Note: While the primary lesson focused on beauty, the fact that it covered four school days means that the observation notes also include information on tasks related to the reading assignments, vocabulary, etc.

1. Major Function: Management of Instructional Time

1.1 Teacher has materials, supplies, and equipment ready at the start of the lesson or instructional activity.

1.2 Teacher gets the class started quickly.

1.3 Teacher uses available time for learning and keeps students on task.

Comments
The television, data projector, procedure signs, etc. were set up prior to class as they were needed each day. Initial handouts were already on students’ desks or were ready to be picked up by students. Agenda, objectives, homework, and vocabulary warm ups were already on the board. Mr. M. began class with the bell. Transitions were quick (a page number to flip to was already prepared, the task instructions were already on the handouts, etc.). There were even tasks for students who finished reading quizzes earlier than their classmates.

2. Major Function: Management of Student Behavior

2.1 Teacher has established a set of rules and procedures that govern the handling of routine administrative matters.

2.2 Teacher has established a set of rules and procedures that govern student verbal participation and talk during different types of activities—whole class instruction, small group instruction.

2.3 Teacher has established a set of rules and procedures that govern student movement in the classroom during different types of instructional activities.

2.4 Teacher frequently monitors the behavior of all students during whole-class, small group, and seatwork activities and during transitions between instructional activities.

2.5 Teacher stops inappropriate behavior promptly and consistently, yet maintains the dignity of the student.

2.6 Teacher analyzes the classroom environment and makes adjustment to support learning and enhance social relationships.

Comments
Mr. M. used a general call and response approach for short vocabulary questions, raised hands for discussion of Romeo and Juliet, and a pass-the-ball procedure for a discussion of beauty where emotional responses were anticipated.

Mr. M. brought up the pass-the-ball procedure and “sensitive discussion” procedure but then went to an initial activity that did not yet utilize this new procedure, leading to student confusion. As a result, students began to raise hands, then speak out, then talk over each other. However, Mr. M. adjusted by reviewing the posted procedure and restored order.

Mr. M. made use of a timer to hold students to time parameters for given tasks.

Mr. M. addressed minor disruptions by asking the student a question related to the lesson, thus maintaining the student’s dignity in the course of redirecting him / her.
3. Major Function: Instructional Presentation

3.1 Teacher links instructional activities to prior learning.
3.2 Teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning activities that make these aspects of subject matter understandable and meaningful for students.
3.3 Teacher speaks fluently and precisely.
3.4 Teacher provides relevant examples and demonstrations to illustrate concepts and skills.
3.5 Teacher assigns tasks and asks appropriate levels of questions that students handle with a high rate of success.
3.6 Teacher conducts the lesson or instructional activity at a brisk pace, slowing presentations when necessary for student understanding but avoiding unnecessary slowdowns.
3.7 Teacher makes transitions between lessons and between instructional activities within lessons effectively and smoothly.
3.8 Teacher makes sure that assignment is clear.
3.9 The teacher creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.
3.10 The teacher uses instructional strategies that encourage the development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.
3.11 The teacher uses technology to support instruction.
3.12 The teacher encourages students to be engaged in and responsible for their own learning.

Comments

Vocabulary: Mr. M. asked students to recall previously learned vocabulary word parts.

Romeo and Juliet:
Instruction was differentiated through the use of different texts / versions of the script but not through activities / tasks.

Viewing of Romeo and Juliet film clips as initial exposure to the scene:
Mr. M. gave promptings during the viewing regarding the import of directorial choices, thus building on the concept of method and meaning from the previous poetry unit, now utilizing the medium of film and directorial choices as it related to Shakespeare’s text. Mr. M. referenced rhyme scheme and sonnet form from a previous poetry unit, now to guide students in articulating the significance of Shakespeare’s use of this form in Act I, scene v.

Romeo and Juliet post-reading discussions:
Mr. M.’s extensive familiarity with the text of the play allowed him to quote appropriate lines, to prompt student responses, to provide examples, etc.

Beauty Lesson:
In asking students to develop criteria for beauty, he provided non-examples and examples to clarify the task. Mr. M. started with having students develop criteria for beauty in objects and then in people which encouraged more thoughtful responses on the second step. By asking for specific or refined responses, he encouraged critical thinking. Mr. M. built on their film viewing analytical skills as students examined contemporary images of beauty in magazine ads, again asking them to share what they noticed, what decisions the photographer was making, what patterns they could see developing, etc. Mr. M. used scaffolding for a final task (editing Shakespeare’s script for imagery) with two activities: (1) having students brainstorm dark objects for beauty—as opposed to Shakespeare’s use of light imagery for beauty—and (2) having students transform a white / light centered modern custom, weddings, with alternatives. Further, in the first task, Mr. M. had students develop associations for those dark objects and demonstrated how to use the object and the association to create a line of imagery.

