

Student Interviews

Description:

The teacher interviews students individually or in small groups to two or three students by asking a small number of predetermined questions relating to concepts, skills and procedures foundational to the level learning goals/achievement objectives. For each response, whether correct or incorrect, students are asked to explain their reasoning or solution method.

KEY THINKING QUESTIONS FOR ALL DISCUSSIONS/INTERVIEWS.

1. What is another way you could solve this? Tell me why you would solve it that way?
2. Tell me more about that?
3. Can you draw it for me?
4. Can you show me how you did that?

Sample Interview Questions:

1. About how much do you think the answer to (insert computation) would be? How do you think this?
2. What do you call these shapes? How are they different from each other?
3. How would you solve this problem(insert problem) Why did you do it that way?
4. Can you use these blocks to build a? Why did you build it that way?
5. How many do you think can fit in this? Tell me how you thought about this?
6. What would the next three numbers in the sequence be? How did you figure that out?

How this FACT Promotes Student Learning.

The depth of a misunderstanding is often uncovered only with follow-up questions pertaining specifically to a student's solution or strategy. A one-on-one or small- group interview provides students with an opportunity to communicate mathematically in a setting where they have the sole attention of their teacher, creating an opportunity that is more likely to uncover areas of misunderstanding or difficulty. In addition, putting mathematical knowledge into words is an important literacy skill in mathematics. The FACT helps students put ideas into words and explain their thinking, a critical skill in mathematics and language.

How this FACT Informs Instruction.

One-on-one or small-group interviews often reveal valuable information that is not available when teachers rely solely on students' written work (Burns, 2010). Interviewing provides an insight into a student's level of understanding and ability to put mathematical ideas into words and representations. The FACT allows teachers to gather information about the range of learning needs within a class of students.

Design and Administration.

"Good interviewing requires careful preparation in advance.." (Stepans et al., 2005, p. 227)

Select a topic that is going to be taught in a future unit of instruction. Align the interview questions to the learning goals of the unit and include questions that targets concepts and procedures that are foundational to developing the key mathematical within the goals. Create picture cards, or have manipulatives on hand to use during the interview. Decide on the learning task other students will be engaged in so that you are able to focus on student responses during the interview.

Ease of use: High

Time Demand: High

Cognitive Demand: depends on questions

Caveats: Teachers often find it difficult to hold back from turning an interview into a teachable moment. Refrain from correcting or teaching during an interview.