PPAT® Assessment

Library of Examples – Science

Task 2, Step 1, Textbox 2.1.3: The Two Focus Students

Below are two examples of written responses to Textbox 2.1.3 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 Prompt for Task 2, Textbox 2.1.3

a. Choose and describe two Focus Students who reflect different learning needs and for whom you will need to modify the assessment. Provide a rationale for selecting each of the students. Refer to them as Focus Student 1 and Focus Student 2 as you respond to the guiding prompts.

b. What data did you use to establish a baseline for growth for these two Focus Students?

c. Based on their specific learning needs, how will you modify the assessment for each of the two Focus Students? Provide a rationale for each decision.

Example 1: Met/Exceeded Standards Level

a. Focus Student 1 (FS1) is an intelligent and eager student, and conceptually understands most of the topics we discuss in class. Orally, he can satisfactorily explain the concepts we've discussed leading up to this lesson, including displacement, velocity, and acceleration, and is an active contributor to classroom discussions on such topics. But when it comes to deciphering text and word problems, he struggles to organize and execute on his own. These same challenges seemed to arise on the pre-assessment. FS1's IEP provides accommodations for dyslexia, including oral administration and extended time on assessments. But in a very energetic and vocal atmosphere, as this classroom is, those accommodations often succumb to the temptations of distractions and off-task behavior. I believe if we can eliminate the frustration of excess text and keep FS1 engaged in elaborating on his rather acute understanding of forces and motion, his performance will more accurately reflect his true comprehension. Focus Student 2 (FS2) struggles with solving word problems, but is either unwilling or unable to vocalize her lack of understanding. When I try to walk her through the step-by-step process of negotiating word problems, at times she can follow what I am doing, and at other times she becomes

frustrated and unable to tell me which step didn't make sense. I believe the disconnect is arising from not being able to identify variables by their SI units. Working one-on-one, if I cover up everything except a particular variable, "a 5N force is applied..." for example, she knows that F=5N. When I do not do that, she often struggles to identify and inventory these variables independently. I believe that if we can solidify an understanding of SI units and their associations with variables in the equations of motion, FS2 will be able to consistently solve word problems, and her achievement will motivate her to remain confident in ensuing lessons.

b. The data I used to establish a baseline for growth for both Focus Students was the same pre-assessment I administered to the whole class. In class discussions, both Focus Students were familiar with the concepts of Newton's Laws from previous years' classes, so I wanted to determine how they would perform on their own prior to modifications and differentiated instruction during lesson activities in order to more accurately identify which aspects (units, written explanations, mathematical calculations) the Focus Students struggled with, how I could facilitate their learning and achievement during lesson activities, and the modifications I could make to their assessments to better allow them to expand upon their understanding. As can be seen from their baseline data, both Focus Students exhibited significant room for growth. FS1 received 1/25 points. I noted an almost immediate frustration during his pre-assessment. A follow-up conversation revealed confusion began with the compact arrangement of unit values in the matching exercise, and focus deteriorated from there. FS2 received 8/25 points, with marked confusion on unit matching and F=m*a calculations. With this data, I will be looking for growth from FS1 in all areas once he is allowed to fully elaborate on his comprehension, and growth from FS2 in matching units and completing calculations after concentrating on these skills throughout lesson activities.

c. I will provide FS1 with two options for completing the assessment: 1) Oral administration during which I will record his responses verbatim; or 2) a modified assessment on which I will reduce the number of unit-variable matches from 6 to 3, increase font size and spacing of units, highlight pertinent variables and key words in word problems, and allow extended time to complete the assessment. In terms of long-term personal growth, I believe such choices will benefit FS1's mettle and self-efficacy. Oral administration will be available until he feels comfortable in conquering assessments solo. Should he possess the aplomb to complete this assessment on his own, reducing the number of matching questions, highlighting key words, and allowing extended time should alleviate commonly experienced frustrations for FS1, improve his focus and tenacity, and truly benefit his learning. FS2's confidence hinges on her ability to decipher word problems to identify known and unknown variables and where they fit into the equations. When it doesn't click, this lack of self-assurance tends to percolate through the rest of her work. In our one-on-one work during class she consistently solved F=m*a problems when I walked her through a stepwise process and reminded her of how units compared to those she was more familiar with. I will therefore modify her assessment by providing her with a reference box that compares SI units to their US customary equivalents, as well as a 5-step process for negotiating word problems (see FS2 completed assessment). These modifications do not fundamentally alter the nature of the assessment, nor the skills required to successfully complete it. With this structured support, I believe FS2 will be able complete her matching and calculations with more confidence, and her overall performance on the remainder of the assessment will improve as a result.

Refer to the Task 2 Rubric for Textbox 2.1.3 and ask yourself:

In the candidate's response, where is there evidence of the following?

- A description of Focus Student 1 and Focus Student 2
- The rationale for choosing Focus Student 1 and Focus Student 2
- A baseline for Focus Student 1 and Focus Student 2
- The modifications of the assessment for each focus student based on each focus student's particular needs
- A rationale for the modifications chosen for Focus Student 1 and Focus Student 2

Why is the candidate's analysis complete?

Example 2: Did Not Meet/Partially Met Standards Level

a. Focus Student 1 was chosen because they have consistently shown sufficient prior knowledge when starting each new unit. They know foundational vocabulary and concepts and are therefore quickly ready for more complex material. Focus Student 2 was chosen because they showed some evidence of prior knowledge, yet have a way to go to achieve the learning goals.

b. Focus Students 1 and 2 were given the same pre-assessment as the rest of the class to determine baseline growth. This told me where each of the Focus Students was in comparison to the rest of the class. The Focus Students each showed more understanding than the class as an average.

c. Focus Student 1 will be given more complex true or false questions and with higher-level vocabulary. They have shown their ability to quickly understand fundamentals and can grow further with more of a challenge. Focus Student 2 will be given slightly more in-depth true or false questions that use basic vocabulary. They have proved ready for a slight challenge.

Refer to the Task 2 Rubric for Textbox 2.1.3 and ask yourself:

In the candidate's response, where is there evidence of the following?

- A description of Focus Student 1 and Focus Student 2
- The rationale for choosing Focus Student 1 and Focus Student 2
- A baseline for Focus Student 1 and Focus Student 2
- The modifications of the assessment for each focus student based on each focus student's particular needs
- A rationale for the modifications chosen for Focus Student 1 and Focus Student 2

Why is the candidate's response tangential?

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.