

(RE)DEFINING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT: ENGAGEMENT RUBRIC FOR CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

Directions: Observe or reflect on a class or activity, making observational notes—what is seen and heard—for each indicator. Decide how you would score each component/variable, either as a **0** (no evidence), **1** (little evidence), **2** (average evidence), or **3** (high evidence). Use the Engagement Equation and guide, below, to tally up the total score and identify ways to improve student engagement.

$$\text{ENGAGEMENT} = \text{STC} + (\text{R} + \text{Tc} + \text{Ch} + \text{Sw} + \text{P})\text{V}$$

Variables	Evidence from Observation	Score (0–3)
Students (S) Students enter the classroom to gather, discover, process, understand, integrate, and ultimately learn information.		
Teachers (T) Teachers enter the classroom to share, present, guide, instruct, scaffold, and facilitate students in gaining knowledge.		
Content (C) The lesson content, how the educator shares the content, and how the students will discovery/make new meaning.		
Relationships (R) Healthy relationships between teachers and students are built upon trust and create a safe environment.		
Teacher Clarity (Tc) The combination of teachers knowing what they are supposed to be teaching, informing students about what they will be learning, and reaching agreements with students about the success criteria.		

Challenge (Ch) A balance of difficulty and complexity that affords students a range of experiences that foster fluency, stamina, strategic thinking, and content expertise.		
Self-Worth (Sw) Students know they are valued as individuals in the school community and they have someone in their life who believes in them.		
Purpose (P) Students take responsibility for who and what they are becoming.		
Voice (V) Students have opportunities to make meaningful decisions, communicate their thoughts/opinions, and have a say in their learning process.		
Step	Directions	Score
Step 1	Multiply the score of Students (0–3) x Teachers (0–3) x Content (0–3)	
Step 2	Add up the total score of Relationships + Teacher Clarity + Challenge + Self-Worth + Purpose (0–15)	
Step 3	Take the score from Step 2 (0–15) and multiply by Student Voice (0–3)	
Step 4	Add the total from Step 1 (0–27) and Step 3 (0–45); this is the TOTAL SCORE	

TOTAL SCORE

0–27 PTS: Low Engagement

28–52 PTS: Some Engagement

53–72 PTS: High Engagement

The total score and ranges are meant to be a guide to improve student engagement, rather than a complete diagnosis. Just as a low score signals opportunities to engage students in new ways, especially by amplifying student voice, a high score does not mean a teacher has no room for improvement. Observations and rubrics with specific scores can be inexact. However, focusing on ranges can be a helpful guide to assessing how and when students are most engaged in a classroom. Consider the lowest scoring areas. What steps can you take in those areas to improve the level of engagement in your classroom?