

# **Making Good Choices**

**A Support Guide  
for the PACT Teaching Event**

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## A Support Guide for the PACT Teaching Event

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# Introduction

**T**his support guide can help you make good choices as you work on the PACT Teaching Event. By reading and reflecting on the questions and suggestions in Making Good Choices, you will have the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the Teaching Event and have some of your questions addressed. You can use this document to help you think about how you plan, instruct, assess, and reflect on student learning and academic language development.

Using the Teaching Event Handbook, the Teaching Event Rubrics, and Making Good Choices, you can collaborate with your teacher preparation instructors to discuss how the various aspects of the Teaching Event connect. The information and discourse will help solidify your understanding of the complexities of the Teaching Event and the complexities of teaching for improved student understanding.

Two types of evidence are collected for the Teaching Event: teaching artifacts and commentaries. Teaching artifacts include lesson plans, video clips of teaching and learning, student work samples, and daily reflections. Commentaries are written responses to a set of task-specific prompts. The commentaries both provide contextual information needed to understand the artifacts and describe your reasoning behind or analysis of the artifacts. The artifacts provide an authentic representation of the teaching and learning that is referenced in the commentaries.

This document is organized around the five tasks of the Teaching Event, each of which are scored with task-based rubrics. The tasks are:

1. Context for Learning
2. Planning
3. Instruction
4. Assessment
5. Reflection

An additional category addresses the Academic Language strand that runs across all the tasks and is scored separately. The last section addresses some general issues regarding the Teaching Event.

To fully understand the Teaching Event, you should read the Teaching Event Handbook, the Teaching Event Rubrics, and Making Good Choices. Together, these three documents will help you understand the requirements of the Teaching Event and how it will be scored, as well as deepen your understanding of teaching and learning in your certification area.



# Task 1. Context for Learning

## How much information should I convey about my students when describing my class?

When describing your class for Commentary Question 2, your response should give a sense of the class variety, significant subgroups of students with similar characteristics, and exceptional individuals. You do not need to describe each individual. Subgroups can be described within the identified areas in the question: a) academic development; b) language development (this includes academic language development—the fluency that students have with the formal language used in school settings); c) social development; and d) socio-economic and cultural context. Be sure that your descriptions are based on your observations of your students’ learning and developmental strengths and needs and not based on stereotypes associated with their ethnic, cultural, or socio-economic backgrounds.

Remember that the question asks you to focus on *key factors that influence your planning and teaching of this learning segment*. Try to concentrate on your students’ strengths and needs that are most relevant to the specific learning segment for the Teaching Event. In many cases, you will know more information about your students, but you should focus on the relevant issues that affect your planning, instruction, and assessment decisions for the learning segment being documented.

## What is the difference between English learners and students who are proficient English speakers?

On the Context for Learning form, you are asked to identify both how many students are English learners and how many students are proficient English speakers. “English learners” refers to second language learners who are not yet fluent in English. In some cases the rest of the students in your class will be proficient English speakers.

However, some students are native English speakers and speak dialects of English, not the academic English used in classrooms, and you do not consider them proficient in academic English. In these cases, the number of English learners plus the number of proficient English speakers will not add up to the total number of students in the classroom.

# Task 2. Planning

## **How do I select the central focus/big ideas, student content standards, and learning objectives for the Teaching Event?**

The learning segment selected for the Teaching Event is defined by a central instructional focus. To have a central focus, the standards, learning objectives, learning tasks, and assessments should be related to an identifiable theme, essential question, or topic within the curriculum. The central focus of the learning segment that you select should take into account prior assessment of your students and knowledge of your students' development, backgrounds, interests, and learning levels that might further influence students' thinking and learning.

In identifying the central focus of the learning segment, you should also consider various dimensions of knowledge that you expect your students to learn. In every content area, different types of knowledge constitute dimensions of the curriculum. These include more basic types of knowledge (e.g., facts, skills, conventions) and higher order knowledge or thinking skills (such as strategies for interpreting or reasoning from facts or evidence, synthesizing ideas, strategies for evaluating work). You will want to seek a balance of these dimensions of knowledge in your planning.

## **ELEMENTARY LITERACY ONLY**

Your Teaching Event should focus on literacy elements. While literacy instruction can be integrated with content area instruction, only the teaching and learning related to literacy will be documented and scored.

## **How should I select the appropriate state student content standards for my Teaching Event?**

You are asked to identify the state student content standards that you are addressing in the learning segment. Many student content standards will be somewhat related to student learning tasks within the learning segment. However, only a few will be strongly represented in the learning segment and be the focus of instruction as well. Only list the student standards that represent the student learning which you expect to improve during the learning segment.

