

VIDEO CASE 1—Guide to Analysis

A 3rd-Grade Team Meets to Examine Student Work

This case uses an excerpt of a video of a 3rd-grade team meeting to explore the issue: how to go beyond superficial student work analysis and instead critically examine instructional practices, thinking more deeply and carefully about the challenges presented by their students. The teachers work in an inner-city school where all students are mainstreamed and there is a high proportion of special education students. Watching the video, you'll see the team use a protocol to analyze the work of one child who is on an IEP (Individual Education Plan). Team member Caitlin presents two pieces of the student's work and discusses his learning issues while the team uses the protocol to help Caitlin consider how to improve the student's academic work. (See the Handout—Positive Protocol, Figure VC1.1, and Handouts—Sample of Student Work, Figures VC1.2 and VC1.3.)

Two video clips are included in this case.

- Video Clip 1 is the segment of the team's meeting in which the teacher presents the student and his work using the Positive Protocol.
- Video Clip 2 combines the original team meeting video with reflective comments the teacher presenter makes a few weeks after the meeting as she watches the original video.

Your Facilitator

Wait! It would be very, very difficult to gain any appreciable benefit from your expenditure of time and energy by attempting to conduct this analysis and its series of exercises without a facilitator. You *need* to appoint someone (it can be a team member) as a designated facilitator. This is not necessarily your team leader. This person will not be your "boss." But this person *will* be responsible for:

- Copying and distributing to all participants copies of the Case and Case Analysis and all handouts
- Organizing role-plays (appointing time keepers and observers, where indicated)
- Moving the process along and staying on track

Psst! Facilitators: Read all the activity directions as if they applied to you.

Psst! Team members: You, too.

Materials Needed

Video Clips 1 and 2

Enough printed copies of the following to distribute to all team members:

- The Video Case Guide to Analysis
- Handout—Positive Protocol
- Handouts—Samples of Student Work 1 and 2
- Worksheet—Just the Facts!
- Worksheet—Video Observation
- Worksheet—Focus for Improving Team Meetings
- Chart paper and markers

Tip: It will be helpful to prepare chart paper with an enlarged version of Worksheet—Just the Facts! (Figure VC1.4) prior to the meeting.

A. Analyzing the Case

Step 1: Before Watching Video Clip:

- a. Examine the Positive Protocol and Samples of Student Work (5 minutes) (Figures VC1.1, VC1.2, VC1.3)

b. Review the Worksheet—Just the Facts! Figure VC1.4 (10 minutes)
1. Give yourself a few minutes to digest the details of the worksheet before starting the video.

2. Follow the sequence of events taking place within the video, from the first to last row on the worksheet, beginning with the

Figure VC1.4 Video Case 1—Worksheet—Just the Facts!

Category	Specific Evidence From the Video	What We Can Infer From the Evidence
1. Points that the presenting teacher wants to make: problem(s) to be solved; artifacts presented		
2. Other team members' questions about student's learning style, behavior, etc.		
3. Other team members' comments and suggestions about what to do		
4. The presenter's responses		
5. The presenter's next steps		

presenting teacher's distribution of the artifacts and presentation of the problem, to the end where she suggests what steps she will take toward solving the student's problem.

3. As you watch the video, complete the worksheet, capturing as much detail as possible in the boxes under the second column, Specific Evidence From the Video. In the third and fourth rows, note that you're also being asked to simultaneously focus on other team members' comments, along with the presenter's reactions to those comments. You might want to divide these tasks among individual team members. Some will concentrate on the third row, others will do the fourth row.

Step 2: Watch Video Clip 1 (10 ½ minutes)

Step 3:. Establish the Facts of the Case (20 minutes)

After watching the video, team members should review their notes on the completed Worksheet—Just the Facts! and then focus their attention on the third column: What We Can Infer From the Evidence. Jot down thoughts about what might be reasonably inferred from the evidence.

Enlarge the worksheet onto one or two pieces of chart paper, and ask team members to brainstorm descriptive evidence from the case for each category. Refer to the video case for specific details as you complete the evidence column on the chart. In the next column, form some inferences from the evidence. What might you reasonably infer from the evidence you have listed?

Feel free to add any additional categories.

