

# Coaching Considerations for Fostering Student Ownership in Instructional Practice

At NIET, [student ownership is defined](#) as the stage when **students can articulate what they are learning, why they are learning, strategies that support their learning, and how they will use these strategies in the future**. This tool shares ideas and examples to help teachers foster student ownership through the lens of the NIET Teaching and Learning Standards, but all educators can benefit from it. It can be used by teachers to consider what actions they can take to strengthen student ownership as well as by coaches to help guide instructional practices.

Below are descriptions of how students demonstrate ownership, how teachers can support student ownership, key markers in the classroom environment that signal increased ownership, and guiding questions to help teachers continue thinking about fostering student ownership. Consider using this as you plan for accelerated learning or before your next classroom walkthrough.

NIET Rubric Indicator	Teacher Actions	Student Actions	Potential Evidence of Impact	Next Steps
<b>Standards &amp; Objectives</b>	<p><b>Teachers support student ownership by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly communicating the objective of the lesson by having students interact with the objective.</li> <li>Engaging students in the analysis of exemplars and co-creating success criteria for the lesson.</li> <li>Developing opportunities for students to individually make connections to previous learning and make powerful connections to their lives through prompts, questions, and activities.</li> <li>Modeling and planning for opportune times in a lesson for students to participate in</li> </ul>	<p><b>Students demonstrate ownership by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Articulating what they are learning and why they are learning the objective.</li> <li>Knowing how they will demonstrate mastery of the objective.</li> <li>Articulating how the current learning relates to previous, subsequent learning and making individual connections to their life experiences.</li> <li>Making powerful connections to the lesson's objective throughout the lesson by engaging in rich conversations aligned to the objective.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Classroom environment shifts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students understand the value of learning and the expectations for their learning.</li> <li>The environment is a safe space for students to take risks and understand how struggling is a part of the learning process.</li> <li>Structures are in place for students to experience success.</li> <li>The environment is a safe space for students to seek help and interact with their peers.</li> <li>Students have opportunities to lead their learning.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Guiding questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do you plan to clearly communicate the expectations for the students?</li> <li>What kinds of evidence/artifacts will you require students to produce to show mastery or progress toward mastery of the standard/objective?</li> <li>How will students know if they have mastered the objective for the lesson?</li> <li>How will students deepen their understanding of the objective through discussions? Where will this occur in this lesson?</li> </ul>

NIET Rubric Indicator	Teacher Actions	Student Actions	Potential Evidence of Impact	Next Steps
	<p>discussions where every student has the opportunity to engage in learning.</p>		<p><b>Student dispositional shifts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students feel empowered to articulate their goals and lead their learning.</li> <li>• Students feel confident engaging with the content and can express why they are learning what they are learning.</li> <li>• Students add personal connections to the lesson objectives, deepening the learning for their peers.</li> <li>• Students are not discouraged when they struggle, understanding it is part of the learning process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will students make connections to previous lessons and make powerful connections to their new learning?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Questioning</b></p>	<p><b>Teachers support student ownership by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning intentional and scaffolded questions aligned to the target/standard.</li> <li>• Modeling and providing opportunities for how to generate questions to guide thinking and learning.</li> <li>• Providing the necessary wait time for students to grapple and think about the learning.</li> <li>• Releasing the thinking and questioning to students.</li> <li>• Providing structures where all students have opportunities to develop</li> </ul>	<p><b>Students demonstrate ownership by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responding to a variety of scaffolded questions that build understanding of the standard/target.</li> <li>• Generating questions that deepen their learning and thinking.</li> <li>• Taking initiative to ask clarifying questions as needed or push thinking.</li> <li>• Questioning their own work through reflective practices in order to prompt new learning and challenge themselves.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Classroom environment shifts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is safe for students to ask questions about their learning of the teacher or their peers.</li> <li>• There is interdependence among the students.</li> <li>• There is accountability for all students to generate questions to deepen learning.</li> </ul> <p><b>Student dispositional shifts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students feel empowered to generate and ask questions of both their teacher and peers.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Guiding questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why is it important for students to have opportunities to develop their own questions and search for the answers?</li> <li>• Why is it important to plan intentional questions that are aligned to the standard/expected outcome of the lesson?</li> <li>• How will you model how to generate self-directed questions aligned to the learning for students?</li> <li>• How will you ensure that students have the opportunity to interact with</li> </ul>

