

# G.R.O.W. Coaching Strategy

## *A Quick Guide for Focused Teacher Mentor and Coaching Conversations*

### What is G.R.O.W.?

G.R.O.W. is a simple coaching structure mentors can use to guide focused conversations with early-career teachers. The four steps move the conversation from identifying a student-centered goal to choosing a specific next step.

**G | GOAL:** Identify a student-centered goal

**R | REALITY:** Examine current practice using evidence

**O | OPTIONS:** Explore realistic options

**W | WAY FORWARD:** Commit to a specific next step

*Use G.R.O.W. for a focused 10-minute coaching conversation after an observation, during instructional planning, or as part of a regular mentor meeting.*

| Step                             | Focus of Conversation                                                           | Potential Question Stems                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| G: GOAL (Start with the outcome) | Clarify what the teacher wants students to know, do, or experience differently. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you want students to know or be able to do?</li> <li>• What would success look like?</li> <li>• What is the most important student learning outcome?</li> </ul> |

| <b>Step</b>                                 | <b>Focus of Conversation</b>                                                                                                         | <b>Potential Question Stems</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| R: REALITY<br>(What is happening now?)      | Examine current practice and available evidence. Identify what is working and what needs attention.                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is happening now?</li> <li>• What evidence shows us what is working or not working?</li> <li>• What are students doing or showing you? What have you already tried?</li> </ul>                                                       |
| O: OPTIONS<br>(Explore possible approaches) | Generate two or three realistic strategies or instructional moves. Encourage the teacher to contribute ideas before offering advice. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are some strategies you could try?</li> <li>• What else might work?</li> <li>• What has worked for you in a similar situation?</li> <li>• What could you adjust?</li> <li>• Of these options, which seems most realistic?</li> </ul> |
| W: WAY FORWARD<br>(Commit to action)        | Select one next step and decide how the teacher and mentor will determine whether it worked.                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which option will you try, and when?</li> <li>• What evidence will show whether it worked?</li> <li>• When should we check back?</li> </ul>                                                                                               |

## Using G.R.O.W. Effectively

Keep the conversation focused on one meaningful area of practice. Ask questions before offering solutions. Ground the conversation in what students are doing, learning, or experiencing. End with one specific action the teacher will try and identify when you will revisit the evidence.

## Tip for Mentors

Your job is not to solve the problem for the teacher. Use questions to help the teacher examine practice, consider options, and take ownership of the next step. This approach also reinforces teacher autonomy and immediate application.

# TEMPLATE G.R.O.W. CONVERSATION WORKSHEET

Teacher Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Mentor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Focus of Conversation: \_\_\_\_\_

## **G. GOAL**

What does the teacher want students to know, do, or experience differently?

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## **R. REALITY**

What is happening now? What does the evidence tell us?

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## **O. OPTIONS**

What are 2 to 3 strategies or instructional moves the teacher could try?

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## **W. WAY FORWARD**

What will the teacher try? When?

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What evidence will show whether it worked?

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