

HQIM Walkthrough Toolkit: Classroom Observation Tools for Principals and Coaches

This toolkit is designed for principals, assistant principals, and instructional coaches to gather data trends during classroom walkthroughs. The focus is on High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM), with companion checklists aligned to ELA and Math. Each checklist connects to the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle to support continuous improvement rather than evaluation.

This guide supports principals, coaches, and district leaders in using the HQIM Walkthrough Toolkit to:

1. Collect classroom observation data on HQIM implementation.
2. Analyze trends across grade levels and content areas.
3. Feed results into a continuous improvement process (PDSA).

How to Use the Walkthrough Tools

- Frequency: Conduct short 5–15 minute observations weekly across multiple classrooms.
- Focus: Choose one or two checklist domains per walkthrough (e.g., Differentiation + Scaffolded Practice).
- Documentation: Record evidence in the comments column (avoid judgmental language; capture “what students/teacher were doing or saying”).
- Feedback: Use notes to structure coaching conversations — highlight strengths, clarify HQIM fidelity, and plan next instructional moves.

Sample Evidence Statements (reliability)

Instead of “Teacher did not differentiate,” consider statements such as:

- “Three groups were observed. Two groups worked with grade-level tasks from the HQIM, one group worked on unrelated worksheets.”
- “Students used manipulatives to solve math problems aligned to today’s HQIM lesson.”
- “When prompted, students explained how the graphic organizer helped them summarize key details from the text.”

Trend Data & Aggregation

After each cycle of walkthroughs, aggregate evidence by:

- Frequency counts (e.g., “70% of observed lessons showed HQIM-aligned small groups”).

- Patterns in strengths/needs (e.g., “Scaffolded Practice strong, Differentiation inconsistent”).
- Use simple color coding (Green = consistently observed, Yellow = inconsistent, Red = rarely observed).

Sample PDSA Cycle

- Plan: Increase use of HQIM-aligned small-group work in 5th grade math.
- Do: Provide PD session + model lessons on flexible grouping with HQIM tasks.
- Study: Walkthrough data collected over 4 weeks shows whether groups consistently use HQIM-aligned materials.
- Act: If data shows growth, sustain with peer observation; if not, refine PD to focus on planning for scaffolds.

Using Data for Professional Learning

1. Share trends with grade-level teams to spotlight HQIM strengths and challenges.
2. Use aggregated data in coaching cycles, not for teacher evaluation.
3. Align PD priorities directly to patterns from walkthrough evidence (e.g., “district PD will focus on scaffolded practice because 60% of walkthroughs show limited guided release”).

Checklist 1: HQIM Fidelity & Alignment

Look-For	+ / -	Evidence / Comments
Teacher is using district-adopted HQIM (not alternate/teacher-created materials).		
Lesson objective is aligned to grade-level standards and curriculum.		
Tasks/texts reflect grade-level rigor (students working with complex text/problems, not simplified substitutes).		
Materials and pacing are consistent with the curriculum scope and sequence.		
Teacher models/introduces task using curriculum-aligned guidance (not off-script).		
Student discourse/writing/problem-solving is rooted in HQIM (text-based evidence, authentic math reasoning).		
Scaffolds are used to support access without reducing rigor.		
Differentiation strategies align to HQIM (small-group work uses core materials, not unrelated worksheets).		
All students have materials in hand (texts, problems, manipulatives).		
Majority of students are actively engaged with grade-level tasks.		
Evidence of equitable participation (all learners included, including multilingual learners and students with disabilities).		

PDSA Reflection

- Plan: What adjustment is needed to strengthen HQIM alignment?
- Do: What small next step can the teacher/coach implement before the next walkthrough?
- Study: What evidence will show progress (student work, engagement, lesson pacing)?
- Act: How should instruction or support be refined based on results?

Checklist 2: Differentiation

Look-For	+ / -	Evidence / Comments
Students are grouped for instructional purpose (based on data).		
Grouping reflects flexibility (students move in/out based on progress).		
Groups use HQIM-aligned tasks (not unrelated worksheets or activities).		
Variety of grouping observed (whole group, small group, pairs, 1:1).		
Differentiation maintains grade-level expectations; scaffolds support access without lowering rigor.		
Materials are matched to instructional need (leveled supports, manipulatives, graphic organizers).		
Teacher checks for understanding and adjusts support in the moment.		
Students with IEPs/MLLs have supports integrated into HQIM (not separate curriculum).		
All students are engaged with grade-level tasks at their instructional level.		
Students can articulate what they are learning and how supports help them access the content.		
Evidence of peer-to-peer support (students collaborate using HQIM-aligned tasks).		