NIET Rubric Indicator	Teacher Actions	Student Actions	Potential Evidence of Impact	Next Steps
	<p>questions and respond to questions within a lesson.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students take initiative to reflect on their work.</li> <li>● Students feel confident in answering and posing questions to deepen their learning.</li> <li>● Students do not fear providing “incorrect answers” to questions, but instead, use questions as a way to make connections to prior learning or grapple with learning tasks.</li> </ul>	<p>each other about their learning?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How will you ensure that all students have equal opportunities to answer questions and discuss responses with one another?</li> <li>● What types of questions might you ask to gather evidence of students’ thinking?</li> </ul>

NIET Rubric Indicator	Teacher Actions	Student Actions	Potential Evidence of Impact	Next Steps
<b>Thinking</b>	<p><b>Teachers support student ownership by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Structuring and communicating clear expectations.</li> <li>● Asking scaffolded questions.</li> <li>● Engaging students in developing questions.</li> <li>● Modeling expectations and thinking types.</li> <li>● Providing opportunities for students to think and reflect.</li> <li>● Providing opportunities for students to interact and talk about their thinking and learning.</li> <li>● Allowing students to struggle productively and grapple with their learning.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Students demonstrate ownership by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Developing questions to guide their learning.</li> <li>● Self-directing their learning by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Analyzing, comparing and contrasting, evaluating, and explaining.</li> <li>○ Applying their learning in real-world scenarios.</li> <li>○ Creating, designing, imagining, and supposing.</li> <li>○ Exploring and reviewing a variety of ideas, models, and solutions to problems.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Classroom environment shifts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● It is safe for students to ask questions about their learning.</li> <li>● It is safe to differ in opinion or ideas from their peers and express their opinions respectfully.</li> <li>● Independent thinking and self-regulation are normalized.</li> <li>● Creativity in thinking is valued.</li> <li>● The focus on big ideas and enduring understandings allow for a greater transfer and application of knowledge.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Guiding questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How do you plan for activities/assignments that promote different types of thinking?</li> <li>● How will you ensure that students have the opportunity to interact with each other about their learning and discuss their understandings?</li> <li>● How will you ensure that students have the opportunity to think in different ways?</li> <li>● How will you plan for students to show their thinking?</li> </ul>

NIET Rubric Indicator	Teacher Actions	Student Actions	Potential Evidence of Impact	Next Steps
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Providing high-quality academic feedback aligned to the standard and success criteria.</li> <li>● Modeling how to self-assess their learning and progress toward mastery.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Generating alternatives to solving problems.</li> <li>● Persevering through challenging tasks.</li> <li>● Supporting their opinions and responses with relevant justifications and reasoning.</li> <li>● Identifying and discussing their progress toward mastery.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Student dispositional shifts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students feel empowered and share their unique voices.</li> <li>● Students take purposeful initiative.</li> <li>● Students value peer collaboration.</li> <li>● Students express enthusiasm for their work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How will you model/promote perseverance through challenging tasks?</li> <li>● How will you provide opportunities for student choice in expressing their thinking and understanding?</li> <li>● Where in the lesson are there opportune times for students to collaborate and deepen their thinking around the objective?</li> </ul>
<b>Problem-Solving</b>	<p><b>Teachers support student ownership by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Providing opportunities for students to practice many different approaches to solving problems/tasks.</li> <li>● Developing and communicating high expectations for thinking and learning to solve problems and tasks.</li> <li>● Modeling different approaches to solving problems/tasks.</li> <li>● Developing tasks/activities that require multiple types of problem-solving.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Students demonstrate ownership by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Taking initiative in independent or group work to develop a plan to solve a task or problem in more than one way.</li> <li>● Expressing their thinking and understanding in ways that support their learning style.</li> <li>● Producing products that require thinking and understanding of a concept/objective.</li> <li>● Persevering in deep engagement to solve problems/tasks to arrive at a solution.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Classroom environment shifts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The teacher and students value differences in opinion and thought and respectfully express their different ideas.</li> <li>● It is safe for students to express their thoughts and opinions even if it differs from their peers.</li> <li>● Students are able to approach problems independently and self-regulate themselves.</li> <li>● Creativity in problem-solving is valued.</li> <li>● The ability to practice application allows students to produce solutions through adopting a variety</li> </ul>	<p><b>Guiding questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How do you plan for activities/assignments that promote different types of problem-solving?</li> <li>● What kinds of evidence/artifacts will you require students to produce to show progress toward mastery of the standard/objective?</li> <li>● How will you ensure that students have the opportunity to interact with each other about their learning?</li> <li>● How will the pacing of the lesson provide sufficient time for students to problem solve?</li> </ul>

