



Making Good Choices

Candidate Support Resource

Planning

Instruction

Assessment

*Analysis of
Teaching*

*Academic
Language*

Version 02

SCALE

Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, & Equity

MGC_v02

Copyright © 2019 Board of Trustees of the Leland Stanford Junior University. All rights reserved. The edTPA trademarks are owned by The Board of Trustees of the Leland Stanford Junior University. Use of the edTPA trademarks is permitted only pursuant to the terms of a written license agreement. This document was authored by the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity (SCALE) with design assistance from Evaluation Systems.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Getting Started.....	2
Planning Task 1: Planning for Instruction and Assessment	9
Instruction Task 2: Instructing and Engaging Students in Learning.....	18
Assessment Task 3: Assessing Student Learning	27

Introduction¹

This support guide will help you make good choices as you develop artifacts and commentaries for your edTPA assessment. This document is *not* a substitute for reading the handbook. Instead, it should be used as a reference where you can find supplementary advice for completing specific components of edTPA as needed.

On the pages that follow, each section of this document addresses **key decision points** that you will encounter as you complete your edTPA. Use the live links from the questions in the Key Decisions chart to locate the corresponding answers. **Bold text** provides specific directions to help guide your decision-making.

Overall, *Making Good Choices* examines edTPA tasks within an interactive cycle of planning, instruction, and assessment. This document will help you think about how to plan, instruct, assess, and reflect on student learning, not only for completing edTPA, but also for effective teaching into the future. We encourage you to discuss areas where you need additional support with your teacher preparation instructors and examine relevant *Making Good Choices* sections together.

¹ This version of *Making Good Choices* has been developed for all edTPA fields and replaces earlier versions posted on the edTPA.com and edtpa.aacte.org websites. However, candidates completing edTPA in Special Education and Elementary Education Task 4 are provided with another version of *Making Good Choices*, which addresses requirements in Special Education and Elementary Education Task 4 separately. Contact your faculty advisor for a copy of the *Making Good Choices in Special Education* or *Elementary Education* or go to edtpa.com. SCALE recognizes Nancy Casey and Ann Bullock for their contributions to *Making Good Choices* in 2014 and 2015, respectively.

Getting Started

Key Decisions

Planning Ahead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do I get started with my edTPA preparation?
Organizing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What evidence do I have to submit? • When should I discuss my Context for Learning, including students with specific learning needs? • How do I represent my thinking and teaching in writing?
Understanding the Rubrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do I understand the rubrics? • How do the commentary prompts align to rubrics?

Planning Ahead

How do I get started with my edTPA preparation?

Time management is critical to the successful completion of edTPA. Begin planning for your edTPA assessment as soon as possible. Do not procrastinate. Work steadily and regularly. Saving time for revisions and edits will allow you to represent your best thinking in your final portfolio.

Since it is important to understand the whole edTPA assessment before you begin, **read through the entire edTPA handbook and all of the support materials for your content area before you start working on your edTPA**, including any materials you may have been given by your preparation program. **The specific subject-area handbook that you will use is determined by your [state licensure requirements](#).** Once you have selected the edTPA handbook that fits your licensure needs, be sure that you understand the language of the rubrics so that you understand how your teaching will be assessed.

The three tasks that structure edTPA (Planning Task 1, Instruction Task 2, and Assessment Task 3) are connected together. Acquiring a complete understanding of the evidence that you need to submit in Tasks 2 and 3 will help guide you as you plan the learning segment for Planning Task 1. When reading through Instruction Task 2, make a note on what you must include in the video. When reading through Assessment Task 3, note the types of student learning that you will need to assess.

[Back to Getting Started Key Decisions Chart](#)

Organizing

What evidence do I have to submit?

For edTPA, you will submit artifacts (e.g., information about your Context for Learning, lesson plans, video clips, copies of assessments and materials for your lessons) and written commentaries. Response templates are provided as a structure for organizing your responses to the Context for Learning questions and the three task commentaries.²

When completing the commentary response templates, note that there are page limits. The handbook also specifies instances when supplemental information you may be directed to add to the end of commentaries (e.g., citations of materials from others, transcriptions of inaudible portions of videos, any required translation of materials from another language,³ copies of assessments analyzed) does not count toward those limits.

