



**RIGHT TO PLAY**  
PROTECT. EDUCATE. EMPOWER.

## Coaching Guide

### **Learning through Play:**

A Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Certificate  
Course for Lower Primary Teachers

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# Abbreviations

<b>CoP</b>	Community of Practice
<b>HT</b>	Head Teacher
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communications Technology
<b>LtP</b>	Learning through Play
<b>NESA</b>	National Examination and School Inspection Authority
<b>REB</b>	Rwanda Basic Education Board
<b>SBM</b>	School-Based Mentor
<b>URCE</b>	University of Rwanda – College of Education

# Acknowledgments

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# Forward

Dear Coach,

In line with the effective implementation of the Competence-based Curriculum, many approaches have been suggested for teachers. Learning through Play is one of those approaches, because play was found to be effective in delivering the content of the syllabus. Two important practices have been challenging for teachers in implementing the CBC: developing generic competences and integrating cross-cutting issues in lessons. Learning through Play came as a solution to address these challenges.

It is in this regard that the University of Rwanda – College of Education, Rwanda Basic Education Board, and National Examination and School Inspection Authority, in collaboration with Right To Play, have prepared the Continuous Professional Development Certificate Course on Learning through Play for Lower Primary Teachers. This course was developed to help teachers build their pedagogical skills using Learning through Play in their daily classroom practices.

A coaching guide was developed to provide School-based Mentors with the skills needed to coach and mentor lower primary teachers that will be involved in this course. This guide was developed to equip you with the key theoretical and practical skills that will enable you to successfully mentor and coach lower primary teachers. This guide builds from what you already possess as a School-based Mentor experienced in providing mentorship and coaching. This guide consists of two parts: the coaching basics, and the coaching process. This guide will mainly be used as a reference document for you to use while coaching and mentoring teachers.

We thank all partners who invested their time, effort, and expertise in designing, reviewing, and validating this coaching guide. We encourage the users of this guide to give their contributions in terms of comments on how it can be improved.

Dr. MBARUSHIMANA Nelson  
Director General of the Rwanda Basic Education Board (REB)

# Introduction

Research shows that coaching is an important part of Teacher Professional Development. Teacher training programs that include follow-up coaching visits lead to higher learning gains.<sup>1</sup> For this reason, the **Learning through Play: A Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Certificate Course for Lower Primary Teachers** has been designed to include coaching visits by School-based Mentors.

As a School-based Mentor (SBM), you are part of a team of professionals made up of Headteachers, supervisors, and partners and colleagues from Right To Play, the Rwanda Basic Education Board (REB), the University of Rwanda – College of Education (URCE), and the National Examination and School Inspection Authority (NESA) working to support teachers in their professional development. Teachers will be observed by others for the purposes of evaluating the overall impact this online teacher training program has on teacher performance. They will be observed by you as the coach, invested in growing their skills in using Learning through Play to deliver the Competence-based Curriculum (CBC).

Perhaps you already know a lot about coaching. That's great! You can use your knowledge and skills to support teachers to apply what they are learning online about how to use Learning through Play in their classrooms. To refresh your knowledge and skills on coaching before working with the teachers, we recommend reading through this short guide. This resource is here for you. You do need to use it.

## *Coaching Guide at a glance*

<b>Who?</b>	All SBMs enrolled in this course will also take on the role of a coach to teachers that are enrolled in this course. This Coaching Guide is designed to support you to understand and apply the essential skills of coaching in this role.
<b>Why?</b>	Coaching is one of the key ingredients for success in teacher professional development. "Coaching can help to create conditions necessary for instructional practices to change and student outcomes to improve." <sup>2</sup>
<b>What?</b>	You will coach teachers as they work toward their goals in using Learning through Play in the classroom. These goals will align with the content they will be learning in the online course and discussing with peers at their Community of Practice meetings.
<b>When?</b>	Coaching visits and conversations occur every month for the duration of the teacher training program. You will visit each teacher that you are coaching at least once per month.

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<sup>1</sup> The World Bank, 2018

<sup>2</sup> Aguilar, Elena. "How Coaching Can Impact Teachers, Principals and Students." Edutopia, 02 May 2023. <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/coaching-impact-teachers-principals-students-elena-aguilar>

**How?**

This guide has been created to support you as a coach by reviewing key skills and offering ideas and strategies to use in the coaching process. This guide complements the training you received at your orientation. You will also find the Classroom Observation Tool inside which provides the foundation of goal setting, classroom visits, and coaching conversations.

## Part 1: Coaching basics

### *What is a coach?*

You might have had a coach in your life before. Perhaps as a child you played in a sports team and a teacher or community member coached your team. When we talk about a coach for teachers, we are talking about a role similar to a sports coach. In both situations, we are talking about someone who teaches, observes, and gives feedback to help another person reach their goals.

Specific to a teacher's professional development, a coach is a person whose role is to support improvements in teaching practice through ongoing interactions. Coaches work to develop teaching practice to drive learners' academic achievement.

