

The Mentor Teacher Beliefs Inventory

This inventory is designed for mentor teachers to assess their own beliefs about mentoring and professional development. The inventory assumes that mentor teachers believe and act according to three theoretical orientations to mentoring, but that one usually dominates. The inventory is designed to be self-administered and self-scored. Mentor teachers are asked to choose one of two options. A scoring key follows.

Instructions: Highlight A or B for each item. You may not completely agree with either choice, but choose the one that is closest to how you feel.

1	A. Mentor teachers should give beginning teachers a large degree of autonomy and initiative within broadly defined limits.	B. Mentor teachers should give beginning teachers directions about methods that will help them improve their teaching.
2	A. It is important for beginning teachers to set their own goals and objectives for professional growth.	B. It is important for mentor teachers to help beginning teachers reconcile their personalities and teaching styles with the philosophy and direction of the school.
3	A. Beginning teachers are likely to feel uncomfortable and anxious if their mentors do not tell them what they will be focusing on during classroom observations.	B. Classroom observations of beginning teachers are meaningless if beginning teachers are not able to define with their mentor teachers the focus or foci of the observation.
4	A. An open, trusting, warm, and personal relationship with beginning teachers is the most important ingredient in mentoring beginning teachers.	B. A mentor teacher who is too personal with beginning teachers risks being less effective and less respected than a mentor who keeps a certain degree of professional distance from beginning teachers.
5	A. My role during mentoring conferences is to make the interaction positive, to share realistic information, and to help beginning teachers plan their own solutions to problems.	B. The methods and strategies I use with beginning teachers in a conference are aimed at our reaching agreement over the needs for future improvement.
6	A. In the initial phase of working with a beginning teacher, I develop objectives with the teacher(s) that will help accomplish school goals.	B. In the initial phase of working with a beginning teacher, I try to identify the talents and goals of individual beginning teachers so they can work on their own improvements.
7	A. When several beginning teachers have a similar classroom problem, I prefer to have the beginning teachers form an informal group to help them work together to solve the problem.	B. When several beginning teachers have a similar classroom problem, I prefer to help beginning teachers on an individual basis find their strengths, abilities, and resources so that each one finds his or her own solution to the problem.
8	A. The most important clue that an entry-year workshop is needed occurs when the mentor perceives that several beginning teachers lack knowledge or skill in a specific area, which is resulting in low morale, undue stress, and less effective teaching.	B. The most important clue that an entry-year workshop is needed occurs when several beginning teachers perceive the need to strengthen their abilities in the same instructional area.
9	A. Practicing mentors should decide the objectives of any entry-year workshops since they have a broad perspective on beginning teachers' abilities and the school's needs.	B. Mentor teachers and beginning teachers and beginning teachers should reach consensus about the objectives of any entry-year workshop.
10	A. Beginning teachers who feel they are growing personally will be more effective than beginning teachers who are not experiencing personal growth.	B. Beginning teachers should employ teaching methods that have proven successful over the years.
11	A. When I observe a beginning teacher scolding a student unnecessarily, I explain, during a post observation conference with the teacher, why the scolding was excessive.	B. When I observe a beginning teacher scolding a student unnecessarily, I ask the teacher about the incident, but do not interject my judgments.
12	A. One effective way to improve beginning teacher performance is for mentors to formulate clear professional improvement plans for beginning teachers.	B. Professional improvement plans are helpful to some beginning teachers but stifling to others.
13	A. During a pre-observation conference, I suggest to the teacher what I could observe, but I let the teacher make the final decision about the objectives and methods of observation.	B. During a pre-observation conference, the teacher and I mutually decide the objectives and methods of observation.
14	A. Improvement occurs very slowly if beginning teachers are left on their own, but when a group of beginning teachers and their mentors work together on a specific problem, they learn rapidly and their morale remains high.	B. Group activities may be enjoyable, but I find that providing individual guidance to a beginning teacher leads to more sustained results.
15	A. When an entry-year program meeting is scheduled, all mentor teachers who participated in the decision to hold the meeting should be expected to attend it.	B. When an entry-year program meeting is scheduled, mentor teachers, regardless of their role in calling for or planning the meeting, should be able to decide if the workshop is relevant to their personal or professional growth and, if not, should not be expected to attend.

Mentor Teacher Beliefs Inventory: Scoring Key

1. Highlight your answers to the inventory in the following columns:

Column I	Column II	Column III
1B	1A	
	2B	2A
3A	3B	
4B		4A
	5B	5A
6A		6B
	7A	7B
8A		8B
9A	9B	
10B		10A
11A		11B
12A	12B	
	13B	13A
14B	14A	
	15A	15B

2. Tally the number of circled items in each column and multiply by 6.7:

2.1 Total Response in Column I _____ x 6.7= _____

2.2 Total Response in Column II _____ x 6.7= _____

2.3 Total Response in Column III _____ x 6.7= _____

3. Interpretation: Refer to the Three Approaches to Mentoring worksheet (below) to gain insight into your scores.

Three Approaches to Mentoring

Interpretation

Instructions: The following brief descriptions of the three approaches to mentoring provide a general overview of each approach. After reading each description, reflect on your scores in terms of whether you believe they are personally valid.

2.1 Direct Approach. The product you obtained in Step 2.1 is an approximate percentage of how often you are likely to take a *directive approach* to mentoring rather than the other two approaches.

Mentor teachers with high directive scores may tend to believe that beginning teachers are best supported when their mentors provide professional direction that is grounded in their veteran knowledge and experience. Consequently, such mentors may feel most comfortable when providing strategic or technical advice.

2.2 Collaborative Approach. The product you obtained in Step 2.2 is an approximation of how likely you are to take a *collaborative approach* to mentoring rather than the other two approaches.

Mentor teachers who take a predominately collaborative approach to the mentoring process may tend to believe that beginning teachers benefit most when their mentors relate to them as professional peers. Consequently, such mentors may feel most comfortable when engaged in collegial dialogue or collaborative problem solving.

2.3 Non-Directive Approach. The product you obtained in Step 2.3 is an approximation of the degree to which you are likely to employ a *nondirective approach* to mentoring.

Mentor teachers who prefer a nondirective style of mentoring may tend to believe that beginning teachers profit most when their mentors provide them with the professional autonomy to find their own way and solve their own problems. Such mentors may feel most comfortable when listening to or encouraging beginning teachers as they seek their own solutions to professional dilemmas.