All of the requirements about what to submit (and information about the optional elements) are introduced in the Tasks Overview chart at the beginning of the handbook, and then specified in more detail in the Evidence Chart at the end of the handbook. Read the Evidence Chart and be sure that you understand the requirements and all necessary evidence you must submit before you start working on your edTPA. You may find it helpful to use the Evidence Chart as a checklist to ensure that you have submitted all necessary evidence according to the requirements, including artifact format (e.g., live hyperlinks to materials are not permitted). Portfolios with missing, inaccessible, or inappropriate evidence will receive condition codes (see the condition codes listed in the [Submission Requirements](#)).

[Back to Getting Started Key Decisions Chart](#)

When should I discuss my Context for Learning, including students with specific learning needs?

The Context for Learning artifact allows you to describe your school setting along with the particular features of your classroom. It informs scorers about the class you are teaching and the teaching environment along with knowledge about the learning needs of your students and their supports/accommodations.

In addition, you will be asked to consider the variety of learners in your class several times throughout the handbook—see boxed text below for an example. The boxed text is included to help call your attention to learners who might need different strategies/support to meet their needs **relative to the central focus of the learning segment**. The list included in the box is not exhaustive; you should consider all students with specific learning strengths and needs. As

² Three additional templates are provided for the Elementary Education Handbook for a total of seven templates for that subject area.

³ If you are submitting materials in a language other than English, see the [Submission Requirements](#) for more detailed translation requirements and guidelines. Requirements vary by subject area.

appropriate, you should also make connections back to the student needs identified in the Context for Learning Information artifact.

Consider the variety of learners in your class who may require different strategies/supports or accommodations/modifications to instruction or assessment. For example, students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or 504 plans, with specific language needs, needing greater challenge or support, who struggle with reading, or who are underperforming students or have gaps in academic knowledge.

[Back to Getting Started Key Decisions Chart](#)

How do I represent my thinking and teaching in writing?

Although the rubrics do not address the quality of your writing (and you will not be scored on errors in spelling, grammar, or syntax), you should be mindful that your written work reflects your thinking and your professionalism. Writing errors may change the meaning of your commentaries or cause it to become unclear, so proofreading is essential. **When writing your edTPA commentaries, consider the following guidelines:**

- **Note the originality requirements included within the edTPA Professional Standards and Submission Requirements.** As indicated in the subject-specific edTPA handbooks, you and your teacher preparation instructors can and should discuss how the various aspects of edTPA connect with each other and to your preparation coursework and field experiences, including the placement in which you complete your edTPA portfolio. However, the specific choices that go into the planning, instruction, and assessment tasks that are part of edTPA should solely reflect **your thinking, based upon your knowledge of pedagogy and your students' needs. All writing should be your own—edTPA uses software to detect plagiarism.**
 - Originality requirements apply to settings where co-teaching and collaborative planning may take place. Even if you are co-teaching, collaboratively planning with another candidate or your grade-level team, or in a context with a uniform, prescriptive curriculum,⁴ you must be the lead teacher for the lessons documented in the learning segment and submit original commentaries. You may choose to incorporate help from other classroom personnel during your learning segment (e.g., teacher's aides or parent helpers) but, again, you must be the lead teacher and these strategic decisions should be addressed in your commentaries. In your Context for Learning artifact, you will explain your placement setting and any features that influence your planning process. Your commentaries for each task must provide your own justification for planning decisions and analyses of your teaching and student learning.
 - Outside editing support of your official edTPA submission that includes direct revisions to the content of your writing is not permitted. Consult with your program leaders for guidelines for acceptable support while developing your edTPA materials.

⁴ See the "[Planning for Content Understandings](#)" section of this document for more information on how to address prescribed curricular requirements.

