

**CAVEAT EMPTOR¹:
COMPARING THE DOWNEY WALK-THROUGH WITH OTHER APPROACHES –
WHAT’S DIFFERENT?**

*How the Downey Walk-Through Is Different from Other “Walk-throughs” or
“Walk-Abouts” In the Educational Market Place*

There are a number of approaches to classroom walk-throughs in the current market place of education. Superficially, they may look alike. However, a closer examination will show that there are very profound differences among them. We highlight these differences in order to indicate how a potential consumer may differentiate among them.

The heart of the Downey approach to walk-throughs is not the “technique” but the reflective question and follow-up conversation. The reflective question makes the Downey approach radically different. The Downey model does not use checklists because it is not normative and does not replace the traditional evaluation process. It has a very different objective in mind. So the Downey model does not advance the “normative gaze” of punitive institutionalized evaluation practices which many teachers loath and fear and which does not have a researched base of improving professional practice in schools.

The Downey approach is pro-active and it is about changing school culture, not simply installing a more technically efficient method of traditional teacher evaluation. Here’s how the Downey model differs from nearly all of the others in the current market place:

1) OTHER MODELS EMPHASIZE EFFICIENCY AND THE NORMATIVE GAZE

An initial examination reveals that “walk-throughs” are much shorter in duration than traditional classroom evaluations. Some approaches emphasize that the advantage is pure efficiency, that is, it enables a busy principal to observe and evaluate more teachers within the already limited time available. Most of the walk-throughs contain this feature and nearly all attain the reduced time by (a) reducing the scope of the observation, and/or (b) resorting to checklist attributes of the teacher. As such, walk-throughs, which promise efficiency, are not interested in changing the professional culture of the school.

Implicit in this view is that the teacher is not an adult and must be “supervised” to conform to matters of practice. The principal/teacher, superior/subordinate relationship is thus frozen and perpetuated. The teacher is always a kind of “semi-professional” who needs constant surveillance. The Downey approach shuns this perspective. It is centered, not on efficiency but on changing the professional culture in a school and de-bureaucratizing the working relationships in the school.

2) OTHER MODELS HAVE NO RESEARCH BASE: IT’S MORE THAN TECHNIQUE

The Downey approach was developed by a former school superintendent/professor and brought to fruition by a panel of practitioners/professors representing some of the practices of scholarship and research found at research intensive institutions of higher education. The Downey model has been reported in international research conferences. The practices of the Downey walk-through are related to the research literature on professional growth, psychology of being, and organizational sociology. The Downey model has been thoroughly explicated in the book *The Three-Minute*

¹ Buyer Beware

Classroom Walk-Through: Changing School Supervisory Practice One Teacher at a Time (2004) released by Corwin Press, the first of its kind in the professional literature. The Downey model has made its practices and beliefs public and invited a wider scrutiny by practitioners and researchers alike.

3) QUI BONO? WHO BENEFITS? OTHER MODELS MINIMIZE TEACHER GROWTH

The different approaches to classroom walk-throughs can also be analyzed by asking the question, “who benefits?” from their implementation? If the response is that the administration is the main beneficiary of a walk-through practice, then one can be pretty sure that the professional discourse within a school will not have been changed at all. The classroom teacher’s role is trapped within that discourse and kept in “check” by a new form of the institutional disciplinary gaze. In this scenario the emphasis on the walk-through is on technique and efficiency, often using a hand held computer to record the data. The role of the principal as the omniscient supervisor has been reinforced by the technique. Teacher growth is similarly limited.

The Downey model envisions the teacher as the primary beneficiary by working to expand the teacher’s view of the educational process and by placing the teacher firmly in control of his/her own growth within a model of schooling in which the role of the teacher is not limited.

KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT A WALK-THROUGH MODEL IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN PROMOTING TEACHER GROWTH AND A CHANGE IN SCHOOL CULTURE

Here are the key questions to ask when considering a walk-through model if one desires more than a new efficiency approach to teacher evaluation:

1. Is the emphasis of the model on doing more evaluations within the current structure of schooling? (An emphasis on more efficient inspection?)
2. Is the emphasis of the model on technique – learning the steps and recording data in categories?
3. Does the model use checklists? (The normative gaze and the disciplinary institutionalized norms?)
4. Does the model maintain the relationships between principals and teachers – keeping the role of the classroom teacher as a “semi-professional” who always needs traditional supervision?
5. Does the model always assume there is a right or “correct” answer, and does the principal ask such questions expecting them? (Thus reinforcing the administrative role as “superior?”)
6. Does the model require paper to keep as records on teachers observed, or is it aimed at promoting a dialogue that is paperless and on going?

