

## CLASSROOM OBSERVATION - JANE

DATE: 15-03-2006

DURATION: 8: 15 TO 13:30

### FIELD NOTES

8H10	<p>I entered the classroom... I spoke briefly to the participant, telling her that I intended to be a helper at first just to put children at ease. I told her that as time went on I would withdraw my participation and take on the role of a mere observer. Jane invited me to sit at her table. I greeted the children, opened my notebook and quietly scanned the classroom. It was a gloomy morning but the class was well lit. Learners' desks were arranged in a rectangular pattern to form a workstation. Six learners were seated at each workstation and the arrangement of the furniture promoted easy movement of learners in spite of the large learner numbers. There were many resources available in the classroom but they appeared to be dusty and cluttered all around the classroom. The charts on the walls appeared to be a little too old. There was a lot of clutter on the teacher's table. There were Black and Indian learners and a small percentage of Coloured learners.</p>	<p>The state of the teacher's table was reminiscent of the state of the classroom. I wasn't too impressed. I felt that the classroom and the organisation of the resources needed to be improved.</p>	
8H15	<p>Jane was busy with a Maths lesson. The learners were very responsive. Most of their hands went up when the teacher asked a question. They were very attentive.</p>		

8h25	<p>Lesson is interrupted when a learner enters the classroom and speaks to the teacher. I gather from the discussion that it is about her brother not doing his homework for a few days. The discussion lasted for about two minutes.</p> <p>Teachers made sentences. Topic- the homes of insects. The children seemed very relaxed. I noticed that the learners remained very quiet while Jane was talking to the learner. Learners enjoyed the discussion on insects and the places that they lived.</p> <p>The teacher moved from the Math lesson to Literacy one without much disruption. There was indeed a very smooth transition.</p> <p>Jane continued with the question and answer method.</p> <p>Learners were asked to make sentences using the word “they”</p> <p>Jane went back to a Maths lesson. Learners were asked to count in tens. These learners were well disciplined. At this point of the lesson the magnetic weather and news board chart fell from the chalkboard. A group of learners came to the front and helped to pick up the pieces that lay on the floor. Jane instructed them not to set it up but to put it aside.</p> <p>Jane praised her learners- she asked them whether they were good exceptional, brilliant or good. They all responded with a very joyful “yes”</p> <p>Learners were then asked to put away their books and take out their flip files.</p> <p>Jane pointed to a huge chart attached to the chalkboard with numbers arranged in smaller vertical and horizontal blocks. Jane pointed to</p>	<p>I assume that this is in response of Jane’s message to the learner’s parents via a sibling. I’m happy to hear this because I believe that this is an indication of Jane’s efforts to get parents involved and a way of communicating learner progress to parents.</p> <p>I was surprised that most learners were not distracted by my presence.</p> <p>I noticed that these learning activities were not being coupled with assessment tasks.</p> <p>I was impressed by the Jane’s use of praise as a motivational tool.</p> <p>I remembered that these were recently purchased for the</p>	<p>Parental involvement Chalk and talk</p> <p>Traditional method of teaching.</p> <p>Flexible time schedule.</p> <p>Good use of visual aids.</p> <p>Positive reinforcement</p>
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	<p>certain numbers and questioned learners on place value. Practically every learner that she questioned gave the correct answer. Learners responded well to the teacher. They were very enthusiastic and most of the hands went up when she asked questions.</p> <p>Learners were the value of digits in a number e.g. In 37 which digit is more –the 3 Or the 7.</p>	<p>Foundation Phase and I felt glad that it was being used in her class.</p> <p>I noticed that Jane continued to praise the learners for their efforts.</p> <p>Jane continued to use the question and answer method.</p> <p>There was still no evidence of any assessment activity.</p>	<p>Learners respond well to the teacher</p>
8H27	<p>Some learners appear to be a little restless. Learners are asked to identify numbers on the number chart as Jane calls them out. The came to the chalkboard and pointed out the number. Learners enjoyed this activity and clapped for the learners who approached the chalkboard. Learners seemed used to this routine and most of the responses were correct. Then learners were asked to read out the numbers that Jane pointed to selected numbers. Some learners faulted with this activity.</p>	<p>I felt a little disappointed at this point in time because I felt that this was a good opportunity for Jane to assess learners’ performance through their responses. I wondered about her learning outcomes she aimed to achieve and how she kept track of how learners achieved these outcomes.</p> <p>I felt that this was also another opportunity to assess learners and record these assessments.</p>	<p>Absence of assessment activities.</p> <p>No recording of learner responses</p>
8H30	<p>Learners were asked to open their flip files and use the counting charts in their flip files to identify certain numbers by pointing them out. At this stage I moved around the class to assist learners. I noticed that these charts were a replica of the chart on the board. Most numbers pointed to the correct numbers.</p>	<p>However, this was not forthcoming from Jane. At this point I wondered whether Jane intended to give the learners a paper and pencil test at the end of this unit of work. I thought to myself, I</p>	<p>Teacher well</p>

