

ACTIVITY

GREATNESS NEXT DOOR

A Peer Observation Activity for Connection & Growth

A simple way to spark inspiration, build trust, and highlight great teaching—one 10-minute visit at a time.

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ACTIVITY OVERVIEW



Purpose:

Your greatest PD resource might be right down the hall. Inspired by Principal Diane Beninato, this low-lift rotation gives teachers a chance to step into each other's classrooms, spark new ideas, and spotlight great teaching—without adding to their plates. It builds connection, professional growth, and a culture of celebration.



When to Use It:

This idea works all year long. Try launching it in:

- September to kick off a collaborative tone
- January to re-energize midyear
- Spring to finish strong and collect great ideas to carry forward

Aim for once a semester—or even once a quarter if your schedule allows. The key is consistency over perfection.



Key Benefits:

- Encourages professional growth by sharing real strategies and ideas from fellow teachers
- Strengthens relationships and trust across grade levels and teams
- Spotlights everyday excellence and builds a culture of recognition and celebration.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- Activity Steps & Directions
- Display Examples
- Templates & Printables



ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS

Here are the steps to try out this activity with your team throughout the school year.

1. Draw a Name

Teachers randomly draw a colleague's name each semester to determine which classroom they'll visit. This ensures they don't just pick their friends—and opens the door to surprising inspiration.

2. Take a 10-Minute Visit

Teachers schedule a 10-minute visit during the school day. The principal steps in to cover a duty—like recess or lunch—so it's not "one more thing."

3. Leave a Note

After the visit, the teacher fills out a quick "I Noticed..." card. For example:

- "When I was in your classroom, I noticed ____.
- It stood out because ____.
- Thanks for doing what's best for kids!"

4. Celebrate It!

The principal takes a photo of the note and sends it to both the observer and the teacher who was observed. Then, the note gets posted on a hallway bulletin board to showcase the great things happening across classrooms.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY ADD-ONS



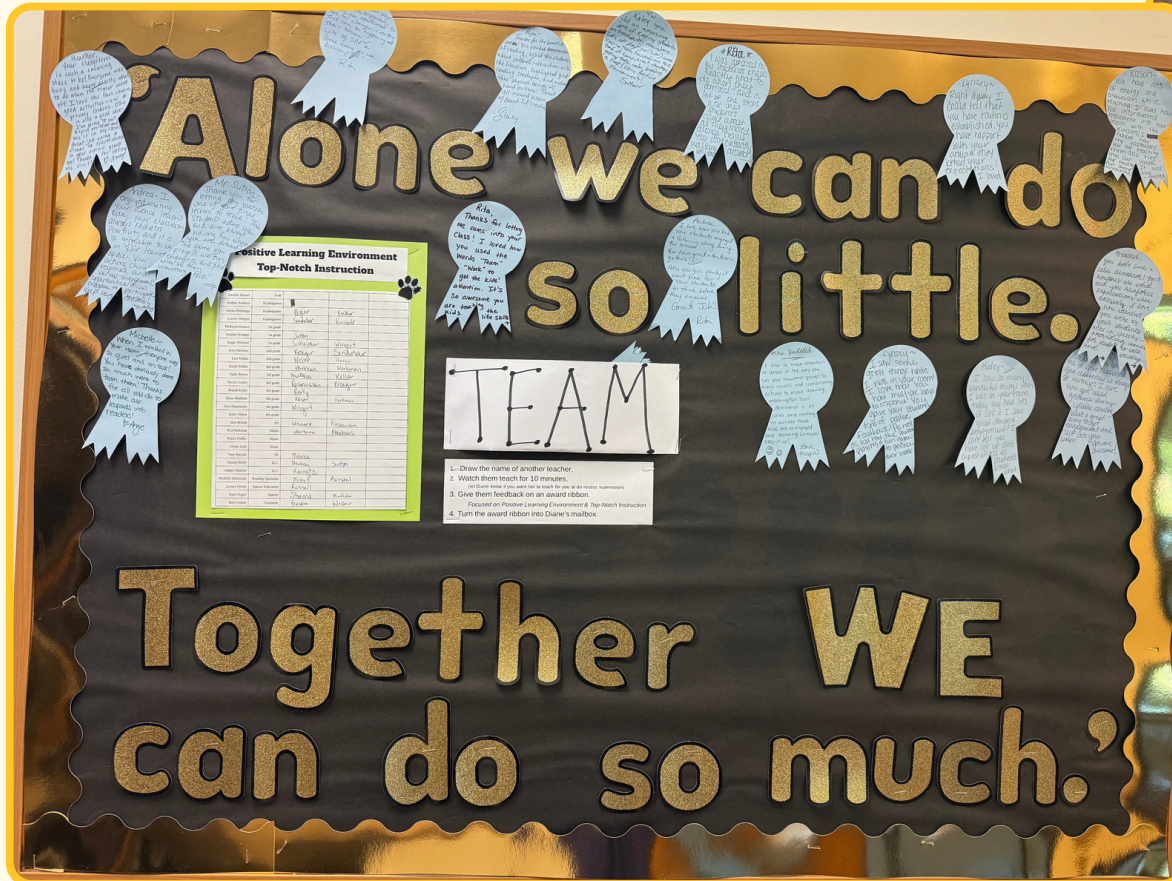
- **Tie It to Your School Theme:** Diane used a TEAM theme (Together Everyone Achieves More) and printed die-cut cards with TEAM symbols to make it fun and on-brand.
- **Newsletter Shout-Outs:** She also includes a staff spotlight in her "Cool Things from My Colleagues" section in her monthly professional learning newsletter. A great way to reinforce the celebration and share ideas schoolwide! Check out an example below!
- **Photo-Friendly:** Add a headshot or quick quote from the observing teacher if they're comfortable—this makes the bulletin board feel even more personal.