If the answers to the above questions are yes, the model is not the Downey reflective collegial walk-through model and it won’t change a thing.²

² CMSi Conference on Closing the Achievement Gap, 14-16 February 2005, Texas: San Antonio.

**THE CHANGED AXES OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE IN THE
DOWNEY MODEL OF CLASSROOM WALK-THROUGHS
By Fenwick English**

From	To
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher as a subordinate worker, a child in a dependent relationship with authority figures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher as a colleague, an adult with autonomy to make decisions about how to construct the work and execute it in the work setting.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three or four formal, infrequent, lengthy observations and evaluations per year, dependent on checklists and forms-- followed up with a scheduled, formal appointment with the evaluator. Such evaluations become part of the "permanent file." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many informal, observations, interactions, and visitations per year which are paperless and conversational. Discussions with the principal are held in informal and unscheduled places and times. May later become formal if necessary. Do not become part of the "permanent file."
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers evaluated on checklists which rest on abstracted practices which are "context free" and "out of curriculum." Effectiveness is considered generic and rated in the abstract without reference to specific curricular objectives and specific instructional settings and performance is considered out of any relationships with the supervisor, colleagues, students and parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers are observed in specific contexts, relative to specific curricular objectives they are attempting to teach. Effective practices are contingent upon specific classes with specific students in specific settings. Effectiveness is relational and situated in specific contexts. Performance is viewed as being within a constellation of other humans in the work setting.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principals look for conformance to abstracted lists of generalized instructional practices and techniques which are oblivious to specific curricular objectives and only interested in the "discrepancies" or gaps. These are the "gotcha" glitches that are often the gist of "recommendations" for improvement which change little and do not lead to improvement in student achievement. Abstracted lists of "proficiencies" which are essentially curriculum free have little to do with learning specific curricular objectives. Achievement is defined by what students learn, not conformance to context free abstractions of "good teaching." This dominant approach to classroom supervision focuses on the wrong things. It is best captured in the phrase, "The operation was a success but the patient died." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principals first look at the objectives the teacher is trying to accomplish and how the objectives are manifested in the specific pedagogical decisions made by the teacher in a specific classroom setting. Effective classroom practice is contextually defined by the content of the objectives which forms the relational borders in which the teacher and the students interact. The principal is not looking for breakdowns in abstracted lists of teacher proficiencies, but for the connection between pedagogical decisions and the linkage to specific curricular content to be learned. This relationship is the "hub" of viewing what is going on in the classroom and it is where the principal begins the conversation with a teacher about his/her design and delivery of the curriculum in a specific classroom setting. The principal is foremost concerned with the locus of the decisions made by the teacher and not so much with in any one specific outcome.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom practice is confined to the classroom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom practice is influenced by the climate and culture of the entire school. No classroom is immune from the rest of the school. Effective teaching practice is relational and never permanent. It exists within a network and it must be a constant process of interaction on an adult-to-adult model of conversation.

Handout 2

Five-Step Observation Lens of the Downey Walk-Through⁴

Directions: Use this overview of the five-step observation lens as you learn the process. Initially, you might want to do just Steps Two and Three. The decision points regarding your observations are also listed for you.

DOWNEY WALK THROUGH OBSERVATION STRUCTURE

Step One-Instruction: Orientation of Students to Task

- Note the orientation of bodies toward the task the moment you walk into the room.

Step Two-Curriculum Decisions: Determine Curriculum Objectives, Ascertain Alignment to District Curriculum, and Identify Possible Growth Areas

- Derive the curriculum objectives—the content, context, and cognitive type (CCC)—being taught. Derive from observation: the activity, worksheet, test, or book being used.
- Compare the taught objectives with planned objectives, if available (board, lesson plan, stated).
- Compare the taught curriculum to district the curriculum for congruence

Step Three-Instructional Decisions: Note Instructional Practices Used and Identify Possible Growth Area

- Identify the generic teaching practices taking place (e.g. comparing, contrasting, and classifying; having students summarize and take notes; reinforcing effort and giving praise; employing practice and feedback; using nonlinguistic representations; using cooperative learning; generating and testing hypotheses; using cues and questioning strategies; using advance organizers; engaging students in active participation; using accountable talk; implementing effective teacher-student interactions; having effective classroom organization and management...).
- Identify strategies being used related to a specific school/district focus, (e.g. literacy).
- Observe for subject-area specific, effective teaching practices (e.g. math-metacognition, mental computations, manipulatives).