<p>8H35</p>	<p>Learner disrupts lesson by bringing in a notice for Jane to read. Jane asks learners to continue to identify numbers on the chart. Learners continue to focus on the task at hand.</p> <p>The siren wails. The first sign of restlessness amongst the learners appear. However they continue to work with the counting chart. Jane moves onto simple bonds e.g. <math>20 + 16 = ?</math> Learners respond well. Jane asks them to explain the method they used to get to the answer. The learners respond by telling her that they used the calibrations on the ruler. Others indicated that they used their fingers to arrive at the answer. Learner responses and their enthusiasm to answer questions start dwindling. Jane still uses the question and answer method. She tells them about love and the need to ensure that love needs to continuously grow amongst them. Jane moves onto subtraction. Learners are becoming restless. Some start playing with objects on their desks. They are not listening to</p>	<p>must remember to ask her about this during our next conversation. I was however impressed how she praised her learners efforts. This seemed to motivate them. I was extremely pleased to have noticed that this slight disruption did not distract the learners from their tasks. They remained focused and continued to work on their own.</p> <p>At this point there is still no evidence of any effort to assess learners.</p>	<p>prepared</p> <p>Learners responded well</p> <p>Learners absorbed in lesson.</p> <p>Evidence of encouraging problem solving</p> <p>Values and attitudes.</p> <p>Attention span waning</p>
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<p>8h50</p>	<p>Jane, as they were earlier. Fewer hands are going up to answer questions. Jane is still doing most of the talking. I notice the smoke of the incense sticks that is burning in the classroom a short distance behind me. It is giving off a pleasant aroma. The learners seem oblivious to these burning incense sticks. It seems that they have grown accustomed to this practice by Jane.</p> <p>Maths lesson continues. The restlessness amongst learners is becoming more pronounced. When a learner does not respond with the correct answer, Jane does give that learner some individual attention. The same learner asks to be excused from the class immediately after Jane assists her.</p>	<p>I know that Jane is a deeply religious person. Her earlier reference to love and the burning incense sticks directs my attention to her religious beliefs and I start to wonder about how much of her beliefs and own values does she attempt to bring into her lessons. At this point I focus on the ventilation of the classroom. I notice that of the 30 windows in the classroom only 4 are left open. I wonder about this. I'm also pleasantly surprised to find that the noise level's in this section of the school is low. The teachers seem to be well in control of their classes.</p> <p>There is still no evidence of recording the learners' performance.</p>	<p>Absence of learner assessment activity.</p> <p>Attempts to create a pleasant learning environment.</p> <p>Good discipline in this section of the school</p>
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	<p>Jane then asks the class to add ten to a number that has been written on the chalkboard. The learner response to this activity suddenly increases- more hands go up.</p> <p>Jane tells learners that she wants to see if they are thinking and continues to asks them to continue to add ten a single –digit number. Jane continues to use the question and answer method. Jane repeats this activity by using other single digit numbers. Learners respond by shouting out their answers.</p>	<p>I gather that the traditional methods of teaching are dominant in Jane’s classes.</p>	<p>Use of traditional teaching methods.</p>
8h55	<p>My cell phone rings and I’m informed that I have a visitor in the office. I leave the classroom.</p>		
9h30	<p>As I approach Jane’s class she is standing outside her classroom talking to a colleague. She informs me that one of the learners in the class has urinated and she needs to allow him to clean himself in the toilet. The colleague volunteers to help the child. We enter the class and I apologies for leaving my cell phone on and disrupting her class. She then tells me that she had in my absence dealt with number patterns. We enter the class and the lesson resumes.</p> <p>Learners are then given worksheets dealing with how to follow a healthy lifestyle. It deals with what a child must do to prevent him from getting sick. Jane tells the learners what to do. Together we move around the classroom and monitor the children</p> <p>I talk to Jane about the good control she has over her learners. The learners seemed to be very discipline and seem to follow a definite routine.</p>	<p>I also see this as a good opportunity to assess the learner’s performance but still nothing is done in terms of recording learner assessment.</p>	<p>Teaching life skills</p> <p>Routines are followed.</p> <p>Good classroom discipline.</p>

