

The Tuning Protocol: Tuning a Lesson Plan Protocol

When you tune a lesson plan you have two basic components: the goals of the plan and a set of learning activities sequenced in a way that you believe will help the students meet those goals. The general objective is to get feedback from your colleagues about the degree to which the activity you structure seem likely to get your students to these goals. The plan is “in tune” when the goals and activities are most in alignment.

Time

Approximately 1 hour

Roles

Presenter (each person will present their lesson plans)

Participants (seated in small groups of 4)

Small Group Facilitator (who also participates and keeps time)

Large Group Facilitator (who leads entire process and debriefs at the end)

1. Presentation (5 minutes)

- What are the learning goals of the lesson? What do you want students to learn? How will you facilitate this learning?
- Provide context for lesson plan (i.e. what led up to the lesson, what will be your next steps, etc.).
- Focus question for feedback:

What evidence exists in the lesson that students will read, write, think, and talk and how might I increase those opportunities during the lesson or unit of study?

2. Clarifying Question from Group (3 minutes)

- Clarifying questions are matters of fact and allow participants to get information that may have been omitted in the presentation and will help them to understand the context for the lesson. The facilitator is responsible for making sure that clarifying questions are really clarifying and that the person asking the question is not making suggestions at this point.

3. Pause to Reflect on Feedback (3 minutes)

- Participants prepare their feedback by taking notes on where the plan seems “in tune” with the stated goals and where they may be opportunities for improvement. Feedback will be in the form of “warm” and “cool” feedback.
- **Warm feedback** may include comments about how the lesson presented seems to meet the desired goals. When providing warm feedback, avoid judgment statements such as “I like, Great job...etc.” Instead, consider starting comments as **“I saw,” “I noticed,” “I heard,” or “I see evidence of...”**
- **Cool feedback** may include possible disconnects, gaps, or suggestions for change. Remember that cool feedback should offer ideas or suggestions that strengthen the lesson plan presented. Cool feedback should address the focus question outlined in step 1. When providing cool feedback, consider starting comments as **“I wonder if you have considered.....,” “I’m curious to know what might happen if.....”** Results are more positive if you can frame cool feedback as a probing question that allows the presenter to reflect on their plan.
- Presenter is silent during this reflection; participants do this work silently until step 4.

4. Warm and Cool Feedback (5 minutes)

- Participants share feedback with the presenter, starting with warm feedback then transitioning into cool feedback. Remember the suggestions should help answer the focus question in step 1.
- Presenter is silent and takes notes while the participants provide feedback.

5. Reflection (5 minutes)

- Presenter speaks to those comments/questions he or she chooses while participants are silent.
- This is not a time to defend oneself, but is instead a time for the presenter to reflect aloud on those ideas or questions that seemed particularly interesting.
- Facilitator may intervene to focus, clarify, etc.

6. Repeat steps 1-5 until every teacher has presented and received feedback on their lesson plan.

7. Debrief (5 minutes)

- Large group facilitator leads discussion on the tuning experience.