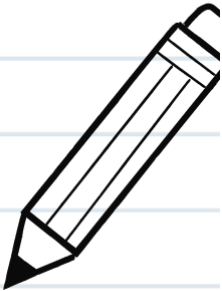





Re-Imagining  
MIGRATION 



# Observation and Reflection Guide



# Observation and Reflection Form

## Overview:

We have designed this reflection form to support educators in holistic observations of their school community, classroom practices, and student social relationships. The *individual student*, *classroom*, and *whole-school* questions are intended to help teachers gain a deeper understanding of their students' experiences, especially their immigrant origin and newcomer students. The ultimate goal is to use the findings to create action plans for fostering a greater sense of inclusion and belonging for all students.

## Directions/Recommendations:

Print out this observation form, and use a notebook to capture your answers to each question. We recommend attaching this form to a clipboard as you walk around your school. You can also choose to type your answers. Having a transportable option, however, will be helpful when conducting your whole school observation. We encourage you to answer as many questions as possible; the questions you do not have an answer for offer an opportunity for reflection. Once you have completed your observation, use your responses to think about how you can create an action plan to center belonging for your students.

## *Individual Student Questions*

Choose one student to focus your observation on. At the top of your notebook, capture the initials of this student's preferred name. It is important that you keep the student anonymous in case, for any reason, fellow students were to see your notebook.

### Student Identity and Experiences

- How does your student self-identify? Try to list as many as you can. (Examples: Ethnicity, Race, Religion, Gender, Orientation, Country of Origin, Interest, Activity, etc.)
- What labels are attached to this student by others?
  - How do they compare with the student's self-identification?
- For the following questions, consider– what do you *actually* know, and what do you *think* you know about this student:

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- What are their preferred communication language(s) and mastery levels?
- What was their previous education experience?
- What do you know about this student's academic identity?
- What is their relationship to academics (prior experiences and current)?
- What are their favorite subjects?
- What drives /inspires this student?
- Who do they look up to?
  - In the school? In the community? In the Media?
- What is their parent/guardian dynamic?
- How do their home values impact their school experience?
- What excites them about school?
- How do they build /maintain relationships?
- How does their migration story play out in school?
- What else do you feel you should know, and how might you find out?
- **Reflection:** How did you determine what you know from what you think you know?
- How would you describe this student's peer community?
  - What are their interactions like?
  - How do they engage in partner/group work?
  - Do they share out-of-school activities, time, or interests with their peers?
- What are their outside-of-school commitments?
  - Do they work? If so, where and for how long?
  - Do they care for older or younger family members?
- Does this student experience barriers to inclusion?
  - If so, what are they?
  - **Reflection:** How were you able to tell? What might stand in the way of you knowing if barriers exist?

## Academics: Socio-Emotional and Civic Dispositions

- What social-emotional, academic, and civic outcomes are expected/rewarded for this student?
  - **Reflection:** Why do you think this is?
  - How does this compare to expectations for others?

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- What opportunities do they have to share their perspectives with others? (Peers, Accessible Adults, Community Leaders)
- What opportunities do they have to learn others' perspectives?
- How do they navigate differences in perspectives?
- What opportunities do they have to be leaders in the classroom?
- Do they have opportunities to express their civic agency (express their voice, take action)?
- How does this student navigate conflict/resolution?

## Academics: Windows, Mirrors, and Cultural Representation?

- What knowledge and insights does this student bring to the classroom?
  - Is that knowledge recognized, valued, and celebrated?
  - If so, how? If not, why might it not be?
- Do you connect curriculum to their life, experiences, and knowledge?
  - If so, how?
- Is this student's identity, culture, and history represented in the curriculum?
  - If so, what language, framing, or tone is used in the discussion?
  - Are they an active participant in discussions?
  - Are they expected to shoulder the burden of an expert?
    - If so, where does this happen?

## School Community

- How is this student greeted/welcome by others?
- Are they able to explore ideas and make mistakes without fear of judgment?
- Are they able to explore freedom of identity expression without fear of judgment?
- What is this student's experience like at lunch? What about during recess? In the hallways?
  - Do they appear to be excited about lunch/recess?
  - Are they able to follow lunch/recess procedures with ease?
  - What is this student's relationship to food in the cafeteria?
  - Do they share lunch/recess with peers?
    - If so, are they the same peers every day, or do they differ?
  - What activities do they engage in during lunch/recess?

## Student & Faculty Dynamics

- How do you greet this student?
- How does this student greet you?
- Does the way you greet this student change?
  - If so, what causes the change?
- Did you know anything about this student before you met them?
  - If so, what was it, and how did you hear about it?
- What is their relationship with other faculty? How does the faculty talk about this student, what data is shared, and in what way (tone, intentions, timing)?

## Community and Society

- How might the language you hear in your community, media, and social media impact your student and their experience inside and outside school?

## *Your Classroom Questions*

### Classroom Community

- Do students know each other's names?
- Do students know each other's stories?
- Do students exhibit curiosity toward each other's lives?
  - How do you know / what does this look like in your classroom?
- Do students value each other's opinions?
  - How do you know / what does this look like in your classroom?
- Do students support each other academically?
  - Do students remind each other about homework, tests, and projects?
  - Do students push each other to do their best?
  - Do students more frequently collaborate or compete with each other?
- How do students show that they are listening to each other when they share?
  - Does everyone receive the same treatment?
  - Are some students given more respect than others?
    - If so, is there a pattern to whose voices are respected or does it change by content/conversation?
- Do students ask each other follow-up questions?
  - If so, are they asking for clarification or connection?
  - Do MLLs receive the same types of questions from their peers?