In the final performance task, Mr. M. made use of a scenario (“Shakespeare asks you for your input on his script. You point out he’s too reliant on white imagery for beauty. Shakespeare asks for your help revising.”) Mr. M. scaffolded this creative writing challenge with concrete steps: 1. What imagery needs to be removed? 2. What requests / commands are in the lines that must be kept for the sake of clarity? 3. Choose a dark image from the previous activity or use that previously created list as examples to develop a new one. 4. Extend on that line. Mr. M. took the class through an example before they began. This careful planning with instructional design allowed for maximum challenge with maximum support.

In extending the line, the class gravitated towards using participial phrases, a recently covered grammar concept. Mr. M. did not explicitly make that grammar connection with the class. When Mr. M. took the
class through an example, light imagery reappeared. Mr. M. did not address this fact, which could have led to confusion about the editing task. It could have been an opportunity to model further revision.

As students began working in assigned pairs, there was a fairly steady rate of raised hands. (As soon as Mr. M. finished talking to a student, there was almost always one more raised hand in the classroom.) This fact indicated that the challenge level of the task was appropriate (not too simple, not too overwhelming—just slightly beyond their comfort zone, where we ideally want students to be).

Throughout:
Transitions were smooth—students were given brief independent tasks as Mr. M. set up the next activity. Mr. M. provided written examples and asked students to volunteer further examples before beginning any task.

4. Major Function: Instructional Monitoring

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<th>Above Standard</th>
<th>At Standard</th>
<th>Below Standard</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Teacher maintains clear, firm, and reasonable work standards and due dates.</td>
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<td>4.2</td>
<td>Teacher circulates to check all students’ performances.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Teacher routinely uses oral, written, and other work products to evaluate the effects of instructional activities and to check student progress.</td>
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<td>4.4</td>
<td>Teacher poses questions clearly and one at a time.</td>
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<td>4.5</td>
<td>Teacher uses student responses to adjust teaching as necessary.</td>
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Comments
Mr. M. frequently used a middle aisle in the desk arrangement to gain proximity to students in both the front and the back of the classroom. He used sufficient wait time for student response and switched to scaffolded questions when his open ended questions were met with confusion. Mr. M. uses oral questions and written tasks to hold students accountable throughout the lesson. Mr. M. used a “mock” quiz to determine student readiness (and help students determine their own readiness) regarding independent reading assignments before actual quizzes were utilized.

During more student centered parts of the lesson, Mr. M. circulated to answer questions, prompt students to provide more thoughtful responses, ensure students were on task, etc.

5. Major Function: Instructional Feedback

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<th>Above Standard</th>
<th>At Standard</th>
<th>Below Standard</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Teacher provides feedback on the correctness or incorrectness of in-class work to encourage student growth.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>Teacher regularly provides prompt feedback on out-of-class work.</td>
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<td>5.3</td>
<td>Teacher affirms a correct oral response appropriately and moves on.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>Teacher provides sustaining feedback after an incorrect response by probing, repeating the question, giving a clue, or allowing more time.</td>
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<td>5.5</td>
<td>The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal and non-verbal communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.</td>
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Comments
Mr. M. validated student responses by asking students to extend their answers, helping them be and feel more successful by moving them higher on Bloom’s taxonomy of thinking skills. Examples: What else did you notice? Why did the director / photographer do that? Probably not—any other reason? If we have x and y, what can we conclude?

When students had questions about their reading, Mr. M. had students go back to the text or asked fellow students to answer their questions, clarifying or elaborating on student responses as needed to ensure accuracy. This approach increased student accountability, even in the very moment of their confusion.
Observer’s Summary

Strengths
1. questioning techniques
2. discussion leading
3. organization
4. expertise with content
5. establishing relevance

Continue...
1. beginning lesson planning with the objectives, particularly thinking about what students will be able to do as a result of the lesson rather than what material you as the teacher want to present.
2. experimenting with moving away from handouts that require students only to fill in lines or boxes.

Next Challenges
1. Differentiate with tasks / required products in addition to differentiating through grouping and text.
2. Consider higher levels of Bloom’s taxonomy for tasks rather than just for discussion questions.
3. Be careful with pacing—shift the teacher / student ratio. Don’t linger (procrastinate?) on parts of the lesson that are teacher led or teacher centered.