## **Why is attention to my students' backgrounds, interests, and needs important when planning my lessons?**

You are expected to plan your lessons with consideration of your students' backgrounds, interests, and needs (see Planning Commentary question 3). In other words, your instruction and assessment plans should be tailored to the students in your classroom and not planned generically. Most classrooms are a heterogeneous mix of students who

have a variety of backgrounds, language proficiencies, learning needs, and interests. Planning for student learning then requires the teacher to take these aspects of their students into consideration. In your Teaching Event, you should be specific about how your knowledge of your students informed the lesson plans, such as the choice of text or materials used in a lesson, how groups were formed or structured, using student learning or experiences (in or out of school) as a resource, or structuring new learning to take advantage of specific student strengths.

Many teachers plan lessons that are from published curriculum guides or that have become standard to teach in a particular school or department. If this is the case, your plans should also reflect how you selected curriculum materials with your students' backgrounds and needs in mind, how you adapted a lesson to meet your students' learning needs, or how you made accommodations for particular students to allow them access to the selected curricular materials. As you think more deeply about addressing your students' backgrounds, interests, and needs when planning your lessons, you may choose to differentiate instruction, or plan for instruction to address the different student needs. You may plan to address multiple needs simultaneously with scaffolding techniques or additional support for students who need it.

### **What kinds of assessments should I plan for the Teaching Event?**

The assessments for your selected learning segment should be aligned with both your central focus/big ideas and with student standards. They should provide opportunities for students to show some depth of understanding with respect to your learning objectives. In designing and planning for assessments, you should be sure to consider both productive (speaking, writing, drawing, etc.) and receptive (listening, reading, viewing, etc.) ways of monitoring student understanding. It is essential that the criteria you create to evaluate student work are also connected to the central focus/big ideas, student content standards, and learning objectives of the learning segment.

You will plan for both formal and informal assessments during the learning segment. Formal assessments usually require students to produce a product or complete a specific task that will be evaluated. These are typically structured and students know they are being assessed. Informal assessments are typically conducted by the teacher as part of ongoing instruction in the classroom, through discussions and consultations with students. Informal assessments typically allow the teacher to collect information quickly and efficiently to guide immediate next steps of instruction.

When discussing your assessment plans, whether formal or informal, you should be clear about the criteria you are looking for in the students' performance. For example, if the informal assessment is to question small groups while they are engaged in a planned activity, you should know what you are listening for in the students' conversation and responses with respect to the learning goals for the lesson. Remember that your assessments can be modified as you progress through the teaching event. You

are expected to reflect during and after each lesson and take the assessment information you are collecting from your students into account for planning or modifying your plans for the next steps of instruction.

### **How detailed should my lesson plans be?**

You will submit lesson plans only for the learning segment documented in the teaching event. Using the optional Lesson Plan Template in Task 2 or your program's own suggested template, the plans should provide enough detail so that educators reading your overview can determine the sequence and progression of the learning objectives, determine what you are assessing and the means by which you plan to assess your students, the specific instructional strategies you have planned, and how they will be implemented.

If you plan to make any modifications for particular students or groups of students, these should be noted in your planning. You will also attach all instructional materials, including class handouts, readings from a textbook or other source, overheads, assessments (including homework), and informal and formal assessment tools (including evaluation criteria) used during the learning segment. These instructional materials will help communicate details of your plans.

### **What role do daily reflections play in my teaching and in the Teaching Event?**

The expectation is that you reflect on your students' progress toward the learning objectives you have set and that you make appropriate adjustments to your planned instruction to help move them further toward those learning objectives. While we understand that you may create the plans for your learning segment in advance, the daily reflections are meant to provide you with the opportunity to formatively assess what is happening in the teaching and learning interactions on a daily basis so you can make adjustments as you go.

The daily reflections are likely to be more meaningful to your teaching and your planning process if you complete them the same day that the lesson is taught. When completed the same day of the lesson, reflections can inform how you will teach the next lesson. Therefore, it is important to write your reflections as soon as possible after each lesson. Your reflections do not have to be in a polished essay format. You can respond to the two reflection prompts in the form of notes of what you observed, explanations of what you observed, or questions to be explored. The reflections should include enough detail about what you observed and your conclusions or questions to show that you are attempting to understand what and how students are learning and how that learning connects to your instructional strategies.

Please note that Daily Reflections are to be submitted with Task 5. Reflection and will primarily be scored using the rubrics for Task 5.

