not eight. Run questions 2, 4 and 8 for two weeks before you add anything else. Seven observations and no decision is a diary entry.

The six-line log, and the questions worth upgrading

Six-line lesson log

DATE / PERIOD	STUDENTS I DID NOT REACH
WHAT STUDENTS PRODUCED	WHAT THE EXIT EVIDENCE SAID
WHO DID THE THINKING	THE ONE CHANGE FOR TOMORROW

Only the last line has to be acted on. Never write anything about a student you would not say to that student's family — a reflection document is still a document.

Five weak questions, rewritten

The question people ask	Ask this instead
How did that lesson go?	What did students produce that they could not produce at the start of the period?
Were students engaged?	Who did the thinking, and for how much of the period?
Did they get it?	What did the exit evidence say, and how many students does it disagree with me about?
What should I do better?	What is the one change for tomorrow, and which period does it apply to?
Do they like this unit?	Which part of this unit did the bottom third of the class stall on?

Weekly and monthly prompts

Daily questions are about one lesson. Weekly and monthly questions are about patterns, and a pattern question answered after a single period produces noise.

The cycle

- **Weekly:** Which students have now gone a full week without saying anything in my room?
- **Weekly:** Where did the same five minutes get lost on more than one day?
- **Weekly:** What did I grade this week that did not tell me anything I did not already know?
- **Monthly:** Which standard do I keep reteaching — and is the problem the teaching or the prerequisite?
- **Monthly:** Whose classroom have I actually been inside since the last time I asked this?

Why that last one matters. In Kaufman, Stein and Junker's study of 47 teachers and 422 observations, the teachers who overrated their own practice reported little peer conversation; those who talked regularly with colleagues or a coach judged themselves more accurately. Those were K–5 teachers, so take the mechanism rather than the number.