- **Respond to commentary prompts in either bulleted or narrative form.**
 - Page limits indicate the maximum number of allowable pages. Although you may write up to the maximum as needed, you may not need to reach that maximum in order to sufficiently complete your commentaries.
- **Make sure to respond to every part of every prompt.** Pay attention to conjunctions (“and”, “or”). When the prompts are bulleted, make sure to address each bullet point.
 - Incomplete, superficial, and unelaborated responses are not sufficient. Although there may be a few exceptions, answering a prompt in one or two sentences will not provide enough information for a reviewer to understand your intentions.
- **Pay attention to the verbs in the prompts.** When asked to “describe,” do that: tell about what you planned or did. When prompted to “explain,” include more detail, and give reasons for your decisions. “Justify” requires analysis; you must explain why you did what you did and include evidence to back up your response with supporting details.
- **Move beyond showcasing or summarizing your classroom practice.** Write your commentaries in a way that shows you understand how your students learn, and identify and analyze what you do to help them learn and the evidence of their learning. edTPA provides an opportunity to reflect on your beginning teaching practice and what you have learned by planning, instructing, and assessing student learning. **Perfect teaching is not expected.**
- **Provide specific, concrete examples to support your assertions.** Do not merely repeat a prompt or rubric language as your responses to commentary prompts—you must always include examples and evidence of **your** teaching. For example, if you state in a response to a prompt that most of the students were able to understand a concept, you should provide specific, concrete examples from your students’ written or oral work that demonstrate and support your assertions. You might point to a specific aspect of a student’s response on an essay, project, or other assessment. **In Instruction Task 2**, you will submit video evidence for your teaching. Use time stamps to direct a scorer’s attention to specific points of instruction and provide concrete evidence for your commentary statements. Time stamps can be approximate; they need not be accurate to the second.
- **You may find some prompts repetitive across tasks.** This “repetition” is intentional. Key prompt elements that appear across tasks represent threads that tie all the tasks together, for example, your knowledge of students or the central focus of the learning segment. Questions that appear to be similar are couched in terms of the task that you are completing. Therefore, when you encounter a prompt that seems similar to one you already answered, think about how the context in which the prompt appears might guide your response.

[Back to Getting Started Key Decisions Chart](#)

Understanding the Rubrics

How do I understand the rubrics?

Each edTPA task has five rubrics,⁵ and each rubric has five levels of scoring. As you work on responding to the commentary prompts, refer to the associated rubrics and read them again before and during your writing process. Carefully read the qualitative performance differences across levels found in **bold text** in each of the rubric descriptions. Pay attention to the **conjunctions** (“and”, “or”) in the descriptions so that you are sure to provide all of the information required. Be sure to review the Level 1 rubric descriptors carefully, as these point out particular issues to avoid.

If there are particular rubrics that you want to learn about in more depth, refer to the ***Understanding Rubric Level Progressions*** (URLP) resource for your subject area. This resource gives a detailed description of the differences in rubric levels and provides subject-specific examples of what evidence might look like on each level.

[Back to Getting Started Key Decisions Chart](#)

⁵ Classical Languages and World Language Tasks 1 and 3 have four rubrics, and Elementary Education Task 4 has only three.

Alignment of Rubrics and Commentary Prompts

In general, the rubrics and commentary prompts align as depicted in the charts below.

Planning Commentary & Rubrics

Rubric #	1	2	3	4	5
Commentary Prompt	1 LSP: 1a–b, 2	2 ETS: 2, 3b LSP: 2a, 3b–c	3	4	5

Instruction Commentary & Rubrics

Rubric #	6	7	8	9	10
Commentary Prompt	2 AGR: 2, 3	3 AGR: 4	4a EAL: 4a–b AGR: 5a	4b EAL: 4c AGR: 5b	5 AGR: 6

Assessment Commentary & Rubrics

Rubric #	11	12	13	14	15
Commentary Prompt	1	2b	2c	3	4

Key:

AGR – Agricultural Education

ETS – Educational Technology Specialist

EAL – English as an Additional Language

LSP – Literacy Specialist

The World Language and Classical Languages Handbooks have 13 rubrics because they address Academic Language differently than other handbooks.

