

FOCUS SESSION 1 (Instrumental) - Getting Started / Beginning Materials Observation Outline
--

School: _____ Teacher: _____

Date: _____ Beginning/Ending time: _____

ASK YOURSELF: What can be answered without asking?

Questions to consider (Getting started):

- How many students are in the class?
- What is the instrumentation? How many students are there on each instrument? How did students select the instrument? Did the teacher play an active role in this decision? How?
- Are there different class sessions for each instrument group?
- How do students procure an instrument? Through school? Through a specific store? Through any of a number of stores? Is this true for all instruments? If instruments are rented from an outside source, are there any options for students who cannot afford the fees?
- How was this accomplished? Was there an in-school presentation? An evening program or meeting? To what extent were parents actively involved?
- What do beginning percussionists play? Snare only? Mallets? A broad range of percussion instruments?
- In what grade are the students? Is it only one grade level or is the group mixed?
- How much time per week is available for beginning instrumental class?
- Is there a room specifically devoted to instrumental teaching?
- Exactly when did the students begin instruction?
- When were the students able to select to participate in instrumental instruction? The beginning of this year? The end of last year?

Questions to consider (Beginning materials):

- What types of materials are the students using? A method series? A combination of books? Materials put together or created by the teacher?
- Why were these particular teaching materials selected?
- Are the students required to buy their own materials or does the school purchase them?
- What sort of balance do you observe between exercises, songs, solos, ensemble pieces, etc.?
- How far into the program are these materials used? Do the students continue at some point to "Book 2"? Do they move to another book entirely? Are books abandoned entirely in favor of ensemble pieces?