Step Four-Past Curricular and Instructional Decisions [IF TIME]: “Walk-the-Walls” etc. for more Curricular Objectives and Instructional Practices

- Specify other objectives and teaching practices observed in artifacts on walls, charts, chalkboard, centers, portfolios, etc.

Step Five-Safety and Facilities: Happens Naturally

- Identify any safety and facility issues not yet addressed.

DIALOGUE DECISION POINTS

- What curricular or instructional practices have I identified for possible dialogue?
- Will I initiate a follow-up dialogue?
- If yes, will I be direct and teach (dependent), invite reflection (independent), or pose a Reflective Question in a conversation (interactive/interdependent)?
- When will I do this and how will the conversation be organized?

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Handout 3
PREPARING THE DOWNEY REFLECTIVE QUESTION⁵

Directions: Use these ideas while learning how to state the five positive presuppositional phrases (PPP) of the reflective question, which you will incorporate throughout the reflective conversation.

REFLECTIVE QUESTION: FIVE POSITIVE PRESUPPOSITION PHRASES		
Phrase	Component	Example Starter Language
PPP 1	Situation	When you are planning your lessons.... When you are teaching your lessons....
	Context of Situation	Recognizing that you have English Language Learners included in your class... Recognizing that you are working with honors students...
PPP 2	Teacher Thinking and Teaching Practice	And thinking about... And wondering about... the many ways... the various strategies... all the any approaches you could use... when to and when not to... [label of the teaching practice] such as [give two or three examples]
PPP 3	Criteria	What criteria to you use... What criteria to you consider using...
PPP 4	Decision (and bring teaching practice back generally)	To decide on... In deciding about... strategies, ways, approaches, when to and when not to... [label teaching practice]
PPP 5	Student Impact	To impact student learning To move students forward in their learning of the objectives To increase the likelihood of students learning what you want them to learn

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Handout 4
EXAMPLE TEACHING PRACTICES
FOR 2nd PRESUPPOSITIONAL PHRASE
OF THE DOWNEY REFLECTIVE QUESTION⁶

Directions: As you are learning how to state the reflective question and also thinking about what particular teaching practice you might focus on with your question, the ideas below might help you.

I. CURRICULAR TEACHING PRACTICES EXAMPLES (There are only a handful)

Start each example with-- And thinking about...

- ...approaches for selecting objectives
- ...approaches for sequencing objectives
- ...ways to determine which objectives to teach and their order (the two above)
- ...strategies for determining the time to devote to each objective
- ...prior learnings (objectives) you might link with the new objectives
- ...when to interject a prior learning spontaneously into a lesson on a different but related objective
- ...approaches for sequencing en-route objectives to the culminating objective (task analysis)
- ...ways to cluster objectives for learning
- ...strategies for integrating objectives within the same discipline
- ...strategies for integrating objectives across subject areas
- ...approaches for integrating writing objectives into your [subject area] objectives
- ...ways to integrate reading, oral presentations, and listening objectives into your lessons (when and when not to)
- ...approaches for integrating objectives and determining which objective to focus on at any given time
- ...ways to incorporate objectives into a thematic approach

Note: These examples used the term “objective.” You need to use the appropriate language for the curriculum (e.g. objectives, content standards, student expectations, indicators) in the district.

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II. INSTRUCTIONAL TEACHING PRACTICES: EXAMPLES (There are hundreds)

Start each example with: And thinking about the...