## **PLANNING : HOW WILL MY RESPONSE BE SCORED?**

Guiding questions identify what assessors consider to be the most critical dimensions to be scored for each task. The scoring rubrics for the planning task include three guiding questions. For each question, the assessors will assign a score level. The level descriptors are based on candidate performance during the pilot years. Please refer to the Teaching Event rubrics for a full description of the scoring process and scoring criteria.

### **Guiding Question 1: How do the plans structure student learning of [the discipline-specific focus of the learning segment]?**

The assessors will examine your lesson planning and your planned assessment strategies. Assessors will evaluate how your planning addresses the multiple dimensions of your content area in relation to your central focus. Assessors will also judge the degree to which the lessons, learning tasks, and assessments you plan are designed to progressively build understanding of the central focus of the learning segment. They will take into account the sequencing of the learning tasks; the conceptual development represented; and the links that are made between learning facts, conventions, or skills and comprehension, reasoning, or problem solving.

### **Guiding Question 2: How do the plans make the curriculum accessible to the students in the class?**

The assessors will examine your curriculum planning in light of your description of the learning context, including your knowledge of your students and the summary of important factors related to your students' learning. As they judge how you have made the curriculum accessible to the students in your particular class, the assessors will look at the accuracy of the content of your lessons and how your planning reflects your knowledge of your students' experiential backgrounds, prior knowledge, and learning needs.

### **Guiding Question 3: What opportunities do students have to demonstrate their understanding of the standards and learning objectives?**

The assessors will examine your lesson planning and your planned assessment strategies. The assessors will focus on several dimensions: 1) the match between your learning objectives, your instruction, and the planned assessment (Are you assessing students on the identified objectives? Have students had an opportunity to learn what is assessed?); 2) the depth of understanding or skill with respect to the standards and learning objectives that students are expected to demonstrate on the assessments; 3) the use of productive and receptive modalities to determine student understanding; and 4) accommodations for special needs students.



## PAUSE FOR SELF-ASSESSMENT (OPTIONAL): PLANNING

After you have taught your learning segment and completed a draft of your Planning Section of the Teaching Event, reflect on your planning processes by answering the following questions. You may also want to share your responses with your supervisor or a peer.

1. How does your knowledge of your students' learning and development strengths and needs specifically connect to your planning for instruction and assessment?

2. Looking across the variety of assessments that you included in your learning segment plan, what learning objectives were you assessing in each of the assessments? How well do your assessments align with the learning objectives you set for the learning segment?

3. What features of your instructional practice do you discuss in your daily reflection? How do your daily reflections show your attention to student learning and their progress toward the learning objective you set for them?

## Task 3. Instruction

### **Why do I submit video clip(s) instead of a videotape of a complete lesson?**

The video clip(s) represent critically important teaching and learning tasks in the content area. Sometimes these occur within a single lesson and sometimes they do not. Pilot test results suggest that the length of the video is more than sufficient for scorers to identify patterns in the way that you work with and respond to students.

### **How do I select my video clip(s) to show active engagement of students in their own understanding of the concepts, skills, and/or processes related to the learning objectives?**

The focus of this task is to show how you structure learning activities that engage students in developing their own understandings of the content and how you further your students' knowledge and skills by actively monitoring their understanding while teaching. The video should feature instruction where you interact with students or students interact with each other and you have an opportunity to respond to student questions, concerns, or needs.

The video that you select should clearly show student engagement in the learning activities of the lesson. (The individual voices of students as they are working on a task or with each other should also be audible.) The work the students are doing should be complex, showing student thinking, analysis, and judgment. If your students are not accustomed to engaging in these kinds of interactions, you should point out how you are supporting them in developing these skills. Lessons that require students to only focus on recall of facts or information or to practice a set of narrow skills, conventions, or procedures are not appropriate choices for the Teaching Event video.

### **FOR ELEMENTARY LITERACY ONLY**

If you are featuring integrated instruction, make sure the focus of each clip is on literacy learning, not content learning with no connection to literacy. For example, your focus could be on understanding the purpose and structure of parts of a lab report if you are integrating with science or it could be on reading a history/social science textbook for information if you are integrating with social studies. Although you have content objectives as well as literacy objectives for the integrated instruction, for purposes of this assessment, you will focus on the literacy instruction and learning objectives. Understanding of concepts in the content discipline will only be addressed in the Teaching Event as a context for understanding and demonstrating literacy skills and strategies.

## **FOR SCIENCE ONLY**

For the Science Teaching Event, you will select two video clips that total up to 20 minutes. The first clip should illustrate how you facilitate your students' engagement in meaningful scientific thinking while they are conducting a scientific inquiry. This should include data collection (quantitative and/or qualitative) through empirical investigation or simulation activities. The second clip should illustrate how you actively engage students in analyzing, interpreting, and synthesizing the results of that investigation. This can include any form of data analysis that requires finding patterns in the data or observations. Together, these video selections should show how you engage students in doing science.

