

I Notice, I Wonder, It Reminds Me Of

Why observe?

1. Ask: Who are exceptional observers?
2. Ask: What makes some observers better than others?
3. Share Sherlock Holmes quote; ask or explain what it means.
▶ *"I see no more than you, but I have trained myself to notice what I see."*
4. Tell students you are going to teach them some tricks that will help them be better observers and notice things others don't notice.

Making Observations (I notice...)

1. Ask each student to pick up the same type of natural object, then circle up.
2. Define observation and introduce the first prompt: "I notice..."
▶ *An observation is something we notice with our senses (sight, touch, smell, hearing, taste—but please don't taste anything unless you are told you can.*
▶ *I know I'm making an observation when I begin a sentence with "I notice" and then describe what I can observe using my senses.*
▶ *Observations are what you notice in the moment, not what you already know. Saying "I notice it's a leaf" is identification, not observation.*
▶ *Saying "It looks awesome," or "I notice it's gross," is your opinion, not an observation.*
▶ *Saying "the leaf has been eaten by bugs" isn't an observation if you can't see any bugs. It's a possible explanation for the observation that it has holes.*
3. Provide some examples of observations.
▶ *Here are some examples of observations: "I notice this leaf is yellowish-green in color, oval shaped and about the size of my thumb, it's rough in some places and smooth in others..."*
4. Tell them they will be saying observations out loud, taking turns with a partner.
▶ *If you get stuck, try observing your object from a different perspective or using different senses. Listen to what your partner says, and see if that helps you notice different things.*
5. Have them partner up with someone standing next to them.
6. Give students ~1 minute to make observations about their object out loud.
7. Pairs share observations with a neighboring pair, then a few share with whole group.
8. Monitor student energy and keep things moving.

Asking Questions (I wonder...)

1. Introduce asking questions with the second prompt: "I wonder..."
2. Students ask questions out loud to themselves for ~1 minute.
3. Pairs share questions with a neighboring pair, then a few share with whole group.

Making Connections (It reminds me of...)

1. Introduce making connections and the last prompt: "It reminds me of..." What it looks like, an experience, or information.
▶ *The veins on this leaf remind me of the lines on my palm.*
▶ *This leaf reminds me of the time I collected leaves at my grandmother's house.*
▶ *My leaf reminds me of a TV show about uses for native plants.*
2. Tell them it can be helpful to focus on one part of the object.
3. Students say "It reminds me of" statements out loud for ~1 minute.
4. Pairs share connections with a neighboring pair, then a few share with whole group.

Applying the Strategy & Inquiry Fever

1. Help students think about how much they can discover in nature.
2. Explain they will be looking for anything they find interesting in nature, then making observations, asking questions & making connections out loud.
3. **Optional Crosscutting concept:** Tell students to pay attention to **patterns**.
▶ *When scientists observe and investigate nature they look for patterns. This leads to more observations and interesting questions about why the pattern occurs.*
▶ *Try to find interesting things to practice observation/investigation skills and look for patterns.*
4. **Optional Crosscutting concept:** Provide some examples of patterns from the field.
▶ *Is there a pattern to the height of woodpecker holes on trees?*
5. Explain boundaries for inquiry fever; students practice strategies in pairs or small groups.
6. Give students 5–10 minutes to explore and offer materials.
7. Circulate, model the strategies, and help students engage with each other's discoveries.
8. Lead the whole group practicing the strategies together.

Wrapping Up

1. **Optional Crosscutting concept:** Ask students what kinds of patterns they noticed and how this impacted their investigations.
2. **Optional Crosscutting concept:** Explain that looking for patterns can help us get more out of science investigations.
3. Ask, "Did you learn anything that surprised you?"
4. Ask students to reflect on how they've learned to be better observers, what kinds of things they noticed, and how there are interesting things everywhere.
5. Let students know they can use these strategies with anything they are curious about in nature or anywhere.