A coach is NOT a teacher's direct supervisor, but rather someone at the school who:

- Already has an existing relationship with colleagues
- Has prior teaching experience
- Has knowledge of the curriculum
- Has time to consistently observe teachers and give feedback

SBMs have been designated as coaches, because they meet the criteria above, but also because Teacher Development Policy in Rwanda details that SBMs take on the coaching and mentoring role at schools.

As a coach, your goal is to empower teachers to become better at what they do, because coaching is about performance. Coaches coach other people to improve their performance. Performance is about achieving results. We want teachers to achieve great results – to see changes in their classroom practice and improved learning outcomes for the learners they teach. People who are committed to doing a good job will perform better at their job. Coaches can build that commitment in those they coach through their relationship.

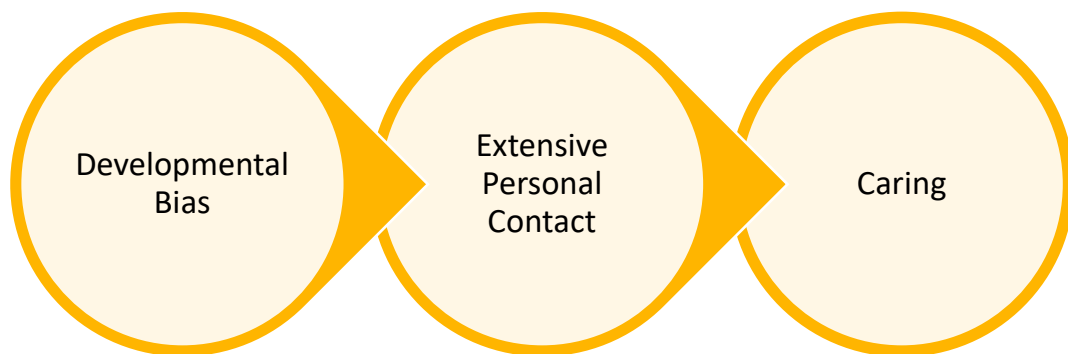
As an SBM, you have a specific role to mentor teachers at the school level. When you take on coaching you will still be a mentor to these teachers. But mentoring and coaching are a little bit different. You will continue to use your knowledge, skills, and experiences to help teachers to grow and develop their skills, but as a coach you use your knowledge, skills, and experiences to **guide teachers towards goals and find their own solutions to challenges**, rather than teaching or telling them how to do it. You do this by applying the skills of coaching to your observation visits and your follow-up coaching conversation. You will be taking the course



alongside the teachers, so you will have access to the same content as the teachers. You will be supporting them to interpret and apply the concepts to their teaching practice.

### *What are the characteristics of a good coach<sup>3</sup>?*

You don't have to think of yourself as an expert in Learning through Play to be a good coach on Learning through Play. Coaches use a few key tools and follow a simple process to support teachers to set goals around Learning through Play and to grow their skills.



The starting point for coaches is to understand the three characteristics that will help you to be most effective in your role.

The first characteristic is **DEVELOPMENTAL BIAS**. What does this mean?

- The goal of coaching is to help people become better at whatever it is they do. Developmental Bias means that you are always focusing on a person's potential because you see what is possible for them. Even if it is only 3-4% of the person that you believe has potential, a good coach must have a bias towards that 3-4% and not the 96-97% that they might believe is a lost cause.
- Developmental Bias shows up in how you coach, but also in the commitment you make to the process and to the person.

The second characteristic is **EXTENSIVE PERSONAL CONTACT**. What does this mean?

- This means that you take the time to build a relationship with the people you coach so that they can discover the awesome power of personal attention. How can you do this? Some simple ways you can connect with people are:

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<sup>3</sup> Jensen, Peter. *The Third Factor* (formerly Performance Coaching, partner of Right To Play International)  
<https://www.thirdfactor.com/>

- Using the names of those you coach regularly in conversations
- Making eye contact when you talk
- Giving your full attention to the teacher and their lesson when you are observing in their classroom

The third characteristic is **CARING**. What does this mean?

- Caring means you are on the side of those you coach, and you believe in them. Caring can only happen in the context of the relationship that you have built, between you and the person you are coaching.
- Caring can be shown through **rapport**, which is building a connection and working to keep it. Caring can also be demonstrated through **respect**. Your relationship with teachers should be one of mutual respect for each other's time, feelings, opinions, efforts, etc. Caring can also be shown through your **commitment** to coaching and how you demonstrate that commitment by planning for coaching and being purposeful in your conversations.

## *What are the key skills for coaching?*

Remember, coaching is about helping teachers become better at their performance. There are four key skills you can use as a coach to do that.

The key skills required to be an effective coach are:

1. Observing actions and behaviours
2. Asking effective questions
3. Actively listening
4. Giving effective feedback

When you are engaged in the process of coaching, all these skills work together. Let's look at each one more closely.

### **SKILL 1: Observing**

As a coach, observing people and situations is an incredibly valuable tool in your toolbox. It gives you the ability to notice subtle cues during conversations, activities, debriefs, and anywhere else so you can react to situations appropriately. When coaching, you want to build awareness in the people you are coaching, so they are more committed to their own development. Keen observation helps you figure out what to focus on - what types of questions to ask, what to listen for, and what kind of feedback to offer. Therefore, it is the first skill mentioned in this section.

