

Classroom Time Analysis Tool: OVERVIEW and USER'S GUIDE

OVERVIEW

The Classroom Time Analysis Tool (CTAT) is a web-based observation tool that helps individual teachers understand how they are using time in their classrooms, and helps schools identify and capture effective time management strategies across classrooms. Schools typically use it as a peer observation tool or to supplement existing school or district classroom walkthrough protocols. The tool is meant for one-on-one use between the observer and the teacher. Observation data will not be used by NCTL or any other entity. All observation information will be cleared once a week on Monday mornings at 4:30 am eastern time.

The CTAT looks at use of classroom time through four broad categories: Teacher-led Time, Student Work Time, Assessment of Student Learning, and Transitions. Each of these four categories is then subdivided into more specific uses of time, described here:

| Categories of Time Use | Subcategories | Observable Behaviors May Include |
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| Teacher-Led Time | Welcome/lesson launch | Teacher introducing daily agenda/ objectives, reviewing HW and/or Do Now |
| | Teacher-directed instruction | A mini-lesson, lecture, read aloud, teacher modeling, guided practice, summarizing lesson |
| | Whole-class discussion/activity | Students and teacher participating in/leading whole-class discussion and/or activity |
| Student Work Time | Small group discussion/activity | Students participating in pair-and-share, small group discussion and/or activity; teacher facilitates group(s) or floats among them |
| | Independent practice/activity | Students work independently on a specific task or activity; teacher floats among them and/or meets with individual students 1-on-1 |
| | Combined practices | Students are doing a variety of activities at the same time – some work independently, others are in small groups, some might rotate through “centers”; teacher working with specific students 1-on-1 or in small groups |
| Assessment of Student Learning | Oral assessment of student learning | Students demonstrate understanding through presentation, performance, or oral response to a question; teacher observes and asks questions |
| | Written assessment of student learning | Students demonstrate understanding through a written assessment; teacher observes and answers clarifying questions |
| Transition | Arrival routine | Students entering classroom, getting out materials, handing-in HW; teacher taking attendance and greeting students |
| | Transition to next component | Students move within the classroom from one component of a lesson to the next, gather materials; teacher guides students from one component to the next |
| | Dismissal routine | Teacher distributing HW, saying goodbye to students; students recording HW in agenda books, putting away |

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| | | materials, exiting classroom |
| | Unplanned interruption | PA announcements, behavioral infraction/classroom management issue, other student or teacher disruptions to lesson |

USING THE CTAT: A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

The CTAT tool is a timer based observation tool that can be used when an observer (a peer, administrator, a paraprofessional, student teacher, staff from a partner organization, etc) visits a classroom during a specified period of time, ideally an entire class period/an entire lesson.

- 1) After logging into the website the observer creates a new observation record.
- 2) Once the record is created, the first screen will ask the observer to fill in some basic descriptive information including the class being observed, the teacher’s name, the length of the class, the observer’s name, the number of students in the class, and the start time of the class.
- 3) The observer will then be taken to a page titled “Ready to observe.” This page has a button that allows the observer to start the observation. **It is important to remember that once this button is pressed the timer function of the CTAT tool will start and it cannot be paused.** The “Start Observation” button should be selected when the first activity of the lesson/observation begins.
- 4) After starting the observation the observer will select a Category and Subcategory for the current activity. The observer can also make notes regarding the current activity. The observer will be able to adjust the category, subcategory, and notes information for each activity after the observation is complete. The time per activity information cannot be changed. A timer showing the total time of the observation will run on the screen and information on each activity will also show on the screen once the activity is completed.
- 5) When a new activity begins the observer clicks the “Next Activity” button at the bottom of the page. Once again, a category and subcategory need to be selected and notes can be taken.
- 6) New activities are created until the class ends. When the class ends, do not create a new activity, instead select the “Class Ends” button. The tool will prompt you to confirm that the observation is over by clicking on the “I am finished” button. If the observation is not complete, the “Continue observation button” can be selected. .

Once the observation is completed; the observer can edit the category, subcategory, and notes information for each activity. The edits do not have to be made immediately. Activity information for each observation is saved after the observation is completed and can be edited after logging-in to the tool

- 7) Once the observation information is finalized, the observer must submit the information by selecting the “Complete Editing” button. The user can then select the “View” button next to the observation name in order to download a pdf file of the results. Users can save the pdf file to their computer or open it directly in Acrobat Reader. The pdf file shows the basic descriptive information and detail of each activity, including the notes, as well as a graphical display of the use

of time during the observation. The observer is expected to share this file with the person they observed. Files will be deleted every Monday morning at 4:30 am eastern time.

Note: Much of the activity that takes place in classrooms might fall across more than one category (e.g., a class discussion might also be considered an oral assessment of student learning). Users should use their best judgment in categorizing time use, knowing that the intent of this tool is less about absolute precision than it is about enabling practitioners to become more aware of their time usage and, in turn, to reflect on how they might modify their time use in order to enhance instructional efficacy.

ANALYZING AND USING DATA FROM THE CTAT

Once an observation is complete, the observer should share the data report as soon as possible with the observed teacher. School leaders then can work with teachers to use the data in a number of different ways; common ones include:

- Helping teachers calibrate their actual use of time in the classroom against their lesson plans
- Setting goals around minimizing transitions and maximizing teacher-led time, student work time, and assessment of student learning
- Identifying teachers and staff who use time effectively and utilize their expertise in time-management to help an entire building become skilled in maximizing learning time