Step 4: Case Analysis Questions (15 minutes)

Using the compiled Just the Facts! chart paper as a basis for discussion, address the following questions:

- What is the substance of the conversation among team members?
- How do you think the team could have gone deeper into the student work presented in this video?
 - Suggestions you might give to Caitlin, the presenter, regarding presentation of work and refocusing the discussion

- Suggestions you might give to other teachers regarding questions to further analyze the work and refocusing the discussion
- What were the benefits and the challenges of using this protocol with the team?
- What, if anything, can you infer from this video about the team's work together and their professional relationships?

B. Exploring the Dilemma (20 minutes)

Employing a protocol provided by the school to examine student work, the team is using an increasingly popular professional development tool, one that has gained enormous currency over the past 20 years. In the book *The Power of Protocols: An Educator's Guide to Better Practice*,¹ the authors present a number of protocols and state that such protocols can enable teachers to focus on improving teaching and learning. According to the authors, protocols can be used to help develop "certain organizational components that are often absent within educational institutions":

- Norms for open and honest conversation
- Meeting habits that support inquiry, dialogue, and reflection
- Opportunities for those immersed in particular work to take direct action to improve it
- Facilitative leadership capable of encouraging participation, ensuring equity, and building trust

Our own extensive experience with teaching teams has shown that protocols are very good tools that can help focus team work, enabling teams to work through curricular and instructional issues more effectively. However, there is a major pitfall:

Teacher teams can use protocols as a step-by-step guide and "go through the motions" without ever doing the difficult work of creating a new kind of workplace where teams of teachers assume collective responsibility for growth and development of colleagues and students.

Is that the case with this teaching team?

This video case raises interesting challenges for this team.

- How can the team raise the level of conversation and produce more rigorous instruction?
- In what ways can the team use the analysis of one teacher's work to affect the instruction of other teachers on the team?

C. Reflect and Connect

Step 1: Watch Video Clip 2 With Reflections (18½ minutes)

In this video, Caitlin, the presenting teacher, reviews the original video of the team meeting and reflects on what she has learned from it, along with what she and the team might have done differently. It will be helpful to preview the questions below *before* watching the video.

Step 2: Discussion Questions (20 minutes)

- What did you notice about Caitlin's comments on the video?
- Compare her comments to the comments you made about the team meeting in your video analysis.
- Caitlin comments on the value of only focusing on the student work and not discussing what the teacher did or the lesson she taught that preceded the work. Do you agree or disagree? In what ways?
- At the very end of the video, Caitlin asks:
 - How much should I focus on the pace of the work?
 - How much should I focus on the quality of the ideas and expression?
 - How much should I focus on mechanics?

Her questions regarding balance highlight a common issue for teachers. Discuss your opinions of an appropriate balance among these three tensions.

D. What Do We Do Now?

1. Video-record one of your own team meetings. Then, at the following team meeting, watch the video together and individually complete the Worksheet—Video Observation (Figure VC1.5) to record the significant facts of the video.
2. The line down the middle of the worksheet serves an important purpose. On the left side the observer records what she or he sees or hears in the video, trying to note the individual who is speaking in the video and what is being said. On the right side, the observer records any questions or thoughts that might have emerged while watching the video. The two columns are

designed to ensure that observational and interpretation data are kept separate.

3. As a group, make a list on chart paper of the significant facts of the video. Try to withhold judgment, inferences, or evaluation, and come to agreement about what happened.
4. Discuss some of the following questions:
 - What do you notice about the kinds of questions teachers asked during the team meeting?
 - How did teachers tend to respond to questions and concerns (e.g., provide strategies, direct new teammates to resources, put items on next agenda, demonstrate empathetic responses)?
 - Which questions and concerns were resolved? Which were not? Why do you think the group attended to some questions and concerns and not others?
 - When and how were students discussed (e.g., group references—ELLs, special education; specific references—individual students; positive or negative references)? What came before and caused teachers to introduce students into the conversation?
 - Who is talking? Who is not? What do you notice about turn-taking and the length of people's contributions?
5. Complete Worksheet—Focus for Improving Team Meetings (Figure VC1.6) in order to give your team a clear direction for improving its work.

Reference

1. McDonald, J. P., Mohr, N., Dichter, A., & McDonald, E. C. (2003). *The Power of Protocols: An Educator's Guide to Better Practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.