<p>9h45</p>	<p>She responded that if learners were constantly kept busy and involved, classroom discipline as a problem is minimized. I also talked to her about her use of praise in her classroom. She responded that even if learners don't know anything they try much harder when they are praised for their efforts... she also indicated to me that she gives the weaker learners extra work. I asked her about when she expected these learners to do this extra work. She told me that she they were expected to do some of the work in school and the rest at home. She also indicated to me that the brighter learners were also given more advanced work to complete. We look at some of the learners' workbooks. Jane asks the class how their work looks, the all shout out, "excellent"</p> <p>Learners are told to put away their books and close their eyes. Jane shows them some breathing exercises. Learners respond well to this. There is absolute silence. They seem to be used to this routine. She tells them to imagine that they should imagine themselves sitting on the grass, enjoying the lovely sunshine, and feeling the wind blowing in their faces. They must hear the birds singing. They are told that they should imagine a soft cloud landing on them and them getting onto the cloud as it drifts high above the ground. They were told to imagine the skies and the stars that the pass by. They were then told to drift back to the earth and gently land on the classroom floor bringing with them the warmth, peace and good of the earth.</p> <p>Children then sang a song with the words, "I am the way I am", which I</p>	<p>I was very impressed with this exercise because I saw the calmness and focus it brought to the learners. They seem to have a new lease of energy after this exercise.</p>	<p>Giving special attention to individual learners.</p> <p>Positive reinforcement</p> <p>Stimulating activities.</p> <p>Building self – esteem.</p>
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<p>9h50</p>	<p>saw as reinforcing and building their self-esteem.</p> <p>Jane instructed learners to hand in their worksheets. Some learners continued to colour in the pictures on the worksheets. She made no effort to stop them.</p> <p>Learners were then asked to count in tens. Learners were suddenly once again more responsive to the teacher. Learners were told to continue their counting activity at home.</p> <p>Jane then revised and reinforced the work that was done in the morning. Jane then reprimanded a learner that was still continuing with the colouring activity.</p>	<p>I asked myself could this possibly an assessment activity on the part of the teacher for that day? It seemed that the previous activities seemed to help the learners focus on their work. The restlessness amongst learners subsided. I felt that because of the large numbers of learners in the classroom, she was having some difficulty in monitoring all their actions.</p>	<p>Jane observes the learners but does not assess them.</p>
<p>9h52</p>	<p>Jane then moved onto a lesson that involved the homes of animals. She again used the question and answer method. The class discussed the home of a crocodile. Many learners were still sitting with the worksheets that Jane had requested to be handed in. I collected these worksheets for her.</p>		<p>Researcher participation.</p>
<p>10h00</p>	<p>The learners were once again becoming restless. Siren wails for the first break. Jane is not distracted, she continues with the lesson. I also notice that there are lots of worksheets and books all over the classroom.</p>		<p>Learners clearly following instructions.</p>
<p>10h05</p>	<p>Learners say a prayer, push their chairs closer to their desks and leave the class in a orderly manner.</p>		<p>Learners clearly following instructions.</p>
<p>10h30</p>	<p>I enter the class amidst lots of laughter. Jane is holding a little boy around the shoulders. I gather that the class is discussing the South African's cricket team's victory over the Australians that took place over the previous weekend. Jane is still using the question and answer</p>	<p>I suddenly find myself wondering about the issue of the language of teaching</p>	<p>Language not impacting on learning.</p> <p>Friendly classroom</p>