## **FOR WORLD LANGUAGES AND ART ONLY**

You will select two (World Languages) or three (Art) video clips with specified foci and maximum lengths. The foci were chosen to reflect teaching and learning tasks that are considered to be critical to education in the discipline and that would occur frequently during your student teaching assignment.

## **FOR ELEMENTARY LITERACY, ELEMENTARY MATHEMATICS, PHYSICAL EDUCATION, MUSIC, AND MATHEMATICS ONLY**

You have the option of submitting either one continuous video clip or two unedited clips that total up to 15 minutes (20 minutes, for single subject mathematics credential candidates and music). You may choose to submit two video clips when a lot of irrelevant footage connects two clips of interest or you want to show two types of interactions that occur at different points in time or in different lessons. Examples of when this might happen include two points during a class discussion that illustrate students engaging with different ideas; highlighting your interaction with two different groups of students that do not happen sequentially on the video; or when you want to show the difference between guided practice and independent practice in your classroom.

### **What are routines and working structures in the classroom?**

Routines and working structures include any regular classroom norms or expectations that guide teacher and student behavior. These may include, for example, group work roles, class discussion norms, behavior norms, designated classroom spaces for particular kinds of activities, or strategies for efficient paper-handling in the classroom. Some of these routines or working structures might have been established early in the school year by your cooperating teacher, and some may be

specific to a task, activity, or unit of instruction. Many student teachers may implement new routines or working structures for the class when they assume the full teaching responsibility for the class (e.g., try new group work structures or different learning tasks than the cooperating teacher). The commentary offers you an opportunity to tell the assessors what routines or working structures are new to the students (if any) and how you prepared the students to work within these structures.

### **How do I show that I am monitoring student learning?**

In the commentary, you are asked to describe your monitoring strategies. The video should show how you respond to student questions, concerns, or needs. You can draw upon any of the interactions in the video to highlight how you listen to students and respond in such a way that you are supporting them and building on their thinking and ideas—or how you informally assess students as part of the ongoing instruction. You may also provide any additional information about your students that will help an assessor understand and interpret the monitoring strategies seen in the video clip(s).

Your ability to show that you are monitoring student learning in the video selection may depend on the strategies you have chosen for engaging students in the learning process. Strategies that do not allow you to engage in discussion or conversation with students may limit your ability to demonstrate that you are monitoring the students' progress during instruction. For example, if you deliver a mini-lecture followed by a discussion during which you check for student understanding, you may want to describe the content of the mini-lecture and provide a video clip that focuses on how you checked student understanding of the content presented.

### **What role does the reflection play in the Instruction Task?**

The instruction task of the Teaching Event would not be complete without asking how your instruction leads to your next steps of planning for future instruction. The Instruction Commentary includes a reflection question:

*Commentary Question 6.* Reflect on the learning that resulted from the experiences featured in the video clip(s). Explain how, in your subsequent planning and teaching, successes were built upon and missed opportunities were addressed.

You may have also addressed this question to some degree in your daily reflections. You do not need to be repetitive in your response to this question. If your response is very similar to your daily reflection, refer the assessors to the daily reflection

response. Your response to this question will primarily be scored using the rubrics for the Task 5. Reflection.

## **INSTRUCTION: HOW WILL MY RESPONSE BE SCORED?**

The scoring rubrics for the instruction task include two guiding questions. For each question, the assessors will assign a score level. Please refer to the Teaching Event rubrics for a full description of the scoring process and scoring criteria.

### **GQ4: How does the candidate actively engage students in their own understanding of [the discipline-specific focus for the video clip(s)]?**

The assessors will examine the video and the response to the commentary questions to determine not only the degree of intellectual engagement among the students in your class, but also the strategies that you used to enable the students with varying learning needs to engage in the learning tasks. For this rubric, engagement does not mean that the students are busy and participating in tasks. There must be evidence that the students are intellectually engaged—they are thinking, reasoning, or analyzing.

### **GQ5: How does the candidate monitor student understanding during instruction and respond to student questions, comments, and needs?**

The assessors will examine the evidence from the video and the written commentary to determine how your instructional technique and interactions with students allow the students opportunities to respond to prompts, questions, or activities in ways that require them to think and reason. The assessors will also evaluate how your responses to students help guide students' understanding by supporting their thinking and building on their developing ideas. "Reasonable attempts" will account for the fact that you are still in the early stages of learning how to use different teaching strategies effectively.

