





Facilitation Difficulty: 

 Varies by need  
and availability

 One observer +  
one observed

 Preconference  
in advance

**Purpose** – This activity was developed to use within a school-based Critical Friends Group® community as an introduction to peer observation. It helps participants focus on identifying evidence rather than evaluating.

**Preparation** – Work with the host teacher to schedule the visit when students are not present. Consider whether to modify the Ghost Visit Worksheet, listing other categories such as classroom management, child-friendly environment, student achievement, print-rich environment, integration of content area, etc. Prepare and bring copies of the worksheet, plus pens and possibly clipboards for all participants.

**Tips** – Remind participants about conducting the observation in silence, and documenting evidence, not judgments.

Steps:

1. **Visit** – CFG® members visit a member’s classroom and silently walk through the space, observing and documenting evidence for the categories listed on the Ghost Visit Worksheet. (10-15 min.)
2. **Share** – Ask the group to share evidence for each item, and chart the observations. Facilitate a discussion around statements of evaluation versus statements of evidence. During this process the teacher whose classroom was visited remains silent and takes notes.
3. **Reflect** – Invite the hosting teacher to respond or comment on what has been shared. Teachers will then often use the attached form as a springboard for further peer observations, creating their own categories/focus point(s).
4. **Debrief** – Begin with the host teacher, then ask the others:
  - *How do you feel about this protocol? What worked well, and what was difficult? Why?*
  - *How might the conversations have been different had we visited the space while in session? Would the evidence differ?*
  - *What are the advantages/disadvantages of using this protocol?*
  - *Why did we do this protocol in silence?*
  - *What would you want to keep in mind as someone facilitating this protocol? (Omit when used with a school-based CFG community)*

For best learning, each person should take a few minutes to write notes and reflections about this experience.

**Ghost Walk Modification** – Ghost Walk is a structured process for a collaborative walk-through observation of a school when classes are not in session.

Steps:

1. **Present** – School host shares a brief presentation that gives visitors a focus for their feedback, i.e.

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“Student-centered learning” or “Differentiation,” etc. (5-10 min.)

2. Visit - Visitors walk through the building silently, making note of evidence observed that supports or doesn't support the host's focus. (15-20 min.)
3. Separate and setup - Visitors return to the meeting room and sit in a circle. The host moves their chair away from the group but staying close enough to hear, and ideally, turning so they aren't making eye contact with anyone. The presenter should bring materials for taking notes. For the next step, instruct everyone to imagine the host has left the room, to avoid eye contact with the host, and to speak of the host in the third person. (“They said we should look for ... “ rather than “You said .... “) (2 min.)
4. Share - Visitors share their observations and how they match or vary from their expectations. Chart this information. The group discusses their findings, looking for any patterns or surprises. (10 min.)
5. Reflect - Host rejoins the group and responds to anything that challenged, pushed, and/or added to their thinking. The host does not respond to everything heard. There is no need to explain the school or classroom to the visitors. (5 min.)
6. Debrief - (5 min.)
  - *How might you use this process with your colleagues?*
  - *What adjustments would you make to the process?*
  - *How might the conversations have been different had we visited the space while in session? Would the evidence differ?*
  - *Other comments?*





# Ghost Visit Worksheet

Name (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Space being observed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

*What evidence do you see of ...*

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.