<p>10h40</p>	<p>method. They learners are very focused and excited by the discussion.</p> <p>Jane asks learners about the location of Australia. She takes out a globe from one of the cupboards and asks learners to locate Australia and South Africa on the globe. After learners have located these two countries she asks them to tell her about the modes of transport that they would use to travel between these two countries.</p> <p>Learners clap when the responded to questions give the correct answer. Jane has a good rapport with her learners. She is calm and seems to enjoy her class. She asks learners to tell her about which cricket team they supported. She then reinforces the concept of patriotism.</p> <p>Jane introduces another activity-role play. She imitates someone driving a car and the learners have to identify the action.</p> <p>Lesson is disrupted by a message over the intercom.</p> <p>Learners are called to the front of the class to imitate an action. One learner runs on the spot, another imitates a cyclist. They are told to identify on word to describe the action. e.g. cycling. Jane writes the word on the board.</p> <p>Learners enjoyed this activity. Jane questions them about vowel sounds. There is lots of excitement and laughter in the class. Many of the learners are able to identify the sounds correctly. Jane writes more words on the chalkboard. The learners are asked to identify these sounds.</p>	<p>and learning. I have observed that in this particular class there does not seem to be a language problem because the learners seem to be communicating well. All seem to understand what the teacher is saying and they most seem to be speaking in English.</p> <p>Although the learners were enjoying this activity, Jane still managed to maintain a high level of discipline in her class. The majority of these learners were between seven and eight years old and the behaved very well. I was also impressed with Jane's ability to</p>	<p>atmosphere.</p> <p>Use of traditional methods.</p> <p>Good use of teaching aids.</p> <p>Teacher works hard.</p> <p>Developing values and attitudes.</p> <p>Teaching enjoying her work.</p> <p>Use of OBE methods.</p> <p>Learners seem to follow instructions</p> <p>Learners enjoying activities.</p>
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<p>10h50</p>	<p>Jane asks learners to tell her about all the things that they can do. She asks learners to give one word responses e.g. sleep, sweep, clean. Learners seem to getting tired. Some yawn other start fidgeting with objects. They seem to be losing focus. Jane reprimands a learner for not listening.</p>	<p>constantly be involved with her learners. I noticed that since my arrival that morning she hadn't sat down.</p> <p>I feel that the question and answer method was used for too long and that the all the learning activities apart from the role-play were very similar. I'm still wondering about the assessment activities and why they are not being built into the lesson as dictated by the assessment policies at all levels. I decide not to comment or discuss the matter with Jane as I feel that I will continue to observe if I am to get authentic data. I begin to think about my presence in the class as having impacted on the context. I start to wonder whether the teacher "talks and chalks" to learners on a daily basis without ever giving herself a few minutes to sit down. I start to think about whether what I am observing is what takes place in her class on a daily</p>	<p>No evidence of attempts to assess learners.</p> <p>Learner attention span wanes.</p> <p>Evidence that there is a combination of old and traditional methods of teaching.</p> <p>Researcher presence impacting on classroom situation.</p> <p>Questioning the impact of my presence.</p> <p>Jane does not assess despite</p>
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10h52	At this point I decide to change my seated position in the class. I move from the front corner of the class to another corner at the back of the class i.e. from the teacher's table to the reading corner.	basis.	of her knowing that that is the focus of my research.
11h00	There is again some excitement in the class. Jane is using flashcards. Learners must read the words aloud. Jane is using drill work. From the back of the class I notice two learners at the back are playing with each other. They are pulling each other by the hand and don't seem to be interested by the flashcard exercise. Jane doesn't notice them. I give them a firm stare and the stop fighting.		Traditional teaching methods still used predominantly.
11h07	Jane continues with the flashcards. Learners are reading out the words aloud. Jane encourages learners by shaking their hands when they respond with the correct answer. They seem to be a resurgence of excitement amongst the learners. I'm quite surprised that they are still responding so well to the teacher. Jane writes sentences on the chalkboard. Learners have to fill in the missing words.e.g. I _____ on the ground. Learners have to place the appropriate flashcard in the space where the missing words appear. There is more than one correct word that fits. Learners seem to enjoy this activity.	I think about the questions that I need to ask Jane regarding learner assessment during our next conversation. But, I feel happy that Jane does not attempt to complete learner assessment even though she is aware that the focus of my research study is learner assessment. She seems to continue to do what she does in her class on a daily basis. I feel that she is not intimidated by my presence. I want to ask her about the assessment activities for the day but at this stage I decide not to because I feel that it would interfere with the data. However, I realize the importance of a	Learner restlessness.  Classroom routines are in place.  Learner activity-traditional.