## **PAUSE FOR SELF-ASSESSMENT (OPTIONAL): INSTRUCTION**

After you have taught your learning segment and completed a draft of your Instruction section of the Teaching Event, reflect on your instruction by answering the following questions. You may also want to share your responses with your supervisor or a peer.

1. What evidence in the video clip(s) demonstrates that students were intellectually engaged in the learning tasks?

2. During your video clip(s), do your students have enough opportunity to contribute their ideas to allow you to show that you can monitor their thinking and understanding? Do your contributions show how you are directing or guiding student learning?

3. What evidence can assessors see in your video and your commentary that show that your classroom is a productive and supportive learning environment for your students?

# Task 4. Assessment

## What kind of student assessment should I choose for the Teaching Event?

You are expected to analyze your students' thinking and learning in this task—not just whether they know a set of important facts or essential vocabulary terms. In order to do analyze thinking and learning, the assessment you choose should allow the students to demonstrate their thinking in some way. You probably learn less about what your students are thinking and learning from multiple choice questions or single word response questions than from open-ended questions, writing samples, or other more complex assessments. For the purposes of the assessment analysis in the Teaching Event, an assessment that allows students to demonstrate their thinking is a more appropriate choice.

The assessment you choose to analyze for the Teaching Event should be tightly linked to the central focus/big ideas, student content standards, and learning objectives for the Teaching Event and provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate an understanding of those standards/objectives. For example, if your learning objectives are linked to helping students develop multiple interpretations of a big idea, then avoid an assessment that only allows students to show basic comprehension or use mechanical, procedural skills. While choosing the assessment to analyze, ask yourself, “Does this student work help me understand how and what my students are learning with regard to the standards/objectives of the learning segment?” The assessment you choose may be formal or informal, but it needs to result in evidence of student learning for each student.

## What are evaluative criteria?

Evaluative criteria make clear to the teacher (and ideally to the students) what features or qualities of the work will be assessed, for example, the accuracy of student's responses; quality of the communication; originality or creativity of the students' ideas; where the students are in their conceptual development for a particular idea; or the mechanics of doing a task. Evaluative criteria are often (but are not required to be) organized within a rubric that identifies the particular feature of the work that will be assessed and the various levels of performance that the teacher might expect from the students (e.g., from beginning levels to proficient levels to accomplished levels). The following examples provide a sense of what some evaluative criteria might include.

## ELEMENTARY LITERACY

The teacher observes students writing/illustrating stories about animals during writer's workshop. Evaluative criteria might include students' use of resources in the room to

support correct spelling of sight words; students' use of phonetic (best guess) spelling; or students' use of story frame (BME, or Character, setting, plot).

## SCIENCE

Students complete a lab and write up their hypotheses, observations, data, and interpretations. The teacher wants to assess students' 1) understanding of science concepts on which the lab is based; 2) ability to communicate in technical and scientific writing; and 3) accuracy of data analysis and interpretation.

For the Teaching Event, the evaluative criteria for the selected assessment should be made explicit to the assessor (and ideally the criteria have been made explicit to the students whose work will be judged). You are asked to analyze the student work samples and to discuss the students' thinking and understanding with regard to your evaluative criteria. In order to discuss the variety of student performances, your evaluative criteria cannot be too narrow in scope (i.e., solely evaluating students on whether they have correct responses or not). There are certainly times when assessment designs in which evaluating correct responses are necessary and useful to support student learning. However, for this task, the analysis calls for a more fine-grained analysis of student thinking than can usually be determined by right/wrong responses alone.

### **How do I analyze the variety of student performances on the assessment?**

Keeping your learning objectives and evaluative criteria in mind, describe how your students performed. You can describe student performances by discussing each evaluative criteria in turn and summarizing the assessment results. You can also consider particular subgroups of students (e.g., English learners; students with special needs; student who think abstractly; students who struggle with writing assignments; or students who organize ideas well) and describe their performances on the assessment task. When reviewing the whole class, you might look for common errors or patterns in the student responses. Your analysis may reveal partial understandings that students have. A focus on partial understandings requires seeing through the distraction of errors to allow you to identify what students did understand as well as what they still need to work on.

### **If I choose to use the summary of student learning chart provided for the Assessment Task, how should I use it?**

The optional chart provided in the Assessment Task is designed to help you disaggregate your students' performance and answer Assessment Commentary questions 3 and 4. You should decide in advance of giving the assessment what your

standard of performance is for the task—what do you want students to know and be able to do in this assessment task? In other words, what would a solid performance on the assessment look like? Define the evaluative criteria on the chart. After assessing

the class work, note down the names of students or the number of students who met your expected standard for each of the criteria, as well as those whose performance was below the standard and above the standard. You may not have students in all categories of the chart. Also, a student's performance may vary across criteria, e.g., meeting the standard of performance for one criteria and being below or above the standard on others.

