Answers to Chapter 5

Comprehension Questions

1. Define and describe instructional support.

Instructional support involves guiding a mentee through the process of developing his or her instructional expertise. It requires deliberate practice and the monitoring of specific instructional strategies, such as those regarding pacing, student engagement, and classroom management.

2. During which phase or phases from Moir’s (1999) “The Stages of a Teacher’s First Year” do new teachers typically need instructional support the most? Why?

Based on the mentee’s needs, mentors can provide some instructional support during the anticipation phase at the beginning of the year. However, take care to avoid too intense a focus on instructional support during the survival and disillusionment phases. Once the mentee has reached the rejuvenation and reflection phases, a mentor should provide plenty of instructional support.

3. Give three examples of instructional support that a mentor can provide for a beginning teacher.

Answers will vary. However, a mentor can provide instructional support in a multitude of ways. Some examples of instructional support include establishing a common language of instruction, helping the mentee use a scale to measure his or her progress, supporting the growth of the mentee up the scale, helping the mentee set appropriate growth goals, providing focused feedback, analyzing data from the mentee’s classroom and guiding reflection based on this data, and providing the mentee with opportunities to observe and discuss effective teaching.

4. Which types of instructional support do mentees only require at the beginning of the school year? Which types do they continually require throughout the year?

Typically, mentors should guide mentees to focus on routine segments at the beginning of the year when a teacher is in the initial anticipation and survival phases. From there, mentors should help mentees focus on segments enacted on the spot and segments addressing content during the rejuvenation and reflection phases later in the school year.

5. How can a mentor provide focused feedback and opportunities for a mentee to observe and discuss teaching?

Help a beginning teacher engage in deliberate practice by providing focused feedback about specific strategies the beginning teacher implemented. Mentors and mentees can use a teacher progress log and a teacher reflection log to guide their discussions about instruction. Provide specific feedback related to individual classroom strategies and behaviors based on classroom observations, and
help the teacher collect focused feedback from student surveys. Finally, arrange opportunities for the mentee to observe and discuss excellent teaching, including opportunities to observe mentor- and master-status teachers via video-recorded lessons or in-classroom observations.

6. Describe the five performance levels from the scales presented in this chapter: Not Using (0), Beginning (1), Developing (2), Applying (3), and Innovating (4).

The five performance levels include Not Using (0), Beginning (1), Developing (2), Applying (3), and Innovating (4). Not Using (0) indicates that the teacher is unaware of strategies or behaviors associated with an element. Beginning (1) indicates that the teacher uses a strategy or behavior incorrectly or with parts missing. Developing (2) indicates that the teacher uses a strategy or behavior but in a mechanistic way. Applying (3) indicates that the teacher uses a strategy or behavior and monitors its effect on student outcomes. Finally, Innovating (4) indicates that the teacher integrates several strategies or behaviors associated with an element of effective teaching to create a macrostrategy or adapts a strategy for unique student needs and situations.