Classical Languages/ World Language	Planning				Instruction					Assessment			
Rubric #	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Commentary Prompt	1	2	3	4	2	3	4a–b	4c	5	1	2b	2c	3

Note for all fields: Although particular commentary prompts align with certain rubrics, all of the required artifacts and commentary responses for each task are taken into account during the scoring process. For example, your lesson plans, assessments, instructional materials, and video are key artifacts in the scoring process that may provide relevant evidence for multiple rubrics. So while you will not find a rubric that “scores” these items in isolation, they all inform and are part of what will be used in evaluating your responses.

Planning Task 1: Planning for Instruction and Assessment

Key Decisions	
Planning For Content Understandings <i>RUBRIC 1⁶</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is my subject area emphasis? • How do I select the central focus, student content standards, and student learning objectives? • How do I develop a learning segment with a central focus? • What should I include in my lesson plans? • What if I have particular lessons that I am required to teach in a prescribed way or if my school or grade level has a standard curriculum?
Knowledge of Students <i>RUBRICS 2 & 3</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What information should I convey about my students when describing my class? • How do I support the assertions I make about my students and decisions I make regarding their learning needs? • How specific do my references to research and theory have to be?
Supporting Academic Language Development <i>RUBRIC 4</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do I identify the academic language demands of a learning task? • How do I plan instructional supports to help students use the identified language demands?
Planning Assessments <i>RUBRIC 5</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kinds of assessments should I choose for my edTPA learning segment? • How do I allow students with specific needs to demonstrate their learning?
Planning Task 1 Key Points	

⁶ **NOTE:** Rubric numbering differs throughout the tasks for Classical Languages and World Language, which have only 13 rubrics each.

Planning for Content Understandings

What is my subject area emphasis?

Every subject-specific version of edTPA has its own student learning and pedagogical emphasis that is the foundation of the assessment. The emphasis for each subject area is stated throughout your edTPA handbook (see handbook introduction) and in the rubrics. Pay special attention to the subject-specific language in your handbook and be sure to address all relevant components (usually presented as a bulleted list) for your learning segment.

[Back to Planning Task 1 Key Decisions Chart](#)

How do I select the central focus, student content standards, and student learning objectives?

The learning segment you develop and teach for edTPA is defined by a subject-specific central focus for student learning. The **central focus is an understanding that you want your students to develop in the learning segment. It is a description of the important identifiable theme, essential question, or topic within the curriculum** that is the purpose of the instruction of the learning segment.

The standards, learning objectives, learning tasks, and assessments addressed or included in your learning segment should all be related to the central focus. The central focus should also take into account prior assessment of your students and knowledge of your students' varied development, backgrounds, interests, lived experiences, and learning levels that might further influence students' thinking and learning.

Each edTPA handbook provides subject-specific guidance for your planning for student learning, so review these guidelines carefully. For each subject area, these guidelines address both basic types of **knowledge** (e.g., facts, skills, conventions) and **conceptual understandings** and **higher order thinking skills** (such as strategies for interpreting/reasoning from facts or evidence, synthesizing ideas, strategies for evaluating work, etc.). When identifying the central focus of the learning segment, **you must consider conceptual understandings** as well as the skills/facts/procedures that students will learn and apply. **If you focus only on teaching facts and/or following procedures without deepening students' understanding of related concepts, you will not fully address your subject-specific learning focus.**

Within your lesson plans you are asked to identify the **state, national, or locally adapted content standards** (relevant to your context) that you will address in the learning segment. Though you may find many student content standards that relate tangentially to your planned learning segment, only a few standards should be the focus of instruction. **Include only the standards that are central to the student learning** that you expect to support during the learning segment documented in your edTPA.

[Back to Planning Task 1 Key Decisions Chart](#)

How do I develop a learning segment with a central focus?

As with any learning segment, decisions about what to teach should be driven by what students are expected to learn at their particular grade level. You will want to think carefully about **how much content** to address in your edTPA learning segment. The amount of content you will address in your learning segment is a significant decision about manageability, not only for the scope of your edTPA assessment, but also for the capacity of your students to learn within the allotted time. While your lesson plans are not required to fall within a certain time range, your learning segment should consist of 3–5 lessons that build toward your selected central focus for teaching and learning, as well as the corresponding standards. **District curriculum guidelines, school goals, grade-level expectations, input from your cooperating teacher that falls within the acceptable support guidelines, and student interests must also be considered.**

[Back to Planning Task 1 Key Decisions Chart](#)

What should I include in my lesson plans?