<p>11h14</p>	<p>Learners are instructed to take out their workbooks. Learners start to be a little rowdy. Jane instructs them to fold their arms she then gives them some breathing exercises. Two learners give out the workbooks. There is still some noise but Jane is now well in control of her learners. Learners are instructed to “rule off” and write the date. Jane tells learners that she will be coming around the class to see how they write “M for March”,</p>	<p>second interview based on everything I observe in her class.</p> <p>I notice that the lessons are not disrupted when the school siren wails after every forty minutes to signal the beginning of a new period for the intermediate and senior phase learners. Jane’s learners seem to be oblivious to the siren. I am becoming aware of how little I know about the happenings in Foundation Phase classrooms. Having worked in the other phases for about twenty-one years, I believe that these teachers have a better control of their classrooms.</p>	<p>Impression that foundation Phase educators have good control over their learner</p> <p>Activities introduced to refocus learners.</p> <p>Does the teacher follow a set daily programme or is she flexible.</p>
<p>11h18</p>	<p>Jane writes on the chalkboard. Some learners start walking around the classroom. I gather that Jane is writing the “Daily News” on the board. It is about the cricket match that was discussed that morning. Noise levels seem to be increasing. Jane then tells them to read what they write aloud. I’m fascinated by</p>	<p>I’m impressed that the learners are still not in the least distracted by my presence. However, I am still concerned that Jane has still not performed any sort of learner assessment.</p> <p>I couldn’t help but</p>	<p>Learners enjoyed this activity.</p>

11h23	<p>the way they call out the punctuation marks when they are reading. Jane then points to words in a sentence and asks them to read these words aloud. Learners start copying the notes from the chalkboard.</p> <p>I get up to browse at learners' books. There is silence as learners start writing in their books. My intention is to help learners with their work by moving from group to group.</p>	<p>notice that the last time the "Daily News" was written in their books was on the 7<sup>th</sup> March, 6<sup>th</sup> March, 27 Feb. This takes my thoughts back to the time when I was a Foundation Phase learner. I remembered writing and drawing pictures in my book. It brings back fond memories. I am so glad to be in this classroom on this day. I felt very excited because I anticipate some kind of assessment activity. I move towards the group.</p>	Attempts to participate.
11h28	<p>I return to my seat. All the learners are occupied. The class is quiet. Jane calls a group of learners to the front of the class with their books. There are twelve learners in this group, they are sitting on the floor. They read sentences off the flashcards. They are then asked to return to their seats, complete their daily news before writing down the sentences with the missing word.</p>	<p>Jane is totally involved with learners. I realise that she hasn't sat down for one moment to take a break. She has been on her feet from the moment I entered the class and that was at 8h10</p>	Working with groups.
11h32	<p>The next group of learners is called to the chalkboard. There are nine learners in this mixed group. Learners are also instructed to read the sentences on the flashcards. Learners are also instructed to complete the daily news and then write the sentences by filling in the missing word.</p>		Differentiated activities for different groups. Time of day may impact on learners' attentiveness.
11h35	The third group is called to the		Learners sit in

