Directions for Teachers' Tool for

Documenting Language Features in the Classroom

for Formative Purposes

Gathering evidence of student language use and progress during instruction is a critical aspect of the DLLP program. This tool is designed to help you gather and document evidence of your focus students' learning on 1-2 DLLP language feature(s) that you focus on for a given month.

Use this tool to help you record your observations of students' giving an explanation. Explanations are multifunctional and can address the what, how, and why of psychological states, phenomena, actions, events, and processes. See below for purposes of explanations.

Explanation Purpose	Definition
Main Purposes	
Procedural/process	How you/I do something
Justification	Why you/I do something
Embedded/Additional Purposes	
Cause and effect	Why something happened
Description/definition	What something is like/means
Evidence	How I know something
Intention	Why I am saying/doing/asking
Internal state	Why I want/feel…

Explanations are integral to and required in all academic disciplines. For example, in the following subjects, students should be able to use explanations to demonstrate:

- *English language arts* – conceptual knowledge and their English language proficiency skills
- *Math* – mathematical concepts, procedures, and reasoning
- *Science* – scientific inquiry, procedures, and casual forces of a phenomenon
- *Social studies* – causes of an event or movement and analysis and interpretation of sources

You may adjust this tool to better fit your style of observational note taking. If you do adapt this tool, please keep the following elements in your version of the tool for recording language features in the classroom.

Language Feature: Record the high leverage language feature you are working on with your students this month. We recommend that you work on no more than 1-2 language features a month with your target students. Below are brief descriptions of the language features. For a full explanation, please refer to the page numbers that reference the *Content Guide*.

- *Sophistication of topic vocabulary* – small, essential topic vocabulary progressing to a more extensive topic lexicon and use of precise/low frequency topic vocabulary (*Content Guide,* pp. 50-52)
- *Sophistication of sentence structure* – simple sentences progressing to complex sentences (*Content Guide,* pp. 60-63)
- *Establishment of advanced relationships between ideas* – causal, adversative, conditional, comparative, and contrastive discourse connectors (*Content Guide,* pp. 72-74)
- *Coherence* – temporal connectors and cohesive devices (*Content Guide,* pp. 68-72)

Oral or Written: Please indicate if the students were using the language feature(s) orally (e.g., in discussion or oral discourse) or in written form (e.g., quick write, essay writing).

Description of Use: Describe the activity or tasks students were engaged in when you were observing language feature use. Also include student participant structures during the activity or task. For example, were students working in small groups, pairs, or individually?

Context of Use: This refers to the subject area (e.g., ELA, math, science, social studies) in which you made the observation. Please include as much detail as you can, such as: math – learning about common denominators for multiplying fractions; science – ecosystems; social studies – Civil War.

Student Example(s) of Use: Record target students' oral or written language use of the feature that you are working on this month.

Teacher Comments/Notes: This is a space for you to jot down any other relevant comments and notes about the student, the activity, next steps, analysis of evidence on student progress of using the language feature, etc.