You will submit a lesson plan for every lesson taught and documented in your edTPA learning segment. Your lesson plans should provide enough detail so that educators reading your edTPA can determine the sequence of the learning objectives, the plan for assessment, and what you and the students will be doing during each lesson. Make sure that each submitted lesson plan is **no more than 4 pages in length**. If you are using a lesson plan model that extends beyond that page limit, you will need to condense your lesson plans to meet the page limit. However, **be sure to include the following necessary lesson plan components (also listed in your edTPA handbook):**

- relevant state-adopted, national, or other local standards used within your teaching context
- learning objectives associated with the standards
- formal and informal assessments
- instructional and learning tasks
- instructional resources and materials

NOTE: Do not put explanations and rationale in your lesson plans, as scorers are instructed to look to the commentary prompts for explanations of your thinking and justification for your plans.

[Back to Planning Task 1 Key Decisions Chart](#)

What if I have particular lessons that I am required to teach in a prescribed way or if my school or grade level has a standard curriculum?

Many teachers teach lessons that are from published or prescriptive curriculum guides that are required in a particular district, school, or department. In some cases, pedagogy is prescribed by the curriculum you are required to teach. If this is the case for you, **explain this in the**

Context for Learning artifact. Your lesson plans and Planning Commentary should address how you modified these lesson plans with your students' backgrounds and/or needs in mind.

In your Planning Commentary you might describe how you selected or modified curriculum materials to meet your students' needs, how you adapted a lesson to meet your students' needs, and/or how you made accommodations for particular students' needs (e.g., providing alternative examples, asking additional questions, using supplementary activities). When following highly prescriptive curricula or district/school/department mandates, these changes may be modest.

[Back to Planning Task 1 Key Decisions Chart](#)

Knowledge of Students

What information should I convey about my students when describing my class?

Planning Task 1 requires you to demonstrate **your depth of knowledge of your students in relation to the learning segment you plan to teach**. Making casual references or surface-level connections to students' backgrounds, interests, development, and learning needs **is not enough**.

In Planning Task 1, **your responses to the Context for Learning artifact prompts and the relevant Planning Task 1 commentary prompts should provide detail** on the class demographics⁷; significant subgroups of students with similar characteristics; and students' varied strengths (including personal, cultural, and community assets), language development, and learning needs. Your written commentary and lesson plans should reveal **what you plan to do in the learning segment to capitalize on their strengths and address their varied needs to help them meet the objectives of your learning segment**.

When describing what you know about your students, be sure that this information is based on your knowledge of your students and not based on assumptions or stereotypes associated with their age or ethnic, cultural, or socio-economic backgrounds. A good way to ensure you are avoiding stereotypes or assumptions is to ask yourself if you would be able to back up your assertions with evidence; if yes, include that evidence in your responses.

[Back to Planning Task 1 Key Decisions Chart](#)

How do I support the assertions I make about my students and the decisions I make about their learning needs?

When describing your students' personal/cultural/community assets, language development, and/or prior academic learning, describe what the asset or prior learning encompasses **and**

⁷ If you need guidance when selecting school setting, reference the [NCES locale category definitions](#) or consult with your placement school administrator.

how it is related to your learning segment. Provide specific, concrete examples to support your assertions (e.g., refer to the specific instructional material or learning task you have included as part of Planning Task 1). Consider a variety of data sources and evidence about your students' interests, backgrounds, cultural/linguistic resources, lived experiences, and other information that helps you determine the instructional approaches best suited to their strengths and needs (academic, social emotional, behavioral, etc.).

Do not merely repeat prompt or rubric language as your responses to commentary prompts—you must always include examples and evidence of *your* teaching. For example, if you suggest that most of the students have not yet learned a concept or skill, you need to provide specific and concrete example(s) from your students' written or oral work or prior academic learning that demonstrate and support your claim. And, when describing assets, be specific about the ways in which the learning tasks or approaches incorporate what your students bring to the classroom—not as deficits but as strengths.