<p>11h38</p>	<p>chalkboard. They are given an oral exercise in phonics. They sound the letters of the alphabet that make up the word. Their activity differs from the activities of the first two groups.</p> <p>I get up and move around the classroom. Learners are working at different paces. Some learners have stopped working. They pick up their pencils when I approach. They seem to be coping well with their work. They all seem to have understood Jane's instructions. Some learners have completed writing and are drawing pictures of the cricket match.</p>	<p>Jane is still on her feet but she appears to be tired.</p>	<p>groups but don't interact with each other.</p> <p>Learners work at different paces.</p>
<p>11h40</p>	<p>The siren wails</p> <p>The learner activity continues with little disruption. I notice that the last group of learners was given less work to do.</p>	<p>I'm impressed by the fact that most learners in the class continue to complete their work on their own in a very disciplined manner.</p>	<p>Good learner discipline</p>
<p>11h43</p>	<p>I return to my seat at the back of the classroom. Jane now asks learners to comment on their work. There response is once again "Excellent" learners are engaged in the writing activity. Jane walks around the classroom checking on learner's work.</p>	<p>There is very little noise. Jane is still very composed although the signs of fatigue appear on her face. I too am feeling a little tired but very excited about my first set of field notes. I wonder whether they will satisfy the expectations of my supervisor.</p>	<p>Use of positive reinforcement.</p>
<p>11h45</p>	<p>The fourth group of learners is sent to the front of the class. There are thirteen learners in this group. These learners respond well to Jane. They are also busy with phonics.</p>	<p>Use of traditional methods.</p>	

<p>11h50</p>	<p>Jane continues to move from group to group to assist learners. As she passes by me, I ask her about whether she has learners in her class that cannot speak English. She tells me that all her learners can communicate in English... Jane then tells her learners that if they do not complete their work, they will have to stay in. The then tells me that their knowledge is limited. She informs me that some of the learners have not seen a chicken and many do not know what a feather is. She tells me that parents do not talk to their children; they do not explain things to their children either from the television or the newspaper. She tells me that their knowledge is very stunted. She tells me that she does a lot of remediation with her learners in the class because they travel and she cannot keep them after school. She tells me that this is the reason why she talks so much. She needs to focus on Phonics</p> <p>Most learners continue to write in their books. Some are drawing pictures. Learners are free to move about the classroom. Some approach the chalkboard has a discussion amongst them and approach their desks. This seems like a normal routine.</p>	<p>For the first time Jane has shifted the focus away from her learners to me. I get the impression that she wants to justify her way of teaching to me. She chats to me but she looks very tired. She leans against a wall for support. My hands start to throb, I've been writing field notes</p>	<p>No language barriers.</p> <p>Learners not exposed.</p> <p>Lack of parental involvement.</p> <p>Supporting weaker learners-difficult.</p> <p>.</p> <p>Traditional methods favoured.</p> <p>Freedom of movement.</p> <p>Reading</p>
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11h58	Another group of learners are called to the front of the class. They are seven learners. Jane sits for the first time. A reading activity begins. The reader is a book for Kate. Jane questions learners.	for a long time now. I again start to wonder about learner assessment. There is still no assessment activity on the part of the teacher. I'm impressed that Jane hasn't raised her voice to any of her learners from the time I entered the class.	activity
12h05	I walk around the class to look at the learners' books. They are working at different paces. Some learners have completed their "Daily News." Most of the learners are busy with the sentences. I move to the reading group. The learners take turns to read. Jane controls the group. The learners respond well to her.		Attempts to participate
12h10	The reading activity stops. There is a question and answer session. I notice that some learners that are seated at their desks have stopped reading and are focusing on the group that is reading in the front of the class. Jane then instructs the learners to go back to their seats. She then seats herself at her table. Learners approach her and are handed a reader. The move to their desks and read on their own. Others continue to write.	Suddenly my attention shifts to the neighbouring classrooms. I'm impressed that the noise levels in this section of the school are low. From where I'm seated I look at the classes opposite Jane's class. Both teachers are standing in the front of their classes and talking to their learners. One teacher has what looks like a stick in her hand. I wonder whether she hits her learners.	Reading activity.
12h17	Learners then approach Jane. She checks their work, talks to them about their work and sends them back to their desks with a reader.		Writing activity. More traditional teaching methods.
12h20	Siren wails for the second break Jane asks learners whether they have completed their work. She then tells learners to put down their pencils. They close their eyes and say a prayer. Children then push their chairs towards their desks and leave the class. They are no longer so orderly. Some learners remain	I am concerned that Jane has not assessed any of her learners.	Still no assessment activity.