When observing a teacher delivering a lesson, you want to observe the whole person, not just their performance. You can look beyond the task and activity at their emotions, body language, facial expressions, and behaviour.

Let's practice observation now!

**Skill-building Activity:**

Look at the picture below. Look closely – observe – for 30 seconds. Then cover the image with your hand and see if you can answer the questions below without looking back at the picture.



Can you answer these questions about the picture?

- How many people are in the picture? \_\_\_\_\_
- What is the setting of the picture? \_\_\_\_\_
- Who is in the picture? \_\_\_\_\_
- What are the learners' bodies doing/saying? \_\_\_\_\_

- Is anyone outside of the group? \_\_\_\_\_

Check your answers by uncovering the image and looking at it again.

You are not expected to observe everything all the time. However, if you know what you are looking for, you will have a better chance of seeing it. That is why you can use the Classroom Observation Tool as a guide for what to look for in a Learning through Play lesson. We will share more about the Classroom Observation Tool in part two of this guide where the coaching process is discussed.

Coaching is about people. Observing will help you learn more about them, ask more meaningful questions, and build better relationships.

## SKILL 2: Asking Effective Questions

Asking effective questions is essential to improving a teacher's performance because questions can focus a person's attention where it is needed.

The most **EFFECTIVE QUESTIONS** are:

### 1. Open-ended

- Open-ended questions are questions that do not result in a "yes" or "no" response. Instead, they allow people to elaborate a response. The most effective open-ended questions start with **what, when, where, who, how much, or how many**.
- Avoid using "why?" when you ask a question, as sometimes the word 'why' can sound like criticism. People feel defensive in their answers. Instead, try asking "Can you talk to be about....?," or "Can you share your thinking on why...?"

### 2. Specific

- You want your questions to be focused on areas of teaching practice and lead to clear actions or responses to develop teaching practice.

### 3. Driven by purpose

- As a coach, you are helping teachers to reach their goals. Effective questions will help teachers link their actions and response back to their goal.

Here are some examples of **EFFECTIVE QUESTIONS**.

- Can you think of one thing you can do differently to make this activity more engaging?
- What is needed to reach your goal and how long do you think it might take?

- Who could you work with in your lesson planning?
- Can you talk about your thinking when you organized the learners into small groups?

Here are some examples of **INEFFECTIVE QUESTIONS**.

- What happened?
- You are not going to do the activity like that, are you?
- Did you think your lesson went well?
- Why did you do it that way?

Are the questions you ask effective? Let's practice your skills.

**Skill-building Activity:**

Here are some examples of INEFFECTIVE QUESTIONS. Can you re-write them so that they are EFFECTIVE?

- a) Why did you use that game in this lesson?

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- b) Do you think the lesson went well?

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- c) Did your lesson contribute to your goal?

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**SKILL 3: Active Listening**

After you have asked questions, you must listen to the answers. Listening is a simple skill, but it can be hard to do well. As a coach, you might think you need to be “in charge” and do all the talking. But if you want to be effective as a coach, you need to know the person you are coaching and their issues and goals. You can do this by observing and by listening.

**Listening:**

- Builds trust, confidence, and motivation in others
- Helps you to gain a real understanding of where someone is at with their learning and their skills
- Allows conversations to happen at a deeper level, which builds the relationship

- Saves time, because it can prevent misunderstandings and help you to uncover challenges early

When we hear what one person is saying, we often immediately want to answer, debate, dismiss, or let the other person know where they have gone wrong. We do this with good intentions, but to the other person it can feel like they have not been heard.

When you coach, listening is ACTIVE. This means you show that you are listening by being an active participant and engaging in the conversation.

**ACTIVE LISTENING** looks and sounds like:

1. Nodding your head
2. Making eye contact with the speaker
3. Smiling at the speaker
4. Making small comments to encourage the speaker, such as, “Yes” or “Uh-huh”
5. Reflecting back what you heard, such as, “Ok. I heard you say felt good about that lesson.”
6. Asking questions to clarify, “To clarify, are you saying that you were unhappy with that activity?”

How well do you listen? Assess your listening skills using the questions below.

**Skill-building Activity:**

Finding the areas where you are strong and can improve will help you to maintain strong listening habits. Circle the number that best reflects your response to the statement.

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Never</b>	<b>Seldom</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Always</b>

a) I find myself finishing the other person’s sentences.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

b) I plan my response while the other person is talking.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

c) Activities in my surroundings can distract me from listening.

1            2            3            4            5

d) I have a hard time listening to someone with whom I disagree.

1            2            3            4            5

e) I hear only what I want to hear.

1            2            3            4            5

Where did you score 1, 2, or 3? This indicates aspects of active listening that you do well.

Where did you score 4 and 5? These are things you can work on to improve your active listening skills.

#### SKILL 4: Giving Feedback

As a coach, you will be providing feedback to teachers about what you observe in their classroom. What is feedback? Feedback is giving others specific information on their behaviour. Feedback is either given for *development* or for *reinforcement*.

To ensure that your feedback is effective you can consider the characteristics of feedback below.

#### EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK:

- Is **SPECIFIC**, *not* general. It is about focusing on one activity or behaviour you wish to discuss. For example:
  - SPECIFIC: You spoke loudly and clearly so that everyone could hear what they needed to do.
  - GENERAL: Good job with that group.
  
- Is **DESCRIPTIVE**, *not* evaluative. For example:
  - DESCRIPTIVE: The total time of the lesson was 40 minutes and you spent 20 minutes on the introduction.
  - EVALUATIVE: You are not good at time management. You took too long with the lesson introduction.

- **FOCUSES ON BEHAVIOR**, and *not* the person. You are not judging the person. Instead, you are providing feedback on what they did or said in their lesson. For example:
  - FOCUS ON BEHAVIOUR: When preparing your lesson, it is helpful to think about and write down the questions you might ask the learners.
  - FOCUS ON THE PERSON: You are too lazy to write down the questions.
  
- **MAINTAINS THE RELATIONSHIP** and is *not* self-serving. For example:
  - MAINTAINS THE RELATIONSHIP: I want to make sure that you are prepared for the next activity. What do you need to prepare the materials for your lesson?
  - SELF-SERVING: Do you really expect me to bring the materials you need?

When giving feedback, it is important to separate what you **think** from what you *actually saw*, **heard**, and **felt**. You want your feedback to reflect what you observed, not what you think about what you observed. When you say, “I think...”, you are sharing an interpretation of what happened. Instead, you want to base your feedback on what you experienced during the observation.



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For example, when speaking to a teacher after a lesson, you could say, “I think the learners were engaged,” but it is more effective to say: “I saw the learners were really engaged in their group work because I heard them talking to each other and asking each other questions.” Because the goal of your coaching is to help teachers change their behaviour, you can use a behaviour-based model called B-I-D to give feedback to those you coach. It is a simple and clear tool that will allow you to be consistent in how you share feedback with all teachers you coach. Feedback can be given for the *development* – or improvement – of skills or it can be given for *reinforcement* – so that strong behaviours are repeated.

B-I-D stands for ***Behaviour-Impact-Do*** and it works like this:

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<sup>4</sup> *The Third Factor* (formerly Performance Coaching, partner of Right To Play International)  
<https://www.thirdfactor.com/>



## The BID Model for EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

B = Behaviour	First, describe the <b>BEHAVIOUR</b> observed that needs to be changed or reinforced.
I = Impact	Next, describe the <b>IMPACT</b> of that behavior for the learners, school, or other stakeholders in education.
D = Do	<p>If your feedback is to <i>improve</i> behavior, tell them what you would like to see. Be explicit. You can tell them what to <b>DO</b>, or you can ask, "What could you <b>DO</b> differently next time?"</p> <p>If your feedback is to <i>reinforce</i> behaviour, you can reflect on what it was that was effective and encourage them to <b>DO</b> the same thing again</p>

Let's look at some examples of the BID Model used for *development* and for *reinforcement*.

### FEEDBACK FOR DEVELOPMENT:

*Case Study:*

Teacher Augustin is working through the units of the Learning through Play online learning course and is practicing using the different types of Learning through Play in his lessons. Prior to observing his lesson, Teacher Augustin shares his lesson plan with you and tells you that he is using guided play in this lesson. During your coaching conversation, you provide feedback to him about the guided play activity he planned and delivered.	
I = Impact	The impact of this was that the boys and girls just followed your instructions and didn't have a chance to share ideas and make decisions about how to play.
D = Do	The way you led the game was a teacher-directed example of learning through play. Since your goal is to improve the use of guided play, what could you do in your planning to ensure that you include opportunities for learners to make decisions during the Learning through Play activity?

Giving feedback to improve someone's behaviour can be difficult both for the person giving it and for the person receiving it. That is why your relationship with the teachers is so important. If the teacher feels safe in this relationship with you – they feel that you care, that you are on their side, and that you believe in their potential - then the feedback you give will have a bigger impact on their performance.

### FEEDBACK FOR REINFORCEMENT:

*Case Study:*

Teacher Amelie has just completed Unit 2 of the online learning course in Learning through Play and is working to bring the 5 Characteristics of Play into her lessons. During the math lesson for her P2 class, she planned for the learners to work in small groups and to do some problem-solving together.

*Example of Feedback:*

B = Behaviour	Amelie, I saw that the learners were working in small groups during your lesson. After the introduction, you encouraged them to select their own group mates and had the room ready to accommodate the learners as they spread out to work on the multiplication problem you gave them. I saw the smiles on their faces as they worked and heard the learners talking to each other about the math problems, using excellent math vocabulary!
I = Impact	The impact on the learners was that they were able to test their own ideas and to test the ideas of the others in their group. This kind of group work allows learners to collaborate, see that their ideas are important, and learn from each other.
D = Do	Keep using group work in your class. You can try it with different subjects and with different lesson topics. It is clearly a benefit to learners' enjoyment of learning.

Now you can try giving feedback! Consider the case study below and practice giving feedback to reinforce the teacher's behaviour.