Based on the results in the summary table, you will be able to be specific about the students' collective performance on the various evaluative criteria for the assessment. The summary should also help you to be specific about the performance of particular students (or groups of students) with regard to the learning standards/objectives of the learning segment. When discussing misunderstandings or confusions, you may want to focus in on the students who performed below the standard and identify what they partially understand and what they still need to work on with regard to the learning standards/objectives.

### **How should I cite evidence from the student work samples?**

When discussing the performance of the students you have selected, it is important to make specific references to the work samples you are providing. The work samples illustrate the evidence that informs your conclusions about what you think the student has understood, what the student needs to improve, and any explanations you might offer about the student's performance. You may choose to point the reader to a particular part of the work sample (remember to label the work samples Student A, Student B, and Student C); quote written student work in your response; or identify a set of features that contribute to a holistic analysis of the work sample.

The following example shows how a teaching candidate summarized a student's performance based on a pre-lab write up in a science class. This is only an excerpt of the analysis of student performance and should not be considered as a complete analysis.

This sample exhibits Student A's developing abilities to make predictions and justify them with his understanding of the circulatory system. He indicates some understanding of the connection between oxygen need and heart rate, and he considers an activity's effect on oxygen levels in the blood suggesting a logical connection to the heart's changing pulse rate. He is more clearly displaying his thinking through words and exhibiting an understanding of cause and effect relationships. Student A's writing is still rather minimalist though, and it is unclear why he believes that less oxygen to the heart results in a slower pulse rate. Again, it is difficult to assess whether he has a

logical reasoning for this belief based in a misconception about the circulatory system or whether he simply has a “gut feeling” about it.

### **What does “next steps” mean?**

“Next steps” is about planning for the learning needs of *this* group of students based on the assessment information you have, *not* what you would do if you were to teach the learning segment again (which will be addressed in the reflection task of the Teaching Event). Now that you’ve analyzed the assessment, think about the information gained. When asked to discuss the “next steps” you would take with the students, you should discuss what you would do with the class or, if different, the two individual students based on your analysis of the class or individual student performances. For example, if you discover that some students struggle with one of your big ideas or even with an important and specific question, rather than moving ahead with your initial plans, what kinds of instructional changes/modifications/ adjustments should you make in order to better support student learning? These next steps may include feedback to students, a specific instructional activity, or other forms of re-teaching to support or extend continued learning of objectives, standards and/or the central focus for the learning segment.

### **ASSESSMENT: HOW WILL MY RESPONSE BE SCORED?**

The scoring rubrics for the assessment task include two guiding questions. For each question, the assessors will assign a score level. Please refer to the Teaching Event rubrics for a full description of the scoring process and scoring criteria.

#### **GQ6: How does the candidate demonstrate an understanding of student performance with respect to standards and learning objectives?**

The assessors will examine the evaluative criteria/rubric, sample student performances on your selected assessment and your commentary analysis. Assessors will consider how you analyze student performance in relationship to the learning objectives and evaluative criteria that you provide. The assessors will also examine how well you analyze the variety of student performances, with attention to the varying degree of understanding (including partial understandings) and attention to the patterns in student performance across the whole class and within subgroups. They will compare your analysis to the relevant student work samples to see how well the samples support your conclusions.

#### **GQ7: How does the candidate use the analysis of student learning to propose next steps in instruction?**

The assessors will examine your commentary analysis for your specific strategies for next steps in instruction. These strategies will be judged based on how well they are aligned with your assessment analysis. The assessors will assess how your proposal

of next steps demonstrates your understanding of your students' learning needs in relationship to the learning objectives and how they specifically address the needs of individual students, subgroups of students, and any whole class patterns.



# Task 5. Reflection

## **What might I address while discussing what I learned about my students as learners?**

Reflection Commentary Question 2 asks you to reflect on what you learned about your students as learners based on your experience teaching this learning segment. This question is prompting you to step back and look at your classroom as a collection of learners who each come with unique needs, styles, strengths, and weaknesses relative to the content taught during the learning segment. Based on the analysis that you have done in the Teaching Event, what are some of the overarching learning characteristics of your students that you now understand better? Some areas to consider might be:

- Common difficulties in terms of approaching learning tasks
- Differences in motivation or habits of mind
- Common misconceptions/misunderstandings
- Concepts/skills that are challenging to your students at this time and why this might be
- Early signs of movement toward understanding/mastery

## **How specific should I be about what I would do differently if I could re-teach my learning segment?**

You should help the assessor understand what you have learned about teaching the content of the learning segment based on your observation of how your students responded to the instructional strategies and materials and your analysis of student learning. Be specific about any changes you would make if you taught the learning segment over. If you would spend more time on one learning task, for example, which of the remaining learning tasks would you cut back and how? How would you use new strategies or materials? Stating that you would have needed more time to accomplish your planned agenda is not a sufficient response to this question.