	<p>behind to complete their work. Jane did not instruct them to do so. There are five learners who remain behind. One learner tells us that she wants to continue reading. A number of learners return to the classroom during the break. There are now twelve learners in the class.</p>		<p>Established classroom routines.</p>
12h30	<p>The break is not over. Seven learners remain in the classroom to complete their work. I did not hear Jane ask them to remain behind. They seemed to be following an established routine. A learner enters the classroom and screams at the top of his voice. He does not see me sitting in a corner in the classroom. When he sees me he runs off.</p>	<p>I notice that the resources that are stacked in front of where I am seated appear to be dusty. It seems that they have not been used in a long time. My attention shifts back to the reading group.</p>	
12h35	<p>Four learners gather around Jane's</p>	<p>I'm tempted to</p>	



12h38	<p>table. They chat to each other. Five learners gather around the magnetic daily news and calendar board that had fallen down earlier in the day. They place it upright and start replacing the magnetic strips.</p>	<p>approach her and ask her about when she will assess the learners. But, I resist doing this. Jane now looks very tired.</p>	
12h40	<p>The siren wails, the second break comes to an end. Learners enter the classroom in an orderly manner. More children gather around the magnetic board. Jane sends them back to their seats. They settle quickly. She wants to know from them whether they have completed their work. Many hands go up. Without any instructions from Jane the learners start collecting their books. This seems to be a set routine. Learners seem to know what to do and what is expected from them.</p>	<p>I talk to Jane about the fact that she did not sit down until about 12h00. She tells me that she never sits down and that she moves around the classroom to monitor the learner's work. During the break, Jane still continues to work with some of the learners. This is impressive. I'm wondering whether she does this daily. This is hard work. I am also aware that she does come to the staffroom on a regular basis. So I conclude that she certainly does not work with learners during the breaks all of the time.</p>	<p>Established classroom routines.</p>
12h45	<p>Jane tells learners to take out their homework books and to write down the date. Learners become a little restless and rowdy. Jane writes down the homework exercise on the chalkboard. They are given a single digit number and have to draw up the numbers that results if ten is continually added to the number to form a number pattern. They write down the numbers three, five and eight. The number three is used as an example-3; 13; 23; 33; 43; 53 and so on. Learners write this in their books. Jane then asks them about who is supposed to check this work. They all reply, "Our parents." They are also told to learn the list of words in their flip files.</p>	<p>I wonder about how my observation with the next two participants will go. At this stage I feel that if I visit their classrooms unannounced the data that I will gather may be more authentic. But I'm worried about the</p>	<p>Writing activity.</p> <p>Homework to reinforce what was taught.</p>