ALPACA PRO TIP:

Use your classroom rotation board to spark future peer learning days or invite teachers to lead mini-PD sessions based on what was observed. **Learning grows stronger when it's shared.**

DISPLAY EXAMPLES



NEWSLETTER EXAMPLE

Cool things from your Colleagues! see below



Shout Out Circle!

At the end of the day, Mrs. Kroeger's students give each other a shout out for positive things they did that day!



Fun with Fractions!

Mrs. Gaskin's kids explored with Fractions using Playdough!

**WHEN I WAS IN YOUR
CLASSROOM, I NOTICED...**

This stood out because...



**WHEN I WAS IN YOUR
CLASSROOM, I NOTICED...**

This stood out because...



**WHEN I WAS IN YOUR
CLASSROOM, I NOTICED...**

This stood out because...



**WHEN I WAS IN YOUR
CLASSROOM, I NOTICED...**

This stood out because...



Thanks for letting me visit!

Name:



→ When I was in your classroom, I noticed...

→ This stood out because...

→ I really enjoyed...

Thanks for letting me visit!

Name:



→ When I was in your classroom, I noticed...

→ This stood out because...

→ I really enjoyed...

The background is white and filled with colorful confetti consisting of small circles, triangles, and squiggly lines in shades of yellow, green, blue, and pink. A black string with colorful triangular flags (red, yellow, green, blue) hangs across the top of the image.

COOL THINGS FROM YOUR COLLEAGUES

— WE APPRECIATE ALL THAT YOU DO! —

TOGETHER EVERYONE ACHIEVES MORE!



**CHECK OUT THESE COOL
THINGS FROM YOUR
COLLEAGUES!**



COLLABORATION

BUILT BY EDUCATORS, FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

This resource was created in collaboration with dedicated educators and school leaders who brought their experience, insight, and heart to every step of the process.

Special thanks to Principal Diane Beninato, whose TEAM-themed coaching rotation inspired this idea. Diane brings energy, equity, and connection to everything she does—reminding us that Together Everyone Achieves More, especially when we lift each other up.



Diane Beninato

Principal at Fremont Public Schools
Fremont, NE

WE'RE SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE!

Thanks for downloading this resource—at [Alpaca](#), we're on a mission to **make school the happiest place to work**.



Tried an activity?

Send a photo or a staff testimonial to [our team](#), and we'll send you a coffee on us!



Got an idea brewing?

We love co-creating with school leaders—[drop us a line](#) with any resource ideas you'd love to see next.



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