You might consider some of the following aspects of planning and instruction as you write your reflection (this is not meant to be a complete or comprehensive list):

- Instructional strategies you selected
- How learning tasks were structured or sequenced
- Materials you used
- Explanations you provided, connections you helped your student to make among the ideas
- Questions that succeeded in helping students with particular tasks or concepts
- Questions that motivated student understanding
- Key moments in monitoring understanding of the whole class

- Starting points of your students compared to starting points of the curriculum

### **How specific do my reference to research and theory have to be?**

The expectation is that you ground your reflection in both your own observations and the theory and research about learning from courses in your teacher education program. You may draw upon specific theories of learning, group work, motivation, conceptions of the discipline you are teaching, classroom management, to name just a few areas. References do not have to have formal citations, but your references should allow the assessor to identify the line(s) of research or theories that are guiding your reflections. In addition, your discussion related to theory and research should be appropriate to the topic you are discussing and be accurate.

### **REFLECTION: HOW WILL MY RESPONSE BE SCORED?**

The scoring rubrics for the reflection task include two guiding questions. For each question, the assessors will assign a score level. Please refer to the Teaching Event rubrics for a full description of the scoring process and scoring criteria.

#### **GQ8: How does the candidate monitor student learning and make appropriate adjustments in instruction during the learning segment?**

The assessors will examine your daily reflections, your reflection on your instruction task, and your reflection commentary for evidence of how you monitor student learning in relationship to the objectives of the learning segment. They will also assess how your reflections help you to make adjustments and modifications to your teaching practices *during the learning segment* that reflect not only time management and generic strategies, but also the learning needs of students and specific support or instruction to meet those needs.

#### **GQ9: How does the candidate use research, theory, and reflections on teaching and learning to guide practice?**

The assessors will examine your reflection commentary for evidence of how you draw upon principles of theory and research to analyze your observations and to make decisions about improving your teaching practice. They will assess both the accuracy and the pertinence of the instructional ideas you have cited as they relate to your students and the evidence in the Teaching Event you have completed.

## PAUSE FOR SELF-ASSESSMENT (OPTIONAL): REFLECTION

After you have taught your learning segment and completed a draft of your Reflection section of the Teaching Event, think about your reflection by answering the following questions. You may also want to share your responses with your supervisor or a peer.

1. In your reflections, what do you find yourself focusing on with regard to your practice—what are the common themes?

2. Identify any big ideas in instruction from research or theory that connect to the common themes.

3. What role does student learning play in your reflections?

# The Academic Language Strand

## What is Academic Language?

Academic language is the language needed by students to understand and communicate in the academic disciplines. Academic language includes such things as specialized vocabulary, conventional text structures within a field (e.g., essays, lab reports) and other language related activities typical of classrooms, (e.g., expressing disagreement, discussing an issues, asking for clarification. Academic language includes both productive and receptive modalities. One of your goals for the learning segment should be to further develop your students' academic language abilities. This means that your learning objectives should focus on language as well as on content. You can and should communicate content through means other than language, e.g., physical models, visuals, demonstrations. However, you should also develop your students' abilities to produce and understand oral and written texts typical in your subject area as well as to engage in language-based tasks.

## What are language demands of a learning task (see especially the Task 2: Planning)?

Language demands of a learning task include any of the receptive language skills (e.g., listening, reading) or the productive language skills (e.g., speaking, writing) needed by the student in order to engage in and complete the task successfully. Language demands are so embedded in instructional activities that you may take many for granted. When identifying the language demands of your planned lessons and assessments, consider everything that the students have to do to engage in the communication related to the activity: listen to directions, read a piece of text, answer a question out loud, prepare a presentation, write a summary, respond to written questions, research a topic, talk within a small group of peers. All of these common activities create a demand for language reception or language production.

Some language demands are related to text types, which have specific conventions with respect to format, expected content, tone, common grammatical structures (e.g., if..., then...), etc. The language demands of other tasks are not as predictable, and may vary depending on the situation, e.g., participating in a discussion or asking a question. All students, not only English Learners, have productive and receptive language development needs. The discussion of language development should address your whole class, including English Learners, speakers of varieties of English, and other native English speakers.