[Back to Planning Task 1 Key Decisions Chart](#)

How specific do my references to research and theory have to be?

When including research/theory in your edTPA, you should **justify why you are doing what you are doing**. **Justify** your instructional choices from your plans, i.e., your choice of teaching strategies, materials, and the learning tasks you plan for students. You may include the principles of research and theory you have learned in courses in your preparation program, your independent reading, or elsewhere. Draw upon educational philosophy and **specific** theories of development, learning, group work, and motivation, as well as conceptions and research-based practices of the discipline you are teaching.

The theoretical concepts and lines of research included in your edTPA **should support/inform your instructional decisions**. **Do not merely mention a textbook author, name-drop a theorist** (e.g., Vygotsky or Bloom said), **or describe a concept** without making an explicit and well-developed connection between the theory/research and your plans for instruction and knowledge of *your* students. **Be sure your justification centers on instructional and support choices that move the students toward meeting the lesson objectives.**

Formal citations are not required when referencing research/theory – only when referencing copyrighted materials such as textbooks. If you do list citations, provide them at the end of the commentary; they will not count toward the page limits.

[Back to Planning Task 1 Key Decisions Chart](#)

Supporting Academic Language Development

How do I identify the academic language demands of a learning task?

Academic language is the “language of the discipline” used to engage students in learning and includes the means by which students develop and express content understandings. It includes the oral and written language and visual representations used for academic purposes. **Your plans for language development in edTPA should address how you support your whole class to be able to understand and use academic language, including English Learners, speakers of varieties of English, and native English speakers.**

Language demands include the **oral**, **visual**, and **written** language that students need to understand and use in order to complete learning tasks successfully within your learning segment. Academic language demands are so embedded in instructional activities that you may take many for granted, especially when you are a subject-matter expert. It is therefore important to examine learning tasks and consider what language your students need to

- understand (what will they need to read, listen to, think about);
- communicate (what will they need to speak about, write about, connect to); and
- perform (what will they need to sing, play, demonstrate, express, read, create, and expectations for acceptable forms).

edTPA requires you to

- identify particular language demands in relation to a chosen learning task AND
- plan and describe instructional supports that will help students understand and use the language you have identified.

These language demands include a language function, important vocabulary and/or symbols, syntax and/or discourse. The focus should be on new or partially mastered language demands that are central to the planned learning tasks. To review definitions and examples of these for your content area, look to these resources: edTPA handbook glossary, *Understanding Rubric Level Progressions*, and *Academic Language Handout*.⁸

NOTE: Academic language rubrics in Early Childhood handbooks address children’s vocabulary only. World Language and Classical Languages handbooks do not include these rubrics because language development is the focus of these fields.

⁸ For additional subject-specific examples of the function, vocabulary, discourse and syntax, see *Academic Language Handouts*, *Understanding Rubric Level Progressions* resource, and the academic language terms in the glossary of edTPA handbooks by content area.

Step 1. Choose a Language Function

You will identify *one* major language function all students need to develop in order to learn the content within your learning segment. edTPA handbooks provide a list of content-appropriate language functions from which to choose. If you do not find a function that relates to your learning segment within the list, look to the standards and/or objectives within the lessons of the learning segment, which often include language functions in the form of active verbs (e.g., students will be able to **explain, infer, compare, justify**).

Step 2. Choose a Learning Task

You will choose a task from your learning segment where students have an opportunity to practice your identified language function. Consider a learning task where students will practice using language in one or more ways: speaking, listening, reading, writing, and/or performing.

Step 3: Identify Additional Language Demands

Considering both your chosen language function and learning task, identify additional language demands that students will need to understand and use including

1. vocabulary and
2. syntax and/or discourse.

Examine instructional materials, resources, and lesson plan(s) related to your learning task (texts, assessments, and other resources) in order to identify examples of each language demand you will need to support. For example:

- What vocabulary (subject-specific words, symbols, and general academic words) will need to be addressed?
- What discourse structures (e.g., visual representations, essays, lab reports, or other texts) will students need to understand, read, use, or produce? At what level of mastery—initial or more advanced?
- What syntax will students need to understand or use (e.g., rules for structuring and writing sentences, mathematical formulas, or composing musical rhythms).