**Skill-building Activity:**

Teacher Gisenyi has just completed Unit 1.4. of the online learning course in Learning Through Play. Teacher Gisenyi planned for a partner activity for her learners where they have to figure out the way of counting 100 objects that isn't counting 1 by 1. You observed Teacher Gisenyi moving around the room to observe each pair as they worked on the problem. You heard her ask questions of some groups that you saw helped them to make their own decisions about how to focus their thinking and solve the problem. She did this rather than telling them how to solve the problem.

What feedback could you give to reinforce the behaviour of Teacher Gisenyi?

B = Behaviour

I = Impact	
D = Do	

Your feedback might sound like this:

B = Behaviour	I observed that all throughout the lesson, you were moving around the room asking questions as the learners worked in pairs. You did not tell them how to solve the problem.
I = Impact	The result of this was that you helped learners to focus their thinking while still allowing them to make decisions on their own and to arrive at their own solution.
D = Do	How else can you support learners to make decisions during their learning?

## Part 2: Coaching process

There are two key tasks you undertake as a coach to support teachers to become better at their performance. The first is to observe the teacher in their classroom as they deliver a lesson. The second is to sit with that teacher after the lesson and have a coaching conversation. Each of these tasks, by themselves, will yield little change in teachers, but together they work powerfully to help a teacher reach their goal for using Learning through Play.

Remember that coaching happens in the context of a relationship. You demonstrate the characteristics of an effective coach to build a relationship of mutual trust and understanding. You apply the coaching skills while setting goals, during your classroom visit and in your coaching conversations, to reinforce that relationship and your role as a support.

### *Classroom observation tool*

The tool you will use to coach a teacher's development in Learning through Play is the Classroom Observation Tool. This tool has been designed as a tool for both data collection and for coaching. There are five main indicators of the classroom observation tool. Each indicator has been divided into several attributes that are presented in the form of questions. These are the attributes you will assess when you collect data. For coaching, these attributes are the goals that the teacher will identify as part of the coaching process.

The complete Classroom Observation Tool is included in Annex 1. Below you can see one section of the tool as an example to refer to as you read about how to use it.

TEACHER'S GOAL: \_\_\_\_\_

Indicator 1: Preparation of LTP learning experience		Check no or yes		COACH'S NOTES
		NO	YES	
01	Did the teacher prepare a lesson plan with a clear instructional objective?			
02	Did the teacher plan an LtP activity?  <i>Select all that you observed:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Child-directed Play <input type="checkbox"/> Guided Play <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher-directed Play			
03	<i>If answer to previous question is YES:</i>  Did the LtP activity connect to the instructional objective?			
04	Did the teacher prepare adequate teaching and learning materials? <i>(i.e., materials that are relevant to the topic of the lesson, materials that support learners to reach the learning objective, enough quantities to implement the lesson, etc.)</i>			Please list any materials used:  If the answer is NO, why were the materials not adequate?
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:				

Each time you visit a teacher, you will observe and assess all of these attributes, so that you have data each month that speaks to the teacher's complete progress in using Learning through Play. When you sit down with teachers for the coaching conversation, following the observation, you can review the entire tool with them so that they can see this complete assessment. However, you will not be coaching teachers on all aspects of the tool at one time. That would be overwhelming. Teachers will set their goal around one of the attributes. This means that you can focus your coaching conversation on this one attribute. This helps to keep teachers clear on their goal and the actions they need to take to reach it.

You can see that for each attribute, you will only assess with NO or YES. Does the teacher demonstrate that characteristic of Learning through Play? Tick YES if you observe it. Tick NO if you do not observe it.

In terms of coaching, this NO/YES assessment allows you to:

- Offer development feedback where the answer is NO.
- Offer reinforcement feedback where the answer is YES, remembering that even if the teacher did demonstrate the attribute, you can encourage them to do it more frequently. Consider this situation:

When observing Teacher Gilbert's Science lesson, you heard him ask open-ended questions two times. On the Classroom Observation Tool, you select YES for the attribute: *Does the teacher ask open-ended questions during the lesson?*

Does this mean that Teacher Gilbert no longer needs to think about asking open-ended questions? It does not. You can acknowledge Teacher Gilbert's success with asking open-ended questions and then reinforce that he can continue to do this more often.

Here is what your BID feedback could sound like in your coaching conversation with Teacher Gilbert.

B = Behaviour	Teacher Gilbert, I heard you use open-ended questions two times during your lesson when you were speaking to a small group of learners.
I = Impact	This allowed those learners to think more critically about the science concept and to apply their own ideas to solving the problem.
D = Do	How can you build more open-ended questions into your lessons, so all learners can benefit?

As you observe, it will be important to take notes about what you see and hear related to the attributes. Where possible, write down specific examples. For example, in the scenario with Teacher Gilbert, you could write down one or two of the open-ended questions you heard him ask. This gives the teacher something concrete to understand and discuss.

Does this mean that Teacher Gilbert no longer needs to think about asking open-ended questions? It does not. You can acknowledge Teacher Gilbert's success with asking open-ended questions and then also reinforce that he can continue to do this more often.

