

Summary of Classroom Observation for Ben Amend

Dr. Amy Pope, Principal Lecturer

Themes Based on Observation Notes:

Organization of Content:

Ben began class with a warm introduction, briefly sharing who he is and setting a welcoming tone. He used an effective icebreaker to get students talking, which helped ease them into the material. The light switch example was a particularly strong choice—it provided a clear, relatable way to introduce the abstract idea of quantization.

The lesson progressed logically, with smooth transitions between concepts. Ben regularly connected class content to real-world ideas and emphasized what students should focus on for assessments. His use of a clicker question to conclude the activity and revisit earlier material reinforced learning objectives while keeping students accountable.

Presentation Skills:

Ben's voice was clear and well-modulated throughout. He varied his tone to maintain interest and draw attention to important points. His pacing allowed adequate time for students to respond to questions. He modeled good questioning techniques, including intentional wait time to encourage thoughtful participation.

The use of the PHeT simulation was a well-integrated instructional tool. Ben effectively narrated what was happening on-screen and used the PowerPoint annotation tool to guide student attention. His humor and lightheartedness created a relaxed and positive atmosphere.

Non-Verbal Communication and General Style:

Ben was highly attentive to the class, maintained good eye contact. He listened carefully to students and created space for them to contribute meaningfully. During group work, he circulated the room to offer guidance and check in with students, helping them feel seen and supported.

Asking for volunteer names and thanking them afterward contributed to an inclusive classroom culture. The only minor issue observed was that the ball-rolling demonstration was hard to see from the back—placing it on a table may have improved visibility.

Class Climate:

Ben created a classroom environment that was both inclusive and engaging. Students participated actively and followed along with the lecture notes. His responses to questions, group facilitation, and use of humor all contributed to a positive learning climate. Clicker questions and other active strategies ensured that most students were engaged throughout.

Teaching Strategies:

Ben used a range of active learning strategies effectively. These included: interactive demonstrations, polling (clicker questions), collaborative group work, real-world analogies, and simulations. His teaching supported multiple learning styles and made abstract physics concepts accessible and memorable.

He also demonstrated strong facilitation skills by pausing for reflection, scaffolding difficult content, and incorporating student-friendly analogies and examples.

Strengths:

- Excellent use of personal introduction and icebreaker to connect with students.
- Strong use of voice, pacing, and technology to support clear instruction.
- Creative and effective analogies that linked abstract ideas to everyday experiences.
- Great classroom rapport supported by humor, respectful interactions, and use of names.
- Effectively integrate lecture, group work, demos, and simulations to maintain engagement.

Suggestions for Growth:

- Consider visibility for all students when performing demonstrations.
- Avoid using phrases such as “this is the final thing we will discuss today,” which may signal students to disengage before the session concludes.
- When using simulations or demos, explicitly state what students should observe or take away from the experience.
- Continue building on your effective pacing by incorporating brief reflective summaries at the end of class to reinforce key points and prepare students for the next session.
- Continue using student-centered engagement strategies, including polling, simulations, and group work.
- Maintain intentional wait time and thoughtful questioning to promote student reflection.

Ben, this was a well-executed and engaging lesson. Your clear communication, intentional questioning, and warm classroom climate suggest strong teaching practice in development. You use a rich blend of tools and strategies supporting deep student learning. With continued refinement and practice, you are on a strong path toward becoming an exceptional educator.