

PPAT® Assessment

Library of Examples – Science

Task 3, Step 2, Textbox 3.2.1: Understanding Each of the Two Focus Students and Differentiating Instruction

Below are two examples of written responses to Textbox 3.2.1 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 Prompt for Task 3, Textbox 3.2.1

Focus Student 1:

- Identify Focus Student 1's learning strengths and challenges related to the learning goal(s) of the lesson.
- Describe how you will differentiate specific parts of your lesson plan to help Focus Student 1 meet the learning goal(s) of the lesson. Provide a rationale.
- What evidence will you collect to show the progress Focus Student 1 makes toward the learning goal(s)?

Focus Student 2:

- Identify Focus Student 2's learning strengths and challenges related to the learning goal(s) of the lesson.
- Describe how you will differentiate specific parts of your lesson plan to help Focus Student 2 meet the learning goal(s) of the lesson. Provide a rationale.
- What evidence will you collect to show the progress Focus Student 2 makes toward the learning goal(s)?

Example 1: Met/Exceeded Standards Level

- Focus Student one's greatest strength is determination, and consistent hard work. For this reason, I know I can trust this student to give me his best effort and utilize the resources provided. The major challenge is related to this student's difficulty with English, an issue which can be more difficult considering the language involved with bonding, so the student has used the wrong term to describe what he seems to understand. This creates

some additional challenges in making sure I am properly assessing how well he understands the concepts of valence electrons and how those form bonds. As we move into naming, it is important this student has a good understanding of the common ions which are formed, and in writing formula for compounds, because it will likely be difficult for him to grasp concepts involved with naming.

- b. The instructional strategy of lecturing and the related learning activity of taking Cornell notes will be modified for Focus Student one in order to make sure I am speaking slowly enough, clearly enough, and while using as low a vocabulary as possible, the last part of which I struggle with at times. This is done in order to try to make sure this student can focus on understanding the content rather than worrying about keeping up with the pace or what a particular word means. I provided the entire class with a video to view the concepts from another perspective. This video may be utilized by Focus Student 1 to give real life examples and explain them through the related electron transfer. I also provided different articles with lower reading levels to Focus Student 1, as well as a few other students, without telling them that was what I was doing in their groups. This should help mitigate Focus Student 1's issues with reading and allow him to focus on applying bonding to another example he can find on his own.
- c. By collecting baseline data for students I was able to provide Focus Student 1 with feedback as to what they need to learn to go into the lesson. By conducting a formal assessment using similar questions and the same rubric, I can compare the results from the formal assessment to the baseline data to see whether or not Focus Student 1 progressed toward his learning goals.
- a. Focus Student 2 is a mathematically minded individual and seems to find it easier to understand representations and models involving numbers than words. This student also has a limited attention span as well as a distaste for working with others. This student is able to conceptualize part of the concepts involved with bonding, but cannot put it together consistently because they lack some of the related knowledge of the periodic table that is a review, although we have had several efforts to try to keep them on pace. Furthermore, I will break the activities into reasonably smaller chunks to keep their attention better, which should hopefully have a positive effect on the class as a whole. While he doesn't really enjoy working with other students, working with others is a skill I feel is necessary for everyone, and in this class, we work together often, so this Focus Student will not get out of that. However, I will be sure to pay this student extra attention while doing group work to make sure he is being treated appropriately, and to encourage their contribution to the group.
- b. Focus Student 2 would benefit if I keep my lecture short, and additionally will be provided with an opportunity to develop a graphic organizer for the definitions of ionic and covalent bonds. I will provide an opportunity to work with this student in doing so by giving the whole class a period of time to re-word the definitions while I work with focus student two one-on-one for about three minutes. I also will provide the entire class with a video to view the concepts from another perspective. This video may be utilized by Focus Student 2 to give real life examples and explain them through the related electron transfer. Focus Student 2 has his material split into smaller chunks to hopefully keep his attention as long as possible, again without his knowledge of special attention. For this same reason, I will also try to engage this student and ask him questions as much as possible.

- c. By collecting baseline data for all of the students I was able to provide Focus Student 2 with feedback as to what he needs to learn to go into the lesson. By conducting a formal assessment using similar questions and the same rubric, I can compare the results from the formal assessment to the baseline data to see whether or not Focus Student 2 progressed towards his learning goals. Furthermore, contact with the Focus Student 2 throughout the class should provide strong evidence.

Refer to the [Task 3 Rubric](#) for Textbox 3.2.1 and ask yourself:

- Identify the evidence provided by the candidate about the learning strengths and challenges of each Focus Student.
- How does the candidate plan to differentiate the lesson plan for each Focus Student and evaluate each student's progress toward the learning goal(s)?
- Why is the analysis of the plan to differentiate instruction effective?

Example 2: Did Not Meet/Partially Met Standards Level

- a. Focus Student 1's learning strengths is the student is verbally strong and can understand basic information if it is verbally given. The student is challenged when it comes to reading and writing. During the lecture, the student is able to listen to the material and can grasp basic concepts, anything complex the student begins to struggle.
- b. To differentiate the instructional strategies and learning activities to keep Focus Student 1 engaged and facilitate her learning, I will present information slower during the lecture portion of the lesson. The lesson is constructed on what she already knows. Pairing Focus Student 1 with low level learners during discussion will help Focus Student 1 think on her background knowledge to construct onto the new content. The learning activities will be the same for everyone in the class.
- c. The evidence that will be collected to show Focus Student 1 is her quizzes. The student will be taking quizzes and this student will be able to explain any information that may need to be clarified verbally.
- a. Focus Student 2's learning strengths related to the learning goals of the lesson include their ability to take notes and able to grasp some complex ideas. The student's challenges include unable to stay focused during a lesson. The student is often distracted, although she hears the information, she often get confused on what term and concept goes with what because of being distractions.
- b. To differentiate the instructional strategies and learning activities to keep the Focus Student 2 engaged and facilitate her learning will be to present information slower during the lecture portion of the lesson. Even though the learning activities will be the same, the resources will be different. Focus Student 2 will receive the lower reading level articles and will have her Tablet to read the articles. Focus Student 2 will be able to research other sites if needed to be able to understand the information.
- c. The evidence that will be collected to show progress made towards the learning goals is the quizzes that are taken by all the students.

Refer to the [Task 3 Rubric](#) for Textbox 3.2.1 and ask yourself:

- Identify the evidence provided by the candidate about the learning strengths and challenges of each Focus Student.

- How does the candidate plan to differentiate the lesson plan for each Focus Student and evaluate each student’s progress toward the learning goal(s)?
- Why is the analysis of the plan to differentiate instruction ineffective?

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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