PDSA Reflection

- Plan: What differentiation strategy needs refinement?



- Do: What specific change will be implemented before the next walkthrough?
- Study: What evidence will be collected to gauge impact (student work, engagement rates)?
- Act: How should differentiation practices be adjusted based on results?

Checklist 3: Scaffolded Practice

Look-For	+ / -	Evidence / Comments
Teacher provides guided practice aligned to HQIM lesson (not substitute tasks).		
Modeling includes think-alouds or exemplars that show how to approach complex tasks.		
Checks for understanding are built into guided practice (cold calls, exit tickets, quick writes).		
Misconceptions are addressed immediately with reteaching as needed.		
Teacher gradually releases responsibility (I do → we do → you do).		
Scaffolds (graphic organizers, manipulatives, prompts) are temporary supports designed to fade over time.		
Multiple opportunities provided for independent practice to build automaticity.		
Teacher circulates and monitors student work, preventing practice of errors.		
Teacher makes connections across content areas to strengthen transfer of learning.		
Supports are equitable and accessible to all students.		
Feedback is specific and motivating, reinforcing growth and effort.		

PDSA Reflection

- Plan: Which scaffold needs refinement (e.g., graphic organizer, modeling technique)?

- Do: What small instructional adjustment will the teacher/coach test before next walkthrough?
- Study: What student evidence (work samples, level of independence) will show progress?
- Act: What should be sustained, scaled, or adjusted moving forward?

Checklist 4: Explicit Instruction

Look-For	+ / -	Evidence / Comments
Lesson objective is explicitly stated and tied to HQIM standard/lesson.		
Teacher reviews or activates prior knowledge relevant to the HQIM lesson.		
Directions for tasks are clear, concise, and repeated as needed.		
Lesson pacing is appropriate (not rushed, not dragging).		
Teacher provides modeling or worked examples connected directly to HQIM materials.		
Think-alouds make the cognitive process visible to students.		
Teacher uses precise academic language and expects students to do the same.		
Misconceptions are anticipated and addressed during modeling.		
Students are given frequent opportunities to respond, practice, or explain.		
Teacher checks for understanding throughout the lesson, not just at the end.		
Teacher uses student responses to adjust pacing, scaffolds, or grouping.		
Students show evidence of accurate use of HQIM materials in their practice.		

PDSA Reflection

- Plan: Which aspect of explicit instruction (clarity, modeling, pacing, checks for understanding) needs refinement?
- Do: What adjustment will the teacher/coach implement in the next lesson?
- Study: What student data (accuracy of responses, engagement, pacing evidence) will show progress?
- Act: What should be sustained, scaled, or adjusted moving forward?

Checklist 5: Classroom Environment & Engagement

Look-For	+ / -	Evidence / Comments
Classroom norms/expectations are clear, consistent, and reinforced.		
Teacher communicates belief that all students can do grade-level work with HQIM.		
Routines (transitions, material use) are efficient, maximizing instructional time.		
Students demonstrate respectful interactions with peers and teacher.		
All students have access to HQIM-aligned materials (texts, math manipulatives, devices).		
Students are actively engaged (reading, problem solving, writing, discussing) — not passive or off-task.		
Student talk reflects HQIM-aligned discourse (text evidence in ELA, math reasoning).		
Students take ownership of learning (asking questions, self-monitoring).		
Teacher uses inclusive strategies to engage multilingual learners and students with disabilities.		
Participation is distributed equitably (not dominated by a few students).		
Classroom environment is welcoming and supportive for all cultural/linguistic backgrounds.		

Opportunities exist for peer-to-peer collaboration that supports access to HQIM.		
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PDSA Reflection

- Plan: Which aspect of classroom environment/engagement needs refinement (norms, discourse, routines)?
- Do: What specific adjustment will the teacher/coach implement next?
- Study: What evidence will be collected (student engagement rates, quality of discourse, efficiency of routines)?
- Act: How should practices be refined or scaled?

References

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