

The M-6 Walkthrough Rubric

A six-indicator coaching instrument for short classroom visits, built to align with the Mississippi Teacher Growth Rubric (Professional Growth System).

Independent work product. Not produced, reviewed, or endorsed by the Mississippi Department of Education.

What this is

Six indicators, each observable in a 10–15 minute unannounced visit with no lesson plan, no pre-conference, and no artifacts.

Each indicator aligns to a specific standard on the state's nine-standard formal rubric and uses the same 1–4 scale, so scores carry meaning across both instruments.

What this is not: a summative instrument. Scores collected here are coaching data — they point at where the next action step should aim. They are not averaged into the state-required summative observation rating, which still comes from the full nine-standard formal rubric and the required observation cycle.

The scale

4	Student-Owned	The practice would hold if the teacher stepped back. Students carry the work.
3	Effective	The bar for every teacher in the building. Not a ceiling, not a compliment.
2	Developing	Real effort, incomplete execution. One specific action step moves this quickly.
1	Needs Support	Beyond what a coaching conversation alone will fix.
N/O	Not Observed	Use it freely.

Scoring rule: score only what you saw. A ten-minute visit usually yields two or three scored indicators. N/O is more honest than a guess and keeps the coaching data clean.

The six indicators

1 Standards Alignment

Is the work students are doing the actual grade-level standard?

ALIGNS TO Formal rubric Standard 1 · Domain I (Lesson Design)

- 4 The work matches the standard's verb and its depth. Students can state the demand of the work in their own words. The teacher names out loud where today sits — what came before, what it's building toward. Signs of planning with other teachers show up in the task itself.
- 3 The work matches the standard's verb and its depth. Today's task has an obvious place in a sequence, and students reference what they did earlier or where this is headed.
- 2 The work touches the standard's topic but not its depth — students *identifying* when the standard says *analyze*. The task sits alone, with no visible thread to prior or upcoming learning.
- 1 No discernible standard behind the work. Topic-adjacent filler, or off-standard entirely.

ASK A STUDENT "What are you supposed to be able to do by the end of this?"

2 Access & Challenge

Can every student get in, and is anyone being held back?

ALIGNS TO Formal rubric Standard 2 · Domain I (Lesson Design)

- 4 Students choose among tasks or materials at different levels of challenge. Supports fade as students gain traction rather than staying up all period. The teacher talks to individual students about their own progress, by name and by specific.
- 3 Supports are in place and matched to need — they hold the thinking up without doing it. More than one path through the work: grouping, task variation, tiered supports. The teacher's moves show she knows where individuals are. The work connects to what students already know or have lived.
- 2 One support for the whole room, or supports that remove the thinking — filled-in notes, steps to copy. One task regardless of readiness. Thin evidence the teacher knows individual levels.
- 1 No supports. Students who can't start don't start. Nothing differentiated. No link to prior knowledge or student experience.

ASK A STUDENT "What do you do when you get stuck?"

3 Monitoring & Feedback

Does the teacher know who has it, and does she act on what she finds?

ALIGNS TO Formal rubric Standard 3 · Domain II (Student Understanding)

- 4 Students check their own work against an exemplar, rubric, or key and fix errors without being told. Students revise during the visit using feedback they were given. The teacher gathers evidence and visibly changes course mid-lesson because of it.
- 3 The teacher moves through the room and gets evidence from many students, not only the ones with hands up. Feedback names the specific fix and how to make it. Students can state the goal in their own words.
- 2 Checks are quick and shallow — thumbs, "everybody good?", the same three volunteers. Feedback stops at right-or-wrong or general praise.
- 1 No evidence gathering. The teacher stays anchored at the front or the desk. Misconceptions pass without notice.

ASK A STUDENT "What did your teacher tell you to work on?"

4 Thinking & Discourse

Who is doing the cognitive work in this room?

ALIGNS TO Formal rubric Standard 4 · Domain II (Student Understanding)

- 4 Students talk to each other about the content across multiple turns — extending, questioning, disagreeing with reasons. Students supply the connection to the real world or to another subject rather than being handed it.
- 3 The concept is presented more than one way. Questions require reasoning, not retrieval. Discussion runs long enough to develop, with most of the room tracking it.
- 2 Question-and-answer stays at recall. One explanation, one representation. A few students carry all the talk.
- 1 The teacher talks and students receive. Questions are logistical or land in silence.

ASK A STUDENT "Why does that work?" — the answer separates meaning-making from memorized procedure.

5

Learning Environment

Is instructional time being protected and used?

ALIGNS TO Formal rubric Standards 5 and 6 · Domain III (Culture and Learning Environment)

4

Transitions and routines happen without narration from the teacher. Students hold jobs that matter to the learning — leading a group, running a protocol, managing materials. The room is arranged so students get what they need on their own.

3

Routines run smoothly with brief direction. Behavior is anticipated and redirected before it costs time. Students have meaningful work the entire visit. Materials and technology are ready before they're needed.

2

Transitions are slow or need repeated prompting. Short stretches with nothing to do. A portion of the room is drifting. Redirection arrives after the problem instead of ahead of it.

1

Real instructional minutes lost. Routines unclear or inconsistently held. Widespread off-task behavior. Materials or technology not ready.

ASK A STUDENT Time one transition. Under a minute with light direction is Level 3 territory.

6

Respect & Relationships

Is this a room where a student can be wrong out loud?

ALIGNS TO Formal rubric Standard 7 · Domain III (Culture and Learning Environment)

4

Students encourage each other without prompting. The warmth reaches every student, not a favored group. Being wrong is survivable and stays productive.

3

The teacher's tone and words are respectful to every student. Genuine positive relationships are evident. Students are civil to one another.

2

Respect varies by student — some get patience, others get clipped. Peer put-downs land without a response.

1

Sarcasm, public humiliation, or a dismissive tone. Students cut at each other routinely and it's allowed.

ASK A STUDENT Watch for: who gets called on, who gets waited on after a hard question, and who doesn't.

Crosswalk to the formal rubric

M-6 INDICATOR	FORMAL STANDARD	DOMAIN
1. Standards Alignment	1	I — Lesson Design
2. Access & Challenge	2	I — Lesson Design
3. Monitoring & Feedback	3	II — Student Understanding
4. Thinking & Discourse	4	II — Student Understanding
5. Learning Environment	5, 6	III — Culture and Learning Environment
6. Respect & Relationships	7	III — Culture and Learning Environment
<i>not walkthrough-observable</i>	8 — professional learning	IV — Professional Responsibilities
<i>not walkthrough-observable</i>	9 — family communication	IV — Professional Responsibilities

Coverage: seven of nine standards, three of four domains, and full one-to-one mapping on the four Domain I and II standards.

What’s deliberately outside the frame

Standards 8 and 9. Neither is visible in a classroom. Professional learning and family communication are evidenced through PLC participation, coaching follow-through, communication logs, and conference records — gathered across a year, not during a visit. Leaving them out keeps observers from inventing evidence to fill a box.

Part of Standard 1. The full standard also asks whether planning reflects collaboration across staff and disciplines. Indicator 1 catches the traces of that visible in the task itself; the rest needs the plan and a conversation, and belongs to the formal cycle.