TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Elementary Student Teacher Guidelines for Observing the Cooperating Teacher
This is a Standard Experience requirement for Elementary.

During the first two weeks of your student teaching experience you will be observing your cooperating teacher, helping with students, and learning as much as possible about your classroom environment and the expectations of your cooperating teacher. As you observe the teacher, use the following areas to structure your notes. At the end of the first week you will be submitting a reflection to your supervisor about what you have observed. Let the teacher know about the assignment and discuss how to balance observing him/her with assisting with instruction and students. You are not evaluating the teacher or classroom – only gathering information that will be helpful to you during the semester.

**Students Behaviors and Characteristics** – Observe individual characteristics and behaviors; take notes to help you remember names. Take notes on individual characteristics and behaviors as you prepare to meet the individual needs of the students.

**Organization of the Classroom** – Take note of how the classroom is organized for instruction ... furniture, centers, computes, materials, etc.

**Classroom Management Procedures/Routines**

- Expectations for entering the classroom and preparing for instruction
- Lunches/money
- Pencil sharpening
- Organization of books and supplies
- Verbal and nonverbal cues and attention getting signals
- Small and whole group procedures
- Line procedures
- Playground/inclement weather expectations
- Fire/disaster drills
- Learning center procedures/expectations
- Library book procedures
- Homework procedures
- Hallway procedures

**Behavior Management**

- Note class rules and overall behavior management plan
- Teacher verbal and nonverbal praises and redirects
- Questioning and answering procedures
- Teacher actions to prevent/control undesirable behavior
- Teacher actions to obtain/maintain student focus
- Teacher interactions with individual students
- Behavioral rewards/consequences

**Instruction**

- Organization of teach/student instruction materials
- Lesson plan format
- Instructional attention getting activities
- Cooperative group procedures and expectations
- Instructional delivery...materials, modeling, guided practice (observe how instructional objectives are met)
- Procedures for turning in completed work
- Formal and informal assessment
- Links and transitions between activities