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- Are there in and out groups in your classroom?
- Do you notice instances of exclusion?
  - If so, do you know what leads to our is causing the exclusion?
- When students engage in partner work, are students equally excited to be partnered with all of their classmates?
  - Do students exhibit and respect equal contributions from all team members?
- Do students discuss outside of or afterschool plans with each other in class?
  - If so, do the plans appear to be accessible to all students?
    - If not, do discussions of outside-of-school plans seem to be more organized by interest friend groups or by identity friend groups?
    - Are specific students left out of these conversations?
- Who do students celebrate in your classroom?
  - How are they celebrated?
  - What for?

## Academics: Socio-Emotional and Civic Dispositions

- How do students speak about power and inequity?
- How do students respond when one of their classmates has been mistreated?
- How do students speak to each other when they disagree?
- Does conflict more often arise from isolated incidents or running tensions?
- How do students respond to conflicts in class?
- What does resolution look like?

## Academics: Windows, Mirrors, and Cultural Representation?

For the following questions, reflect on either a specific unit, lesson, or year-long curriculum. When you answer the questions, also consider:

- How do you know?
- What do you think the impact of this is on your students?

Questions from the Re-Imagining Migration Culturally Responsive Teaching Checklist:

- Do you include major figures, contributors, or historical events from cultures other than the dominant culture in the lesson?

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- Do you include cultural or artistic works (literature, music, visual and performing arts/artists) from cultures other than the dominant culture in the lesson?
- Do you include research contributions from cultures other than the dominant cultures in your lessons?
- Do you include resources and texts (e.g., reading, film, etc.) that present multicultural perspectives in the lesson?
- Do you include lectures/discussions that present multicultural perspectives in your lessons?
- Do you provide resources and instruction that enable students to view concepts, issues, themes, and problems from several multicultural perspectives?
- Does your teaching encourage students to clarify their values and make decisions about existing social problems using multicultural perspectives?
- Does your teaching encourage students to take reflective actions to help resolve social problems?
- Do you infuse multiple perspectives, frames of reference, and content from various groups and perspectives to extend students' understanding of the nature, development, and complexity of the society in which they live?
- Do you introduce the "canons" of your discipline and augment them to reflect the complex synthesis and interaction of the diverse racial/ethnic/religious/cultural elements that comprise our society?

## Student & Faculty Dynamics

- Who do you celebrate in your classroom?
  - How are they celebrated?
  - What for?
- Do your classroom rules apply to all students?
  - If not, why not? What are the extenuating circumstances?
- Are accountability measures for rule-breaking applied equally to all students?
  - If not, why not? What are the extenuating circumstances?
- Do your students name that classroom systems and procedures feel fair?
  - If not, what are they naming that feels inequitable?

## *Whole School Community Questions*

### **Student Identities and Relationships**

- How do students greet each other?
  - Consider: what is said, tones, body language, if everyone is greeted, how do greetings differ?
- Who are the students that greet you, and how?
- What similar interests do students seem to share? How do you know?
- Are there in and out groups in the school community at large?
- What factors separate the different groups?
- Are there dominant groups that are perceived as having higher status?
  - If so, what are the activities, traits, values, and/or identities that earn students status in "dominant" groups?
  - Do students seem to earn unfair advantages as a result of their position in a dominant group?
- Does every student have a visible connection/friendship with 4+ peers?
  - Are there students that don't seem to have a group?
  - If so, what do you know about the student or students?
  - Is there any pattern?

### **Civics and Student Community**

- Do students organize to support each other?
- Are student activities open to all?
  - If so, are all students encouraged to attend/lead?
- Do students rally to support each other when a peer is struggling?
- Do students engage in systems of mutual aid?
  - Academically?
  - Socially?
  - Resourcefully?

### **Learning and celebrating the variety of student identities are our school?**

- What does cultural celebration look like at your school?
- How do different grades learn about migration?
- How does your school celebrate stories of migration?



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- How does your school highlight stories of migration during:
  - AAPI History month
  - Arab History Month
  - Black History month
  - Indigenous History Month
  - Immigrant History Month
  - Jewish History Month
  - Latinx History month
- What about Identity groups not assigned a particular month by the US?

## School Culture

- How are the hallways/classrooms decorated?
- What languages are materials translated in?
- What kind of food does the cafeteria serve?
  - Does it ever align with celebrations or culturally specific cuisines?
    - If so, how were the decisions made? How do students feel about the food?
  - Are there opportunities for students to bring in their culture's traditional foods for themselves and/or to share?
- Are students encouraged to display all the multifaceted aspects of their identity?
- Do you notice patterns of exclusion?
- Does everyone have access to learning resources? (library, computer lab, gymnasium, auditorium, etc)
- Who is publicly celebrated, and what for?
- What is the environment like in community spaces?
  - Hallways? Auditorium? Gym? Lunchroom?
    - Is it stressful? Welcoming?
    - How do you know?
    - Are there preferential experiences? (For example: do some students experience social or physical obstacles in the hallway while others walk through easily?)
      - If so, who receives them? Is it consistent?

## Professional Learning

- Does your school receive professional development on:
  - Immigrant Origin Student Intake?
  - Belonging?
  - Multi-Lingual Learner Education?
- What do school faculty know about the student population and how best to serve them?
- How do teachers talk about members of different groups? Are there differences between groups? Are some dominant? Are others marginalized? If so, which ones?

## Action Plan

Now that you have completed your observation form turn your reflections into an [action plan](#) for centering student belonging.