

STUDY GUIDE
**THE ILLUSTRATED GUIDE
TO VISIBLE LEARNING**

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INTRODUCTION: WELCOME TO VISIBLE LEARNING

SUMMARY

Introduces the purpose of *Visible Learning*—using evidence and evaluation to understand what works best for student learning. It highlights the four big ideas (Climate, Student Agency, Impact, Collective Responsibility) and the importance of mindframes.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What does it mean to make learning “visible”?
- How can we “know our impact” in day-to-day teaching?
- Which of the four big ideas resonates most with your current practice? Why?

SIGNATURE PRACTICE #1: CLASSROOM AND SCHOOL CLIMATE

SUMMARY

Explores the influence of expectations, belonging, relationships, and trust. A positive climate fosters high expectations and inclusion for all learners.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How do teacher expectations shape student outcomes?
- In what ways can your classroom strengthen belonging and cohesion?
- How might we balance warmth and demand to build trust and respect?

SIGNATURE PRACTICE #2: TEACHER CLARITY

SUMMARY

Clarity includes defining learning intentions, relevance (“Why am I learning this?”), and success criteria (“How will I know I learned it?”). Clear teaching fosters motivation and self-assessment.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How do you communicate learning intentions and success criteria to students?
- What strategies help students connect learning to personal relevance?
- How can coconstructing success criteria increase engagement?

SIGNATURE PRACTICE #3: PHASES OF LEARNING

SUMMARY

Learning progresses from surface to deep to transfer. Each phase requires different strategies, such as direct instruction for surface learning and problem-solving for transfer.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What strategies do you use in each learning phase?
- How can recognizing the phase of learning improve instructional decisions?
- How can transfer learning be made more intentional?

SIGNATURE PRACTICE #4: TEACHING STUDENTS TO DRIVE THEIR LEARNING

SUMMARY

Focuses on developing assessment-capable, self-regulated learners who monitor progress, seek feedback, and teach others.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How do you help students understand where they are in their learning journey?
- What does “driving their own learning” look like in your classroom?
- How can we normalize errors and productive struggle?

SIGNATURE PRACTICE #5: TEACHING WITH INTENT

SUMMARY

Teaching with intent integrates four modes—focused instruction, guided instruction, collaborative learning, and independent tasks—within the gradual release of responsibility framework.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Which mode do you use most often, and which might need more attention?
- How can intentional teaching strengthen student ownership of learning?
- How can we use evidence to decide when to “release” responsibility?

SIGNATURE PRACTICE #6: PRACTICE AND OVERLEARNING

SUMMARY

Deliberate, spaced, and retrieval practice transform skills into long-term learning. Feedback-rich, repeated opportunities move students toward fluency and transfer.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What’s the difference between rote and deliberate practice?
- How do you help students practice over time rather than cram?
- How could you integrate retrieval practice into your lessons?

SIGNATURE PRACTICE #7: FEEDBACK

SUMMARY

Feedback is most effective when it is timely, specific, and focused on progress toward goals. It is a loop, not a one-way message.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How can we ensure students *use* feedback to improve learning?
- What makes feedback credible and actionable?
- How can we develop a classroom culture where feedback is expected and valued?

SIGNATURE PRACTICE #8: THE POWER OF THE COLLECTIVE

SUMMARY

Highlights collective efficacy—the shared belief among teachers that they can influence student learning. Collaboration builds confidence and consistency in teaching impact.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How does your team currently measure collective impact?
- What “I” and “We” skills are essential for effective collaboration?
- How can equity and high expectations be part of every collective goal?

SIGNATURE PRACTICE #9: LEADING LEARNING

SUMMARY

Focuses on leader credibility, coaching, and professional learning. Effective leaders build trust, model learning, and foster schoolwide intentionality.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What are the hallmarks of credible leadership in your setting?
- How can leaders model evaluative thinking and reflection?
- What coaching practices best support continuous growth?

SIGNATURE PRACTICE #10: IMPLEMENTATION

SUMMARY

Success depends on how well strategies are implemented—with fidelity, proper dosage, adaptation, and a supportive environment.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Which of the four key elements of implementation most affects your work?
- How do you ensure fidelity to learning intentions?
- What adjustments are needed for specific learners in your context?

SIGNATURE PRACTICE #11: EVALUATIVE THINKING

SUMMARY

Encourages teachers to be “nosy for a reason” by using data and reflection to inform teaching decisions. Evaluation is a mindset of inquiry and continuous improvement.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How can evaluative thinking become part of your daily routine?
- What types of evidence best show your impact on learning?
- How can your PLC use the six evaluative thinking questions to guide improvement?

CONCLUSION: MAKING THE LEARNING VISIBLE

SUMMARY

The journey from research to practice depends on reflection, collaboration, and evidence-based action. Visible Learning is both a mindset and a method for continuous improvement.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What new insights about learning will you implement immediately?
- How can your school sustain a Visible Learning culture?
- What does “learning by design, not by chance” mean in your role?