

## PPAT® Assessment

### Library of Examples – Science

#### Task 4, Step 3, Textbox 4.3.1: Understanding the Two Focus Students

Below are two examples of written responses to Textbox 4.3.1 as excerpted from the portfolios of two different candidates. The candidate responses were not corrected or changed from what was submitted. One response was scored at the Met/Exceeded Standards Level and the other response was scored at the Does Not Meet/Partially Met Standards Level. This information is being provided for illustrative purposes only. These excerpts are not templates for you to use to guarantee a successful score. Rather, they are examples that you can use for comparison purposes to see the kinds of evidence that you may need to add to your own work.

**The work you submit as part of your response to each task must be yours and yours alone.** Your written commentaries, the student work and other artifacts you submit, and your video recordings must all feature teaching that you did and work that you supervised.

#### Guiding Prompts for Task 4, Textbox 4.3.1

##### Focus Student 1

- Identify Focus Student 1's learning strengths and challenges.
- What data did you use to establish a baseline to measure this student's growth?
- What evidence will you collect to show his or her progress toward the learning goal(s)?

##### Focus Student 2

- Identify Focus Student 2's learning strengths and challenges.
- What data did you use to establish a baseline to measure this student's growth?
- What evidence will you collect to show his or her progress toward the learning goal(s)?

#### Example 1: Met/Exceeded Standards Level

##### Focus Student 1

a. Focus Student 1's (FS1) strength lies within her intrinsic motivation to learn. When conversing with FS1, she often tells of how she wishes she could attend a private school to gain a better overall education. I am not concerned with FS1 in terms of learning material and keeping up in school. Additionally, other students enjoy FS1's company in class and get along well. FS1's main challenge lies in her origin; she is from an Asian-European family that mainly speaks Chinese and Spanish. English is FS1's third language and is still new to her. This makes it difficult for her to grasp concepts because she is an English Language Learner (ELL). Another challenge related directly to her trilingual status is being discouraged by her inability to grasp concepts as quickly as other students due to her linguistic barrier. Sometimes, the only way for her to understand is

to translate the information from English to Spanish. I chose this student as a focus student because there are many students who struggle due to a linguistic barrier. By making it common practice to focus in on these students, I will be better suited to help those with linguistic barriers.

b.The baseline data for FS1 will be the same as the other students in the class—that is, the True/False questions done prior to the discussion/lecture. For FS1, a Spanish translation of the questions were available because I was informally assessing her academic knowledge, not her linguistic knowledge. By doing so, I was able to accurately view how much FS1 knows and compare to the rest of the class. The students fell under one of three categories in the pre-assessment: Below-Level (6/10 score or lower), On-Level (7/10 or 8/10 score), and Above-Level (9/10 or 10/10 score). FS1 scored a 6/10 and was classified as Below-Level prior to the discussion/lecture. The categories of questions she struggled were derived from the True/False questions and included identifying misconceptions versus facts, equating cancer to many illnesses, and treatments for cancer.

c.The evidence that will be collected will come from two activities. The first will be the discussion questions placed throughout the slide presentation. The questions are meant to informally assess students over the information just covered. For example, a part of the presentation covers tumor suppressor/proto-oncogenes and their relation to cancer. Following the section, students encounter a discussion question asking them to "Explain the difference between tumor suppressor and proto-oncogenes in relation to cancer." With this information, I am able to regulate the speed of the lecture/discussion in real-time and view the consistent growth of students. The second piece of evidence will come from the exit ticket at the end of class. FS1 will have it modified to where she has the questions in Spanish, can make more grammatical errors without penalty, and can answer the questions in Spanish. The exit ticket will then be scored 1-10 based on a modified rubric (specifically for FS1) and compared to her pre-assessment score to view growth. In this case, FS1 scored 8/10 and was able to improve from the Below-Level category (6/10 score) to the On-Level category (8/10 score).