## Setting goals

Even before you do your first classroom observation, you will need to sit with each teacher you coach and help them to set a goal for their teaching practice related to Learning through Play. You can do this by meeting with the teacher, looking at the Classroom Observation Tool together, and reviewing the indicators and attributes. Remember, the attributes are the goals they are working towards. Each of these attributes represents a behaviour related to using Learning through Play in the classroom.

Together with the teacher, you can identify which of these attributes needs to be developed. Perhaps the teacher will identify many attributes that they want to work on. This is okay, but they cannot work on all of them at once. Or perhaps the teacher will be challenged to name one attribute they wish to improve. This is also okay. Your role as a coach is to help the teacher prioritize one clear goal. Do not tell the teacher what their goal should be.

You can help the teacher to focus on a goal and their plan to achieve it by asking some or all the questions below. These questions follow a goal-setting model called GRROW which stands for Goals, Reality, Resources, Option and Will.

GOALS	The questions you ask here help the teacher to identify a behavioural challenge or problem related to a specific situation i.e., something the teacher is struggling with.
REALITY	The teacher describes their current situation to explain what is happening now to help sharpen the focus of the goal.
RESOURCES	Here, you are determining the resources that could help the teacher achieve their goal. This can be a person (who can help?) or things (what could help?) external, or what personal strengths they have that can help them.
OPTIONS	At this step, your questions help the teacher to determine possible solutions to the challenge or problem.
WILL	The coach invites the teacher to make a choice to decide which of the options is most likely to help him/her and to create an action plan

For more details about the GRROW model, you can watch this video produced by Rwanda Basic Education Board: [GRROW Model Animation : Rwanda Education Board - YouTube](#)

When using the GRROW model, your starting point is *G: Goals*. You then move across the table, asking one or some of the questions from each of the other areas.

You can decide which questions in the table feel the most relevant and necessary in this first goal-setting conversation (and any follow-up conversations you will have about goals)<sup>5</sup>.

<b>G: Goals</b>	<b>R: Reality</b>	<b>R: Resources</b>	<b>O: Options</b>	<b>W: Will</b>
What of the Learning through Play indicators are you working towards? OR What do you want to achieve in the classroom with Learning through Play?	What is important to you about this?	What other skills do you have that could help you in this situation?	What steps can you take to help you reach your goal?	What will you do now? And when? What else will you do?
	What is going on right now?	What or who could help you?	What are the options? What ideas do you have?	Will this action meet your goal?
	What have you done about your goal so far?	How could you find this help?	What do you need to stop doing to	What could stop you from moving forward?
	What is working well?	How do your colleagues react		

<sup>5</sup> For more information: [GRROW Model Animation : Rwanda Education Board - YouTube](#)

<p>What do you want to change or do differently? What is a challenge for you?</p> <p>What would be the benefits be if you achieved this goal?</p> <p>How will you know when you reach your goal?</p>	<p>Where do you think things could be improved?</p>	<p>in a similar situation?</p>	<p>achieve this goal?</p> <p>What else could you do?</p>	<p>How can you keep yourself motivated?</p>
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Throughout this initial goal-setting conversation, you and the teacher can take notes. Once you get to questions in *W: Will*, you will see that the teacher will have a bit of an action plan to follow to achieve their goal – a few clear, simple steps that you can support them to achieve.

The teacher may wish to create a small action plan using the template below, so that the steps they will take are easy to follow:

What is your goal:	
What action(s) will you take to achieve your goal?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> </ol>
What resources do you need?	



What is your timeline for achieving this goal?	
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After each observation you can review the goal with the teacher.

- Do they feel they have reached their goal?
- Based on the feedback they received, what actions or different actions do they have to take to achieve it?
- Or, what new goal do they need to work towards?

If the teacher feels that they are ready for a new goal, then you can use the GRROW Model again to help them define that goal and to create another action plan.

### *Classroom observation and coaching conversation*

Observation of teachers needs to occur with consistency. The recommendation is that you observe and coach each teacher once per month. In this way, you will be able to recognize the progress teachers make on this journey, as well as the results they achieve. You should observe an entire lesson in each visit.

Coaching conversations are most meaningful if they occur immediately or very soon after the observation. You can do this by coordinating with the Headteacher about releasing the class teacher for this conversation, planning with the teacher to stay behind at the end of the day, or finding another time when the teacher is free. If too much time passes between the observation and the coaching conversation, it will be difficult to be precise and the feedback will be less relevant to the teacher as they will have moved on.

Below are some steps to follow that can help you with planning, preparing for, and conducting your classroom observation and coaching conversation.

#### **Before observation:**

- Decide on a day and time for the observation and the follow-up coaching conversation. Explain that when you make your observation:
  - You will sit at the back of the room quietly to watch and make notes.
  - You will not interrupt the lesson.
- Ask the teacher to have a copy of their lesson plan to share with you on the day of your observation, so you are aware of the lesson objectives, the planned activities, and any information about the learners which is relevant to the observation.
- Prepare your materials so you are organized for the visit. You will need a paper copy of the Classroom Observation Tool to record your assessment and observation notes. So

be sure to organize this ahead of time. You may also wish to have some paper or a notebook to record ideas.