## What does developing academic language mean?

Just as students come to school or a particular classroom with some prior knowledge and background in the content of the subject matter, they also come with some skills in communicating effectively in the academic environment or that content area. And just as part of the teacher's responsibility is to help the students further develop their

understandings and skills in the content of the subject matter, they also have to help students develop their skills in using and understanding the oral discourse, the text types, and the subject-specific vocabulary that are typical in the particular content area. Teachers may use a variety of methods and strategies to both explicitly teach students the conventions of academic language in the content area and to help them incorporate them in their everyday classroom usage of language. For example, a social studies teacher may highly scaffold the process of constructing an argument based on historical evidence, how to communicate a thesis in an essay, or how to debate a political point of view. Or an elementary mathematics teacher might help students understand the conventions expected for showing their problem-solving work, how to explain alternative solutions to a problem, or how to interpret mathematical symbols.

For text types, it is important to make the conventions explicit, often providing graphic organizers when students are first learning how to produce the text type. For less predictable language tasks, students need to understand the nature of the task and the range of possible responses and associated language. When students are just learning to use a particular form of academic language, they will need more scaffolding and support. For example, an English teacher trying to develop students' abilities to follow up on a student comment might invite students to brainstorm different types of responses (e.g., agreement with elaboration, agreement with qualification, disagreement) together with some typical sentence starters or grammatical structures for each type of response.

### **DEVELOPING ACADEMIC LANGUAGE: HOW WILL MY RESPONSE BE SCORED?**

The scoring rubric for the Academic Language strand includes two guiding questions. For each question, assessors will assign a score level. Please refer to the Teaching Event rubrics for a full description of the scoring process and scoring criteria.

#### **GQ10: How does the candidate describe student language development in relation to the language demands of the learning tasks and assessment?**

The assessors will examine the five tasks of your Teaching Event for evidence of how you identify language demands of the learning tasks and assessments you chose and how you describe student strengths and needs relative to those demands.

#### **GQ11: How do the candidate's planning, instruction, and assessment support academic language development?**

The assessors will look for evidence of how you plan to support your supports to become more proficient in the skills required by the language demands of the learning and assessment tasks you chose. Supporting students' academic language development can take on many different forms, but assessors will look specifically for your strategies to allow all students access to the core content of the curriculum with specific attention to scaffolding processes that are designed to help a student become more proficient with language and text types used in the content areas.

## PAUSE FOR SELF-ASSESSMENT (OPTIONAL): ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

After you have taught your learning segment for the Teaching Event, reflect on the role that development of academic language played in your planning, instruction, and assessment by answering the following questions. You may also want to share your responses with your supervisor or a peer.

1. How did your plans help students develop their academic language abilities?

2. How did your assessments help you distinguish between students' academic language development and their content understandings?

3. How were your learning and assessments tasks appropriate for the variety of language development needs of your students?

# General Issues

## Time Management

- Read through all of the materials in the Teaching Event Handbook, the Teaching Event Rubrics, and Making Good Choices. It is important to understand the whole Teaching Event before you begin.
- Begin planning for your Teaching Event as soon as possible. Do not procrastinate.
- Work with your cooperating teacher to find the appropriate time for you to independently teach the learning segment for the Teaching Event.
- Plan for videotaping your classroom. Plan time to find the appropriate equipment, to do microphone and sound checks on your video, and have an alternate date in case of potential problems with the filming (lack of sound, poor videographer, fire alarm in the middle of the perfect lesson).
- Reflect daily on your teaching. This will set you into the habit of systematically thinking about your practice and later help you process the Teaching Event.
- Plan ample time for the written commentaries and reflections. Teaching Events that are rushed may not reflect one's best teaching.
- Plan time for peer review and advice on your Teaching Event. Find a peer or other educator to edit and respond to your written commentaries. This can be very helpful in clarifying your meanings and getting deeper into your analysis.

## Videotaping Reminders

- A video clip should be continuous and unedited, with no interruption in the events. If you are required to submit more than one clip, they both should be unedited.
- Both you and your students should be visible and clearly heard on video submitted.
- For “Procedures for Classroom Videotaping” visit the PACT website at <http://www.pacttpa.org/te/>

## Writing Style

- Address each of the Commentary Questions for each of the Tasks in Teaching Event.
- Provide specific examples to support your ideas. For example, if you suggest that most of the students were able to interpret a big idea; provide concrete examples in terms of student written or oral commentary that demonstrates this.
- Use simple, straightforward prose.
- Move beyond summarizing your classroom practice and show that you understand student learning and that you're able to think critically and analytically about it.
- Let your own voice come through in your writing.



# Notes

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