## Focus Student 2

a.Focus Student 2 (FS2) is a great student motivated by his passion to help others. This passion stems from the fact that his mother was diagnosed with an incurable illness at a young age. Within that fact lies his greatest strength—the self-created hunger to learn in order to help others. As a teacher, I am not worried about FS2's possible disengagement from the class or the possibility that he becomes discouraged due to the difficulty involved. Additionally, FS2 writes well and is able to clearly express his thoughts/learning through pen and paper. On the other hand, FS2's largest challenge is his inability to focus. During long lectures or periods of sitting, FS2 begins to lose focus and becomes too distracted to learn effectively. This is evident when FS2 begins to fidget, look around the room, or has a glaze over his eyes. Another challenge stemming from the first is the difficulty he has reading material when it is compact. In other words, the reading material needs to be at minimum double spaced for FS2 to read effectively. I chose FS2 as a focus student because if I can keep him focused and engaged, I can keep any other student focused and engaged for optimal learning.

b.The baseline date used for FS2 will be the same that is used for the other students. The only differences will be the modifications made to the True/False questions outlined below. The first modification is that FS2 will receive the questions in a larger font to help him focus in on the words when reading. The second modification is that the questions for FS2 will have more space in between in order to help him separate one question from another. The difficulty of the questions and the rubric will remain the same. In this case, FS2 scored an 8/10 and put him on the On-Level category described in the prompts above.

c.There will be two pieces of evidence collected to demonstrate progress towards the learning goals by FS2. The first piece of evidence will be from the discussion questions planted

throughout the slide presentation. These questions will provide informal information on whether FS2 can synthesize coherent answers from newly introduced information (progress towards goal) or whether FS2 needs assistance in integrating the novel knowledge. In totality, the discussion questions help me pace the classroom and focus in on topics that students are struggling with—especially FS2. The second piece of evidence will come from the exit ticket at the end of the class. The exit ticket questions cover the same categories presented in the True/False questions and will provide a direct view of growth. In this case, FS2 scored a 9/10 and was able to jump from the On-Level category (8/10) to the Above-Level category (9/10). When comparing the pre-assessment to the exit ticket, FS2 showed some progress towards the learning goals.

**Refer to the [Task 4 Rubric](#) for Textbox 4.3.1 and ask yourself:**

- Identify the evidence provided by the candidate about the learning strengths and challenges of each Focus Student and how each student's progress toward the learning goal(s) will be determined.
- What makes the evidence effective?

### **Example 2: Did Not Meet/Partially Met Standards Level**

Focus Student 1:

- a. Focus Student 1 is a top performing student who is able to consistently demonstrate mastery of learning goals and standards. However, she tends to become bored when she is not stimulated intellectually. This often leads to lack of attention and decreased assignment scores. In addressing this, she will need consistent engagement and stimulation via activities either in class or online.
- b. The baseline for this student was collected by the same timed IXL assessment as the other students. Because this standard is new to students, I wanted to see what they knew beforehand. The IXL assessment provides students with a score that is designed to give them the best possible information on their true understanding of a skill. For which I designated a score of 80 or higher proficient, and anything lower as not proficient. This student's score reflected that she was very close to proficient and that she possessed previous knowledge of the standard.
- c. A similar timed IXL assessment will be given after the lesson to determine student growth. The goal for this student is to obtain a minimum Score of 80, but I believe she will demonstrate mastery with a Score of 100 based on her baseline data. Using spatial visualization questions, which are like checkpoint questions, following each concept, I will be able to track her progress and understanding of concepts as we proceed through the lesson.

Focus Student 2:

- a. Focus Student 2 is an average performing student who demonstrates limited motivation and prefers to communicate with classmates during instruction rather than pay attention. This student also has a sub-grade reading level. Much like Focus Student 1, this student will need consistent engagement and stimulation via activities either in class or online. This student will also require lower reading level material to help them meet the learning goals.
- b. The baseline for this student was collected by the same timed IXL assessment as the other students. Because this standard is new to students, I wanted to see what they knew beforehand. The IXL assessment provides students with a score that is designed to give them the best possible information on their true understanding of a skill. For which I designated a score of 80 or higher proficient, and anything lower as not proficient. This student's score reflected that he possessed limited knowledge of the standard.
- c. A similar timed IXL assessment will be given after the lesson to determine student growth. The goal for all students is to obtain a minimum Score of 80. Using the same spatial visualization

questions, as with Focus Student 1, I will be able to track his progress and understanding of concepts as we proceed through the lesson.

**Refer to the [Task 4 Rubric](#) for Textbox 4.3.1 and ask yourself:**

- Identify the evidence provided by the candidate about the learning strengths and challenges of each Focus Student and how each student's progress toward the learning goal(s) will be determined.
- What makes the evidence cursory?

**Suggestions for Using These Examples**

After writing your own rough draft response to the guiding prompts, ask the question, "Which parts of these examples are closest to what I have written?" Then read the 4 levels of the matching rubric (labeled with the textbox number) and decide which best matches your response. Use this information as you revise your own written commentary.

Lastly, using your work and/or these examples as reference, consider what you believe would be appropriate artifacts for this textbox.

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