12h50	Jane collects the readers. Learners are told to close their eyes and say a prayer. They greet us , place their chairs on the table and leave the class in an orderly manner.	ethical issues around this. I feel that I will have to discuss this with the participants and my supervisor.	
12h58	<p>Thirteen learners remain behind to complete their work. They do this without Jane having to instruct them to do so</p> <p>I thank Jane for having me and I mention to her that during our next conversation session I would like to talk to her about my observations. I get a friendly smile and a nod. The remaining learners leave the class.</p> <p>As I'm about to leave the classroom I ask her to tell me about what she intends doing from now until about 15h00 when her school day ends. She tells me that she will be marking, preparing and supporting other teachers. She makes no mention of assessing learners.</p>	<p>I'm worried about the fact that these learners are left in the classroom during breaks without any supervision. I feel that I will tell Jane about this at a later stage.</p> <p>I am pleasantly surprised to see that the learners are so relaxed. They are not intimidated by my presence. They move about the classroom with ease. They have the confidence to do things on their own.</p>	<p>Absence of learner assessment.</p> <p>Administrative responsibilities after hours.</p>
12h59	A teacher enters the classroom and queries about assessment standards. Jane tells her to include two more assessment standards in the learners' term reports because as it stands, there are too few assessment standards. Jane turns towards me and explains that there are eleven assessment standards for numeracy and that the teachers had only chosen one of them for the first term. She explains that they need to be spread evenly throughout the four terms.	<p>I'm aware that the school day is drawing to a close and Jane has made no effort to record learner assessments.</p> <p>I am convinced that Jane is a teacher that is truly committed to her learners. She loves her work. But,</p>	<p>Trying to meet policy demands.</p> <p>Making ad hoc</p>

	<p>I question them about their decision to include other assessment standards at such a late stage. The visiting teacher tells me in a very defensive tone that if they only do one assessment standard this term they will have to include many more others during the next term.</p>	<p>I'm slightly disappointed that I was unable to observe an assessment activity in her class despite me being there all of the time.</p>	<p>changes for convenience.</p>
13h05	<p>I talk to Jane about the inclusion of more assessment standards in learners' reports at such a late stage in the term. Jane tells me that all the teachers in the Foundation Phase have assessed the learners on the additional assessment standards that they have decided to include in the learners reports but that they didn't include these in the first term report. She tells me that after she discussed the assessment standards with members of their department, they decided to include them in the termly report.</p>	<p>I'm very concerned about the fact that teachers are deciding to add assessment standards to their termly reports at such a late stage. I'm wondering about when will they assess the learners according to these standards. The visiting teacher seems uncertain about the assessment standards. She asks to leave the classroom because she has other work to do. I tell her that she should be absolutely sure that she gets clarity on what she came to see Jane for in the first place. I advise to return and talk to Jane once I had left.</p>	<p>Teacher uncertainty.</p> <p>Teacher uncertainty.</p> <p>Making adjustments to cater for policy requirements.</p> <p>Assessment plans not clear to teachers.</p> <p>No clear instructions or direction.</p> <p>Doubt about the assessment standards to be used.</p>
13h15	<p>As Jane and I walked towards the office block she told me that she did not want to "window dress", she wanted to truly see what went on in her classroom on a daily basis. I</p>	<p>I was very excited about what had happened at the end of the day. I believe that this unexpected</p>	

	<p>thank her for this.</p>	<p>discussion with the two teachers revealed some very important data. I believe that the responses that I got from the two teachers shed light on the elements of uncertainty and doubt that teachers are experiencing with regard to learner assessment. I left Jane's classroom more determined to find out about whether learner assessment was a true reflection of the learner's performance in our Foundation Phase classrooms.</p>	<p>Authenticity of what was observed.</p>
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