- ...ways to compare and contrast approaches in the lessons
- ...ways to have students summarize key learnings
- ...strategies for teaching students how to take notes.
- ...approaches for reinforcing effort
- ...strategies for giving praise and the types of praise you might use
- ...types of homework activities to use and with which students
- ...approaches to guided practice
- ...when to move from guided practice to independent practice
- ...when to use non-linguistic representations/graphic organizers and which one to use
- ...types of cooperative learning approaches you might use (e.g. jigsaw, TGTS)
- ...ways to have students set goals
- ...strategies for providing feedback to students
- ...approaches for having students generate and test hypotheses
- ...ways to use cues and prompts
- ...types of questions you might ask to elicit higher levels of cognition
- ...methods for incorporating questions into your lessons
- ...approaches to use to check for understanding
- ...ways to have students respond to questions (for instance, volunteer, non-volunteer, tell your neighbor, signal, choral response, call-out, write it down)
- ...approaches for providing feedback to students on their responses to questions (for instance, general praise, academically-oriented feedback)
- ...ways to deal with student error
- ...approaches to providing advanced organizers
- ...approaches you might use in selecting activities
- ...types of practice activities to use
- ...approaches to selecting resources you might use
- ...student engagement strategies
- ...types of examples to use
- ...when to use metacognitive strategies and when not to
- ...when to use demonstration and modeling and when not to
- ...approaches to help you determine when to reteach and when to move on
- ...strategies for vocabulary development
- ...ways to differentiate the learnings for given students
- ...ways to use informal assessment data to determine what to do next instructional for each student
- ...ways to use your assessments to determine which objectives to teach next to which students
- ...approaches for analyzing data to help you make curricular and instructional decisions
- ...approaches you might use to diagnose current students' knowledge or mastery of the objectives
- ...ways to use the walls to enhance student learning
- ...ways to organize your room arrangement to provide the flexibility desired

Handout 5
Five Levels of Reflective Question (Downey 2004a)

Five Levels of Reflective Questions	
Level 1: Criteria	What is the knowledge and/or priority for the criteria teacher uses to make decisions about a given teaching practice?
Level 2: Fidelity to Criteria	Does the teacher find himself/herself using the criteria consistently when making decisions concerning the given teaching practice?
Level 3: Use of Criteria and Results	Does using the criteria when making decisions concerning a given teaching practice get the results teacher is desiring?
Level 4: Use of Criteria and Student Achievement Impact	Does the teacher use student learning results (observed or measured) to direct or influence the use of the criteria in the future?
Level 5: Satisfaction with Criteria and Institutionalized in the Teacher's Behavior and Thinking	When does the teacher think the criteria are working in a fluent and almost automatic way around a given teaching practice, one about which he/she does not need to further reflect?

Handout 6
OUTLINE OF THREE TYPES OF FOLLOW-UP CONVERSATIONS

Collaborative-Interdependent Reflective Conversation Attributes
1. Indicate you have a possible reflective question for the teacher's consideration
2. Determine if this is a good time for the teacher to have a conversation
3. Set a time-frame of ten to fifteen minutes
4. Make a positive statement about reflection
5. Label or describe briefly the possible curricular or instructional teaching practice which will be the focus of this conversation
6. Indicate the desire that you have selected a teaching practice that they will find of interest
7. Identify, if needed, what triggered your thinking about this particular teaching practice that might be of value for their reflection. Provide two or three specific examples of things you have seen on your visits or comments made by the teacher.
8. State that the reflection is about the criteria the teacher uses to make decisions about a specific teaching practice.
9. Pose the reflective question using all five of the positive presuppositions
10. Allow for clarification of the teaching practice and what was meant by criteria
11. Pose the reflective question using all five of the positive presuppositions
12. Propose choice to reflect
13. Invite collaborative reflection with you
14. Exit quickly

Inviting Reflection—Indirect Conversation Attributes
1. Set time-frame for conversation
2. Make a genuine positive statement about a recently observed classroom situation.
3. Invite reflection in a general way
4. Ask an unfocused question about the classroom situation.
5. Probe for criteria the teacher uses in making a particular decision when brought up—a type of Reflective Question.
6. If appropriate turn the idea into a reflective question and invite further reflection, if desired.
7. Exit quickly with a comment of a reflective nature on the teaching practice mentioned by the teacher and an invitation for follow-up if desired.

Direct (Teach) Conversation Attributes
1. Set time frame
2. Reinforce reflection
3. Focused statement on curricular or instructional teaching practice to be addressed
4. Invite reflection with you as you discuss the practice
5. Describe behaviors observed (briefly describe what was observed in the Walk-Throughs) the teacher decision/action, and the particular teaching practice
6. Teach about the curricular or instructional teaching practice providing examples (interaction important here)
7. Incorporate research into the discussion
8. Check for teacher understanding
9. End with reflective question
10. Exit quickly

Handout 7

POSSIBLE SEQUENCE OF REFLECTIVE CONVERSATION WHEN USING THE DOWNEY COLLABORATIVE APPROACH⁷

Directions: While you are putting together your own approach to the reflective conversation, the following components of the conversation and suggested sequence may be of help to you.