NIET Rubric Indicator	Teacher Actions	Student Actions	Potential Evidence of Impact	Next Steps
			<p>of strategies and techniques they have learned.</p> <p><b>Student dispositional shifts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students feel empowered and share their unique voices.</li> <li>● Students take purposeful initiative.</li> <li>● Students value peer collaboration.</li> <li>● Students express enthusiasm for their work.</li> </ul>	

NIET Rubric Indicator	Teacher Actions	Student Actions	Potential Evidence of Impact	Next Steps
<b>Academic Feedback</b>	<p><b>Teachers support student ownership by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Modeling and providing opportunities for students to ask questions about their learning that are aligned to the standard/target and success criteria.</li> <li>● Providing opportunities for students to collaborate about the learning.</li> <li>● Modeling appropriate and respectful behaviors expected when students are collaborating.</li> <li>● Making adjustments to the lesson as needed and determined from the feedback provided by students.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Students demonstrate ownership by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Providing feedback to each other using language from the standard and success criteria.</li> <li>● Displaying patience and respect for their peers during discussions.</li> <li>● Holding themselves and their peers accountable for formulating feedback and sharing their thinking.</li> <li>● Seeking out teacher and peer feedback.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Classroom environment shifts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● It is safe for students to express their opinions, thoughts, and interests with their teacher and peers.</li> <li>● Students work together to demonstrate positive relationships with everyone in the classroom.</li> </ul> <p><b>Student dispositional shifts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students provide feedback to peers using language from the standard and success criteria.</li> <li>● Students take initiative to seek feedback from the teacher and their peers.</li> <li>● Students use feedback from the teacher and peers to revise their work and deepen their learning.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Guiding questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How do you know what the student look/listen-for are in order to provide feedback?</li> <li>● How will you ensure the feedback provided is aligned to the standard and success criteria?</li> <li>● How will you use student feedback to adjust instruction?</li> <li>● How do you plan to engage students in providing quality feedback to one another?</li> <li>● Where in the lesson are opportune times for students to self-assess in relation to the success criteria and expectations of the lesson?</li> <li>● How will students use feedback to monitor their own learning and progression to their goals?</li> </ul>

NIET Rubric Indicator	Teacher Actions	Student Actions	Potential Evidence of Impact	Next Steps
<b>Motivating Students</b>	<p><b>Teachers support student ownership by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Developing opportunities for students to generate questions.</li> <li>● Providing opportunities for students to co-create success criteria for the lesson.</li> <li>● Providing choices for students to express their understanding and learning.</li> <li>● Reinforcing and rewarding effort by providing feedback rooted in the success criteria and language of the standard/target for mastery.</li> <li>● Providing a gradual release of learning for students.</li> <li>● Modeling and providing opportunities for students to self-assess their work against the success criteria and to use the criteria to provide feedback to peers.</li> <li>● Providing opportunities for students to talk and write about their learning and thinking.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Students demonstrate ownership by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Generating questions to explore and determine answers/results as it aligns to the lesson target for mastery.</li> <li>● Making personal and real-world connections to the learning.</li> <li>● Developing success criteria for mastery of their learning.</li> <li>● Articulating the purpose of the lesson and why it is important to them.</li> <li>● Grappling with the learning/engaging in productive struggle and persevering.</li> <li>● Utilizing success criteria to self-assess and make adjustments in their work and thinking.</li> <li>● Utilizing success criteria to provide feedback to peers.</li> <li>● Choosing the best method to display their thinking and learning that shows their mastery or progress toward mastery of the target/standard.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Classroom environment shifts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The classroom is a safe space for students to make mistakes, productively struggle, and ask questions to deepen their learning.</li> <li>● Students know how to co-create success criteria for learning, as well as how to use it to self-assess and provide feedback to peers.</li> <li>● Conversations are rooted in the language of the standard and success criteria.</li> <li>● The classroom is a safe space for students to seek help and interact with their peers.</li> </ul> <p><b>Student dispositional shifts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students personally connect with the learning and are able to articulate why.</li> <li>● Students express what they are expected to learn, why the content or skill is being taught, and how they will know they are successful.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Guiding questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How do you organize the content of a lesson so it is meaningful and relevant to students?</li> <li>● How do you develop learning experiences that provide opportunities for students to ask questions and explore?</li> <li>● Why is it important for students to have opportunities to develop their own questions and search for the answers?</li> <li>● How does student motivation impact student achievement?</li> <li>● What will be evidence in the lesson that students are motivated to take ownership of their learning?</li> </ul>