- Fill in the information at the start of Classroom Observation Tool, related to the classroom and the lesson.
- Record the teacher's goal on the Classroom Observation Tool so you can be aware of it as you observe.

### During observation:

- Remain attentive and quiet throughout the lesson. The teacher deserves your full attention but does not need the learners to be distracted by your presence.
- If the teacher moves the learners outside, follow along so you can observe all aspects of the lesson.
- You are completing a full assessment for each observation, so be sure to record NO or YES for each characteristic.
- Throughout the lesson, assess each indicator as NO or YES and take additional notes that will allow you to be specific and descriptive in your feedback. Specific examples are very useful in helping teachers connect their words and actions to the Learning through Play indicators and attributes.
- Record examples to support your assessment of each of the attributes. You may wish to record more detailed examples for the attributes that align with the teacher's goal.
- Refrain from asking questions during the lesson. Write down any questions you may have and ask them in the follow-up meeting.

### After observation:

- When the lesson is complete and the teacher has dismissed the learners, you can prepare to leave the class. How the lesson finishes is also important, so make sure you are there until the end.
- Remember the importance of caring: be encouraging in your words and your facial expressions as you appreciate the teacher's effort. Be sincere and make eye contact.
- Remind the teacher of the agreed upon day and time for the coaching conversation. Ideally it will happen immediately after the lesson, but it can be later that day. As the coach, you might like time between the observation and the coaching conversation so you can organize your thoughts. This is okay.
- When you start the coaching conversation, you will be using your coaching skills so be ready to listen, to ask effective questions, and to give effective feedback:
  - You can start by inviting the teacher to reflect on their lesson. There are some questions at the end of the Classroom Observation Tool that you can ask. Record teachers' responses to these questions.
  - If necessary, ask some open-ended questions to probe their reflections, to get them to be more specific, or to explore some other aspects of the lesson.
  - Share some reinforcement and development feedback related to the assessment and notes you made. There is space at the end of the Classroom Observation Tool for you to write down some thoughts.

- Your feedback should be in line with the goal set by the teacher, regarding what they want to work on, but you can also share some other, more general feedback.
- Try to balance between *development* feedback and *reinforcement* feedback. But don't overwhelm them either. Three to four pieces of good feedback should be sufficient.
- Encourage the teacher to write down your feedback.
- Conclude by allowing the teacher to ask questions and together determining next steps to help them act on the feedback given and to advance towards their goal.
- Review the original goal set with the teacher. Ask if this is still the right goal - does it need to be adjusted or does a new goal need to be set? If it needs to be adjusted, you can revisit the Classroom Observation tool together again and ask some of the GRROW questions to help teachers to choose a new goal.
- After the coaching conversation, upload the assessment date to SurveyCTO.

## *Coaching follow-up*

Your interactions with the teachers are not limited to the observation and coaching conversation. You can check-in more frequently, and informally, on how things are going. And depending on what actions are decided upon with each teacher, you may or may not have some additional tasks to undertake before your next observation. For example, to support them in achieving their goals you might agree to:

- Help them plan a lesson
- Demonstrate a lesson or part of a lesson, in their class
- Meet and discuss the contents of one of the online units
- Review their Classroom Practice assignments from one of the units
- Bring two or three teachers together who are working on the same goal to build a small support network
- Engage in role play with the teacher to practice certain skills
- Video the teacher doing a lesson to discuss it together

As you will be coaching multiple teachers it is important to keep your notes related to each teacher organized in some way so that you can refer to them easily. Consider dividing a notebook with some pages for each teacher or using a file folder to hold your loose papers.



### *Your own coaching practice*

Just as teachers are growing in their teaching practice, you too are growing in your coaching practice. Don't forget the power of professional development for your own role.

Consider setting aside some time to reflect on your own skills as a coach, or meeting with other SBMs to share the successes and challenges in your role. All SBMs in this project are part of a WhatsApp group, so you will have a support network available to you through your mobile device.

Other colleagues are also available to support you when you feel challenged to respond to a teacher's needs. There are a lot of people involved in this online learning program, invested in teacher's success and your own. You can reach out to your ICT/SET subject teacher, Headteacher, URCE lecturers, Right To Play, or any others when you find that you need some support. Additionally, UR-CE lecturers and Right To Play staff will be checking on you from time to time, to observe you as a coach and to help you grow your skills.

# Annex 1: Classroom observation tool

## *Introductory script for OBSERVERS and COACHES*

In line with the effective implementation of the Competence-based Curriculum, many approaches have been suggested for teachers. Learning through Play is one of those approaches.

