

Final Transcript – Ottawa Clip P6

CONVERSATIONS AND OBSERVATIONS TO GATHER EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Narrator: The reliability of evidence of learning is enhanced when teachers find ways to elicit the full range of students' learning. One way to do this is to plan to gather evidence of student learning through observing and conversing with students as they engage in learning tasks. When planning assessment with instruction, teachers intentionally plan opportunities to gather evidence through conversation and observation. They also ensure that both they and their students know and understand the learning goals and success criteria, so they can recognize and document the learning when it is demonstrated.

Lisa: Oh, I like that idea. We can leave it up to the students to decide how they're going to show their knowledge with those challenges.

Stephanie: Mm-hmm.

Lisa: So whether or not they just want to verbalize their knowledge to us, or whether or not they want to take an opportunity during the centres to show us what they know.

Stephanie: Absolutely. Yeah. We could take lots of pictures as well of the products and have them talk. For example, we could use some of the apps that we have, that they... we can take a picture and have them explain what they were doing. And that way, we could have a conversation with one student and another student could be doing that.

Lisa: So they can take a picture of their product and then they can type in the information that they want to share with me.

Stephanie: My main way of recording observations is simply a clipboard with a bunch of sticky-notes on it. And I date the sticky-notes with a name and it allows me to capture evidence that's very fleeting. But it proves that they've achieved something. So it could be just a small snippet in a conversation between two students and I'm able to write that down. It could be simply the expectation that they've achieved. Or whatever the learning goal we were doing that day, or it could be a checklist. If you just have a checklist: "she just proved that she could identify and describe shapes using geometric vocabulary". Something simple like that.

Child: This is a rectangular prism, because there are six faces...

Stephanie: Okay.

Child: And eight vertices?

Stephanie: Mm-hmm.

Child: Eight edges.

Stephanie: Can you show me an edge? Okay. Can you count them for me?

Child: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

Stephanie: Okay. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. What about these ones?

Child: 9, 10, 11, 12.

Stephanie: Excellent! Is there anything else you can tell me about that figure?

Child: There's... This is a rectangle; this is a rectangle, and this is a rectangle.

Stephanie: Wow. Is it made up of rectangles?

Child: Um... yes.

Stephanie: Excellent. Awesome. Do you want to go get me a marker and I can put your name up on the challenge—the challenge wall?

Lisa: One of the tools that I use most often is my camera or my tablet. And not only does it allow me to take pictures and then maybe use a specific app that will allow me or the student to write on those pictures, but when it comes to conversations, I really like to videotape their discussions with each other or their discussions with me. I can easily store those little clips in my e-portfolio, and I will often show those clips to the students when we want to discuss other students' learning. But I will often show those clips to the parents. I just find that it provides me with some really good evidence. Another thing that I use too is I use a lot of checklists. And the checklists are made right from the success criteria that the students themselves have created. And so, because that criteria is so meaningful to the students, if I provide that checklist to the students, and if I explain to the parents how we created the checklist together and what it means to the students, often that seems to be, for them, a real good example of reliable evidence.

Stephanie: I'm hardly an expert in technology but I have found that it's incredibly helpful when gathering evidence of things – of conversations and observations. I can use my camera and I can take a picture, and there's a lot of apps that are available where you can take a picture and have the students record over it. And

they could explain what they were thinking. There's apps where you can draw pictures onto it and also talk about it. And it's also, it's like another, another adult in the room or another teacher because if two students are having a conversation about something that I find valuable, I can simply put a device down in front of them that will record that conversation, and I can go conference with someone else. And the students are very tech-savvy. So you really only have to show them a couple of times and they're very competent in using the software themselves. So it's great, because you can evaluate them later when you have time and you can make notes from there. Then you can go back and ask the students, you can let them listen to their own conversation and say "when you said that, what exactly did you mean?" and you can clarify from there.

Lisa: And they love it when I want to take pictures of their products. So if they know that we're going to be walking around videotaping them and taking pictures, that might motivate them to really try some different ways of showing us what they know.

Stephanie: Absolutely. It really gets them understanding that they are learning, and everything that they're doing is helping them learn.