

Video Observation and Self-Assessment

Why video your classroom teaching?

-All education is ultimately self-education

-Current reality is hard to see:

- confirmation bias: we tend to interpret new information as confirming our previous beliefs (feedback we receive from classroom observations may often be filtered through our confirmation bias and not register deeply with us)
- habituation: we tend to become habituated to our environment and behaviors over time (we get used to doing things a certain way and may resist change, especially if we do not perceive that is anything wrong with what we're currently doing)

-“Self-reflection plays an important role in teachers’ professional growth. Teachers may enter the profession with preconceived ideas about what good instruction looks like based on their previous experiences as a student. This leads to imitative, rather than intentional, practice. Systematic self-reflection, on the other hand, sharpens the intentionality of the practitioner and allows him or her to address the unique challenges of the classroom.”

-“Education researchers tend to distinguish ‘reflection in practice’ from ‘reflection on practice [Schon, 1983]. The process of reflecting in practice refers to in-the-moment or situational thinking. Reflecting on one’s practice requires remembering past actions, evaluating what did or did not work, and using those judgments to drive a theory of action for future practice. Both are important approaches, but they suffer from three inherent flaws that make it difficult to translate self-reflection into meaningful changes.”

-*Leveraging Video for Learning*, Center for Education Policy Research, Harvard University

	The flaw	How video self-analysis can help
Omniscient Flaw	Reflection in practice requires teachers to effectively address whatever provokes them in the moment, yet sometimes the challenges that require action are not the ones teachers see or hear.	Observing taped lessons allows teachers the opportunity to notice challenges that are otherwise difficult to perceive while teaching.
Symptom-Treatment Flaw	Another inadequacy of situational thinking is that it does not provide time or the consideration of root causes. Because teachers must react in the moment, the critical pause required...is not possible.	Video allows educators to press pause and ponder the root causes of problems.
The Recollection Flaw	Reflection on practice relies on the accuracy of memory. Educators must recall the details of prior lessons to maximize their diagnosis, but those details often fade in memory. Reflection is best when specific, yet memory can only deliver an adumbrated version of what happened in any given hour.	Teachers can re-experience the specific details of what happened during the lesson, rather than rely on memory alone.

From *Leveraging Video for Learning*, Center for Education Policy Research, Harvard University

Reflecting on and analyzing video of our teaching in an intentional, structured way breaks down our tendencies toward confirmation bias and habituation. It enables us to more critically reflect on what is going on in our classrooms and to improve our situational awareness and our practice.

What to NOT look for:

- Too many details: Distractions like keys swinging or the number of utterances of “um”, while important to note, take an enormous amount of intention to filter out in order to focus on teaching and learning.
- Excessive self-criticism: Watching oneself can be extremely challenging if nitpicking becomes the dominant stance.
- The wrong film star: Self-reflection doesn’t mean making the teacher the star of the film. Student action must play a prominent role in a teacher’s observation strategy. When teachers can move past watching themselves and start listening to and watching their students, then they can gain new insights into student thinking and behavior.

What to look for and how:

The Video Observation Self-Reflection sheet is based on the Four Foundations practices. This form helps to guide assessment to look for evidence and actions in important areas that impact student learning. (On the reverse of the form is an open area to track observations or reflection as you view the class.)

These will include:

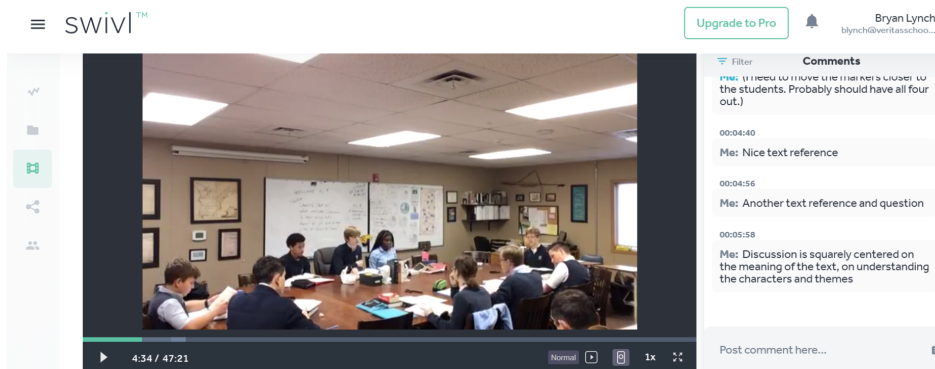
- was the lesson centered around a clear student-learning-focused learning target?
- was there frequent checking for understanding?
- were formative assessments involuntary and all-inclusive?
- did I give specific and descriptive feedback?
- were all students engaged in the learning?
- did I use or offer models of strong and weak work?
- how was the ratio? Did students talk more than I did? Who did the work?
- were expectations and transitions clear?

What to do:

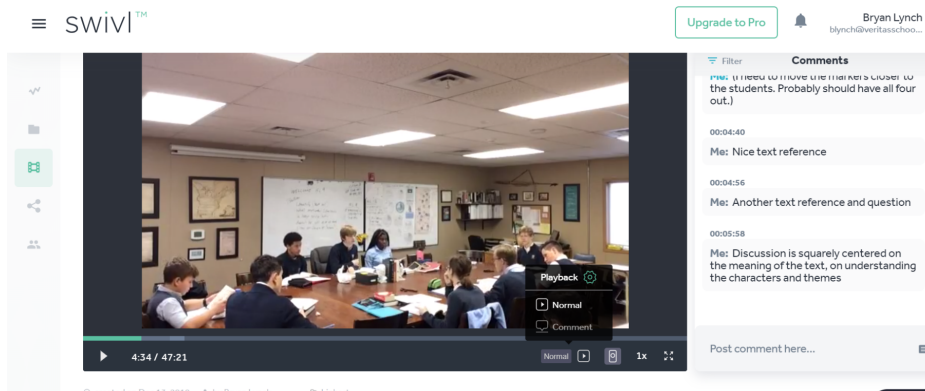
- Video a lesson
- Upload the video to the Swivl cloud account
- Watch it, and use the Video Observation Self-Reflection form
- Add comments in the comment section on the cloud account, if desired
- Set a goal or goals for your next video observation
- Share the video with other teachers, if desired, for their comments
- If you’re willing, volunteer to have part of your lesson critiqued at a future faculty meeting



The Swivl unit has a robot to which a phone or ipad is connected. Using the Swivl app loaded on the device video is recorded and then uploaded to the account site in the cloud.



Once the video is uploaded, viewer logs on to the account cloud site. There the Swivl program allows for comments to be added during the viewing of the video. Comments are time-stamped and show up next to the video.



Video can be played back in two modes: 'Normal' is the full video. 'Comments' shows only the video which have comments associated.

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The Swivl set up has one 'primary' marker, which the base tracks for the video, and up to four secondary markers which provide additional audio.