Collaborative-Interdependent Reflective Conversation Attributes	
Set of the conversation	Set the time frame and indicate you have a reflective question for the teacher's consideration.
	Make a positive statement about reflection and that the area of reflection is their choice to consider.
	Identify the possible curricular or instructional practice you are suggesting to the teacher for potential reflection.
Body of the conversation	Begin talking about the practice, giving examples from your observations of that teacher (just one or two), and have the teacher add examples.
	Move the teacher away from the examples to criteria the teacher uses to select one approach over another. You may need to give an example of a criterion. ("For instance, one criterion you might use is...").
	Carry on a conversation, incorporating the five positive presupposition phrases. Build in time for clarification and interaction, with a focus on the criteria.
Closure of the conversation	Summarize in the reflective question all five positive presuppositions together.
	Indicate clearly that it is the teacher's choice as to whether he/she decides to reflect on the question.
	Invite the teacher to collaborate with you further, in future conversations, if the teacher chooses to reflect on the teaching practice and wishes to explore the ideas with you further—to share their learning with you.
	Excuse yourself and exit quickly.

Note: Educators love to talk about their practices and decisions. Be careful to honor the set time frame as we are all very busy people. Also, do not explore the teaching practice in depth, since the goal is to give a gift of thought to the teacher for his/her reflection over time.

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Handout 8
Example of Possible Attributes and Sequence for an Interactive Conversation
Leading to Reflection (with out teacher comments)

Possible Conversation Attributes and Sequence for an Interactive and Potentially Collaborative Inquiry of Reflection		
Attribute	Purpose	Might Sound Like
Indicate you have a possible reflective question for the teacher's consideration	Alert teacher initially to the purpose of the interaction	"Hi. I have been thinking about a possible reflective question for you and I think I have one you might enjoy."
Determine if this is a good time for the teacher to have a conversation	Provide for teacher choice and set a time when the teacher can be focused on the conversation and not be thinking about something else	"Is this a good time to chat or do we need to find another time?"
Set a time-frame of ten to fifteen minutes	Restrict the possible amount of time for the conversation. Both of you can become so engrossed in it that it may go on too long. Set the stage for reflection, but do not get into it. It requires sufficient time to ponder.	"I have about ten minutes before I need to speak with a parent and I think this might be a good time to begin our conversation."
Make a positive statement about reflection	Provide for a positive recognition—a recognition not about one's performance, but about one's desire to reflect.	"I know you love to reflect on your practice, so I am hoping I have another area for reflection to suggest to you that you'll like."
Label or describe briefly the possible curricular or instructional teaching practice which will be the focus of this conversation	Create an immediate set up front, so there are no guesses as to what the area for reflection will be.	"The area I thought you might like to think about deals with the transfer of learning to various settings in which students might use that learning, and the practice activities you set up to assist in that transfer."
Indicate the desire that you have selected a teaching practice that they will find of interest	Make clear that it is the teacher's choice whether he/she wishes to think more about the possible area for reflection	"I hope I have selected something that would be of interest to you, please let me know. If it isn't, I will go back and think some more."
Identify, if needed, what triggered your thinking about this particular teaching practice that might be of value for their reflection. Provide two or three specific examples of things you have seen on your visits or comments made by the teacher.	Give, if needed, some examples of what you have been noticing when you have been in classrooms so the teacher begins to understand your selection of one teaching practice over another for possible reflection. Don't focus on this attribute long, because it is just to pique the teacher's curiosity regarding the topic. We don't want the reflections to focus on the past.	"What had me thinking about this area of transfer effects was noticing, during the last several visits to your classroom, the ways you activated prior knowledge and learning relevant to the new learning (specific example), and then another time you were giving examples to students about how they might use their prior knowledge."
State that the reflection is about the criteria the teacher uses to make decisions about a specific teaching practice.	Set the stage for analytical reflection on criteria, not strategies, or on how a teacher does something.	"The reflection is around the criteria you consider in deciding how to set up your lessons for multiple transfer effects."
Pose the reflective question using all five of the positive	Begin to pull the conversation together around the reflective question	"So, here is the reflective question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when you are planning your lessons around the district