My name is [NAME] and I am working with Right To Play to learn about the teaching practices you use in your classroom and how to improve Right To Play's teacher training program. I would like to sit quietly in the back of the class and observe your lesson. I won't interrupt any of your activities but **just silently observe**. I am not here to EVALUATE your performance. I am simply interested in the way lessons work in schools. Please carry out your class as if I was not here! I will write down your name, but the results will not be linked to you personally. This will only be used to allow me to find you when I visit your class again. If you think I should not join today's session, please let me know. I will try to find another class. **Could I sit in your class?**

Full Name of Observer (RTP):			
If the observer is not from RTP	Institution:	Position:	
Full Name of Teacher:			
Sex of Teacher (F or M):			
Province:			
District:			
Sector:			
Subject			
Grade Level	P1 – P2 – P3		
Class			
Unit:			
Lesson:			
Name of School:			
Date of Classroom Visit:			
Time (AM / PM):	Start time:	End Time:	
Total # of learners registered in class:	M	F	T
Total # of learners present in class on day of observation:	M	F	T
Ask teacher the # of children with disability registered in class:	M	F	T

Ask teacher the # of children living with disability present on day of observation:	M	F	T
Type of disabilities of children registered in class:			
Ask teacher the # of children with other special education needs registered in class:	M	F	T
Ask teacher the # children living with other special education needs present on day of observation:	M	F	T
Type of special education needs of children enrolled in class:			
Has the teacher taken part in the 'Learning through Play: A CPD Certificate Course for Lower Primary Teachers' in the past month?	YES or NO		
If yes, what is the highest level reached? M: Module U: Unit	M1 U1		
	M1 U2		
	M1 U3		
	M1 U4		
	M1 U5		
	M2 U1		
	M2 U2		
	M2 U3		
	M2 U4		
	M2 U5		
	Graduated		
If yes, has the teacher completed the unit assignments?	YES or NO		
If yes, did the teacher attend/participate in the most recent COP meeting on Learning through Play?			
If no, why is the teacher not taking part in the Learning through Play course?			

Indicator 1: Preparation of Learning through Play learning experience		Check no or yes		NOTES
		NO	YES	
01	Did the teacher prepare a lesson plan with a clear instructional objective?			

02	Did the teacher plan a Learning through Play activity?			Select all that you observed: a. Child-directed Play b. Guided Play c. Teacher-directed Play
03	<i>If answer to previous question is YES:</i> Did the Learning through Play activity connect to the instructional objective?			
04	Did the teacher prepare relevant/adequate teaching and learning materials connected to the learning objective?			Please list any materials used:  If the answer is NO, why were the materials not adequate/relevant?
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:				
<u>Indicator 2:</u> Teachers engaging with learners in the context of play		Check no or yes		NOTES
		NO	YES	
05	Does the teacher demonstrate and guide all learners on how to engage with the material during the teaching and learning process?			
06	During the teaching and learning process, does the teacher move around the room and ask open-ended questions during the lesson?			If the teacher does not move around the room, what is the teacher doing during the teaching and learning process?  Write 1 or 2 examples of questions you heard the teacher use, if any:
07	Does the teacher respond to difficult learner behavior in a respectful way? (i.e., acknowledge feelings, set limits, review expectations & give choices, does NOT shame, embarrass/hurt the learner physically/emotionally)			Record an example of how the teacher managed difficult learner behaviour.
08	Does the teacher demonstrate a positive rapport with learners?			
09	Does the teacher react negatively to challenging behaviours to discipline			

	children? (i.e, shouting or corporal punishment)			
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:				
Indicator 3: Active engagement and learning strategies		Check no or yes		NOTES
		NO	YES	
10	Does the teacher give time for <b>all</b> learners to interact with the teaching and learning materials?			
11	Does the teacher use small groups or pairs during teaching and learning activities?			
12	Does the teacher give opportunities to <b>all</b> learners to ask questions during the lesson?			
13	Does the teacher support <b>all</b> learners to make connections to learning from other lessons or information they know?			
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:				
Indicator 4: Child agency and collaboration in the Learning through Play learning process		Check no or yes		NOTES
		NO	YES	
14	Does the teacher share the learning objective(s) of the lesson with all learners?			<p>If yes, how does the teacher share them?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Writing on blackboard</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Telling learners</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Writing on blackboard and telling learners</li> </ul>
15	Does the teacher give opportunities to all learners to make decisions about the Learning through Play experience?			
16	Does the teacher give opportunities to all learners to talk, ask each other questions, and reflect on their learning during and at the end of the lesson?			
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:				



Indicator 6: Gender and inclusion		Check no or yes		NOTES
		NO	YES	
17	Do <b>all</b> girls and boys have equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of the lesson?			
18	Do learners with disabilities and other special education needs have equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of the lesson?			Please note if there are no children with disabilities and other special education needs present in class.
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:				

**Observer's reflections** (Only answer this question if you are an observer visiting the classroom for monitoring purposes)

1. What went well in this lesson? What could have gone better in this lesson?

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Teacher's Reflections:

1. What does the teacher think went well in this lesson? What does the teacher think could have gone better in this lesson?

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2. What will the teacher do to improve their future lessons?

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**Coaches Reflections** (If helpful, you can use these questions to guide your Coaching conversations with the teacher)

Teacher's Learning through Play Goal:

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1. REINFORCEMENT FEEDBACK: What went well in this lesson?

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2. REINFORCEMENT FEEDBACK: What went well in relation to the teacher's goal?

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3. DEVELOPMENT FEEDBACK: What can be improved to help the teacher achieve their goal?

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4. OTHER FEEDBACK: What other feedback would you like to share, if any (reinforcement or development)?

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