



HELP! Strengths-based Coaching Lifesaver

Positive, strengths-based questions help get to the heart of each teacher’s experience and build on their own classroom expertise. But sometimes it may be difficult to keep the conversation going. Use the key words and prompts below to help support deeper reflection during a challenging coaching conversation.



<p>Discuss a LENA Day experience.</p> <p><i>Help teachers make observations about their experience.</i></p>	<p>Identify Recall Recognize Observe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe what happened when.... • Tell me more about.... • What do you notice about...? • What were your impressions of how this week went? • What was most challenging for you this week? Why? • How did you engage children this week?
<p>Analyze and deepen understanding of a LENA Day experience.</p> <p><i>Help teachers connect evidence to their experience.</i></p>	<p>Interpret Explore Compare Connect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there routines or activities when it is more difficult for you to have individual conversations? • What interactions do you think were most successful? Why? • What interactions seemed to be less effective? Why? • What was happening during these interactions? • How did _____ affect the children? • Why did you decide to ...? • What does _____ tell us about _____?
<p>Set a LENA Day goal.</p> <p><i>Help teachers plan for success in their next experience.</i></p>	<p>Extend Brainstorm Incorporate Develop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can you best use your teaching strengths to support interactive talk this week? • How will you plan to ...? • What are some ways you can ...? • How will you include ...? • What will a successful _____ look like? • What time of day or child would you like to focus on?



Overcoming Common Coaching Challenges

For more coaching tips and scenarios, see the LENA Library in LENA Online.

When Turns Are Low

- Some teachers benefit from seeing conversational turns in practice. Model Talking Tips in the classroom, or help teachers find time to observe an expert peer.
- Start small and build on strengths:
 - “During lunch, try making one turn into two! When you talk and a child responds, respond back to see if you can get one more back-and-forth.”

When Turns Go Down From the Previous Week

- Changes in teacher-child ratios, attendance, health and moods, or special events can all cause some data variability, which is perfectly normal.
 - “Was anything different or unusual about your LENA Day?”
- Frame it as a learning opportunity. Compare the last two reports. What insights can you offer the teacher about how certain circumstances impact engagement?
 - “What happened on this LENA Day that is different from the last? Do you notice a difference from hour to hour or child to child? What can we learn from that?”

When Turns Are High

- Focus on specific children, using the Child Reports.
 - “You’re doing great! I noticed that James’s turns were lower this week. Let’s explore his Child Report to see what we can uncover.”
- Focus on a specific hour when turns are lower.
 - “Your Trophy Hour is so impressive! How can we bring that strength to an hour of the day that has fewer turns?”
- Empower teachers to become peer coaches.

When Teachers Think the Reports Do Not Reflect Classroom Experience

- Remind teachers that, when worn properly, the device serves as a proxy for what children can hear.
- Consider whether noise, like background music, might be interfering.
- Bring together more- and less-experienced teachers so they can discuss how the program is working in other rooms.
- Encourage teachers to record a short video clip on a LENA Day. Look at the video in conjunction with their report.
- Make it an experiment! Set a very explicit goal and see what the data looks like next week.