Pilot Observation Guide
What to look for

Use this guide during any classroom visit to gather evidence that Threads & Themes is being implemented as designed.

How to use this guide

Each item describes something observable: a teacher action, a student action, or a feature of the classroom environment. No item is a judgment about the teacher. Check what you see, note specific evidence, and use the notes section to prepare for a curriculum-focused debrief.

Before you begin, identify the lesson type. Threads & Themes uses seven lesson types plus assessment days, and they are not built the same way. Items that apply to only some lesson types carry a note saying so. Mark those N/A rather than leaving them blank, so a Flex Day is not later read as low fidelity.

About This Visit

SCHOOL

DATE

PERIOD / TIME

OBSERVER

GRADE & SUBJECT

PILOT WEEK

LESSON NUMBER

ARC (CHECK ONE)

- [ ] Spark
- [ ] Investigation 1
- [ ] Investigation 2
- [ ] Showcase

LESSON TYPE (CHECK ONE)

- [ ] Spark
- [ ] Reading
- [ ] Writing
- [ ] Academic Discussion
- [ ] Flex Day
- [ ] Research
- [ ] Presentation
- [ ] Assessment day

If You Are Visiting on an Assessment Day

> Mid-Unit and End-of-Unit Assessment lessons are part of the designed sequence, and most items on this form will be N/A. Expect a Launch that establishes the testing environment, then independent work. Record the Classroom Environment items, and use the debrief to ask how the teacher plans to use the results on the Flex Day that follows.

During the Lesson

Classroom Environment	Notes / Evidence
☐ Learning objectives for the lesson are visible to students (Content, Language, and Foundational Skills, if applicable)	
☐ The unit's anchor text (novel, play, or nonfiction) or short-form text is present and accessible	
☐ Vocabulary (Tier 2/3) and discussion supports (for example key words or sentence frames) are used or posted	
☐ Student materials needed for the lesson are accessible at work areas (print or digital)	

What the Teacher Is Doing	Notes / Evidence
☐ **Launch:** Connects to prior learning, the essential question, or the previous lesson, and states the day's purpose	
☐ Anchors instruction in the unit anchor text or text set: names or references what students will be reading, writing, or discussing	
☐ **Literacy Lab:** Explicitly teaches the skill central to the day's lesson (for example a vocabulary, morphology, syntax, or fluency routine, or explicit writing instruction) *Mark N/A on Spark lessons, assessment lessons, and most Flex Days*	
☐ Models the skill explicitly before students practice it independently	
☐ **Learning in Action:** Circulates and confers with students individually or in pairs as they work, prompting as needed	
☐ Differentiates support based on students' varying needs rather than one approach for everyone (I-ELD Supports, Teacher Tips)	
☐ **Look Back:** Closes the lesson by collecting evidence of student learning (for example a Pulse Check, Reflection, or Checklist)	

Students and Multilingual Learners

What Students Are Doing	Notes / Evidence
☐ Read, analyze, or respond to the unit texts, not working in isolation from them	
☐ Discuss using academic language, not just casual conversation	
☐ Write during the lesson: drafting, responding, revising, or giving feedback	
☐ Connect the day's work to the unit's Performance Task or essential question	
☐ Complete a closing task that shows what they learned or still wonder about	

Multilingual Learner Support	Notes / Evidence
☐ Language supports (sentence frames, visual aids) are visible and accessible to students	
☐ Multilingual learners are actively participating (speaking, writing, and engaging), not only observing	
☐ Teacher adjusts the level of support based on individual students' language proficiency	
☐ Students have an opportunity to talk before they write or respond formally	

Flex Days and Debrief

Flex Day Look-Fors If visiting during a Flex Day	**Notes / Evidence**
☐ Students are grouped based on what formative data showed, not fixed ability groups	
☐ Teacher is working with a small group on a specific, targeted skill in a Targeted Instruction Huddle	
☐ The Huddle targets a specific standard, and that standard matches the need the teacher's data identified	
☐ Students not meeting with the teacher are doing Independent Choice Work, choosing between Option 1: Independent Reading and Option 2: Knowledge-Building, each with a defined written response	

Notes and Debrief

Keep the debrief curious and supportive

Focus on what the curriculum looked like for students and what support teachers need, not on teacher performance.

What evidence of Threads & Themes implementation did you observe today?

What would you like to learn more about or explore further in the curriculum?

What is one strength you will share in the debrief?

What support does this teacher need? By whom? By when?