Possible Conversation Attributes and Sequence for an Interactive and Potentially Collaborative Inquiry of Reflection		
Attribute	Purpose	Might Sound Like
presuppositions	Note: in the example to the right, the phrases are not necessarily said all together, since there will be dialogue taking place. However, you want to get them all into the conversation fairly close together, in several sentences.	standards, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • and thinking about the many ways you could use the varied contexts of your practice activities to impact multiple transfer scenarios, such as transfer to high stakes tests or transfer to the real world, • what criteria do you use • to decide on the type of practice contexts you will use • to assist students in their transfer of learnings to various settings?"
Allow for clarification of the teaching practice and what was meant by criteria	Provide some examples based upon what you have observed through your walk-throughs in the teacher's classrooms and, if kept neutral, more possible examples. Check for understanding; make sure the teacher has clarity about what the area for reflection is. Begin, if needed, to help the teacher come up with criteria based upon their practice.	"Tell me what you think I am suggesting as the teaching area for reflection." " Share with me some of the criteria you might use to decide on a practice activity. For instance, when you have the students do a warm-up activity in a test-like format, what kinds of thoughts go through your mind."
Pose the reflective question using all five of the positive presuppositions	Begin to pull the conversation together around the reflective question Note: in the example to the right, the phrases are not necessarily said all together, since there will be dialogue taking place. However, you want to get them all into the conversation fairly close together, in several sentences.	"So, here is the reflective question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when you are planning your lessons around the district standards, • and thinking about the many ways you could use the varied contexts of your practice activities to impact multiple transfer scenarios, such as transfer to high stakes tests or transfer to the real world, • what criteria do you use • to decide on the type of practice contexts you will use • to assist students in their transfer of learnings to various settings?"
Propose choice to reflect	Focus on teacher choice—not a principal expectation—that the teacher thinks about the area under consider.	"If you find this area to be of interest..."
Invite collaborative reflection with you	Explain clearly that it is the teacher's choice to come back and be reflective with the principal or mentor. It is when the teacher makes that choice to come back for further conversation that it becomes a collaborative reflection.	"...and would like to share some of your thoughts with me, I would enjoy that immensely.
Exit quickly	Honor the time of both parties	"Well, it is time for me to move on. I enjoyed our time together."

Handout 9

Overall Attributes of the Downey Walk-Through with Reflective Inquiry Approach⁸

Attributes of the Downey Walk-Through with Reflective Inquiry Approach	
Decision Maker	The teacher is the decision maker in teaching, one with an inner locus of control. The supervisor or coach does not tell the teacher what to do and he/she follows.
Choice	The teacher almost always has numerous choices of teaching actions to make--such as this objective over another, this strategy instead of the other--and therefore needs to be conscious of these choices as well as personally accountable for those choices.
Criteria	For rational decision making, the teacher uses criteria to decide on one practice over another; and in any given situation these criteria may change in terms of priority.
Reflection-for-Action	The reflective question and conversation is not about a teacher's decision about a lesson or lessons taught in the past; rather, it is a reflection about one's practice in general, and the decisions one makes for future actions. The reflective question is always stated in the present tense.
Contextual	The teaching and learning act is complex, just like each individual student and teacher. Situations vary within lessons that in turn impact the choices one might make. The reflective question is stated using the plural form when referring to decisions, to recognize the varied and complex contexts of making decisions in the classroom.
Analysis, Synthesis, or Evaluation Cognitive types	The reflective question and conversation is designed to elicit analysis, synthesis, or evaluation processes from teachers as they consider the question and respond over time. Teachers are asked to reflect on the criteria they use, whether there is fidelity in use of the criteria, whether the criteria are yielding the desired results, etc.
Neutral Non-judgmental	The observation identifies teaching actions and decisions without judging their quality. The reflection question is designed with non-judgmental words and built into a larger reflective conversation. For instance, the conversation is typically void of praise or criticism, and focuses on provoking deep and meaningful thought.
Positive Presuppositions	Assumes person is thinking about and doing what is presented in the question. The question includes a series of five phrases, all of which are positive presuppositions.
Honor What was Observed	Often the reflective question poses examples of a selected teaching practice, and frequently includes those teaching actions that are part of the teacher's frequently observed habits.
Impact on Student Learning	The reflective question is stated with the presupposition that the teacher's decisions and actions regarding both curricular and instructional practices are based upon the desire to impact student achievement (cause and effect).
Substantive and Meaningful	In selecting a teaching practice around which to form the reflective question, the number one priority is that the teacher views the area for reflection as highly meaningful and beneficial to them—personally and professionally relevant.
Intrinsic Motivation	The dialogue and interactions are designed to promote intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivation. This is the reason for avoiding notes and praise in connection with the informal walk-through. However, through proactive dialogue and reflection, a sense of self efficacy is encouraged and promoted.

⁸ Downey, C. J., Steffy, B., English, F., Frase, L. & Poston, W. K. Jr., (2004a). *The three-minute classroom walk-through: Changing school supervisory practice one teacher at a time*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press