[Back to Planning Task 1 Key Decisions Chart](#)

How do I plan instructional supports to help students use the identified language demands?

Now that you have identified the learning task, language function, and associated language demands (vocabulary, discourse, and/or syntax), **consider how you will plan instructional supports for each of these demands. What instructional strategies and resources will you use to help your students understand and learn to use this language?**

One suggestion to help you plan your language supports is to create a chart that shows supports that address each identified language demand. An example of such a chart is provided below, which focuses on an elementary literacy task where students are asked to “evaluate a friendly letter.”

Objective for a sample learning task: *Evaluate a friendly letter*

Identified Language Demand	Instructional Support Examples
Function: evaluate	Discuss what “evaluate” means, model how to evaluate different sections of a well-written “friendly letter”
Vocabulary: greeting, salutation, body...	As a class, define vocabulary and create word wall for vocabulary list
Discourse: structure and elements of a friendly letter	Model—discuss and identify the elements of a friendly letter using an example on the Smart Board. Label each element.

After creating such a chart for your own purposes, you could use this chart to write your commentary response where you are asked to describe the language supports you have planned for your students. This is one way to help you identify and describe the instructional supports that will help your students understand and use the language the task requires of them.

Remember: When completing your Planning Commentary response, be explicit about the instructional supports/resources you have planned to address students’ understanding, use, and development of the identified language demands. The instructional strategies/resources must be identified as **language supports** within the commentary and/or lesson plans to be considered a support for student language development.

For additional examples of language supports that address particular language demands within specific content areas, see your subject-specific *Academic Language Handout*.

[Back to Planning Task 1 Key Decisions Chart](#)

Planning Assessments

What kinds of assessments should I choose for my edTPA learning segment?

The assessments and evaluation criteria for your selected learning segment should be aligned with your subject-specific central focus, the targeted academic content standards, and the learning objectives. In addition, the assessments should provide opportunities for students to show their understanding of the full range of learning objectives and all parts of the central focus you will teach. **Avoid assessments that only require students to repeat back information or apply procedures without demonstrating an understanding of them. Choose, design, or adapt assessments that measure how well students understand—not just remember—and apply what they are learning. You are encouraged to use both formal and informal assessments throughout the learning segment.**

[Back to Planning Task 1 Key Decisions Chart](#)

How do I allow students with specific needs to demonstrate their learning?

You may need to design alternative assessments for one or more students with IEP/504 plans or other learning needs. In that case, the modified, differentiated versions of your selected assessments must still measure how well students understand what they are learning relative to the central focus, while reducing barriers to demonstrating learning and allowing students with specific needs to express their understanding in alternative ways. You can include modified versions of your selected assessment within the assessment evidence file you are asked to upload in Planning Task 1.

[Back to Planning Task 1 Key Decisions Chart](#)

Planning Task 1 Key Points	
What to Include	What to Avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans for instruction that include a focus on developing thinking skills related to the central focus (explanation, synthesis, evaluation) in addition to skills, facts, and procedures • Rationale for your instructional choices in your commentary, not your lesson plans • Explicit justification of why your instructional strategies, materials, and planned supports (including supports for language) are appropriate for <i>your</i> students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruction or assessment that focuses primarily on memorization or rote application of facts, skills, or procedures • Vague or incomplete planning in your lesson plans and commentary for students with IEP or 504 plans (disregard if you have no students with IEP/504 plans) • Deficit or stereotypic descriptions of students • Lack of alignment between standards, objectives, learning tasks, and/or assessments and the central focus

Instruction Task 2: Instructing and Engaging Students in Learning

Key Decisions	
Video Recording	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are my professional responsibilities for maintaining confidentiality? • What are the features of a quality edTPA video? • How do I prepare my edTPA video recordings for my learning segment? • What resources do I need to consider (equipment, software, and tutorials)?
Learning Environment <i>RUBRIC 6⁹</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do I look for when selecting my clip(s) that demonstrate respect and rapport? • How do I demonstrate a positive learning environment that supports and challenges students?
Engaging Students <i>RUBRIC 7</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do I select my video clip(s) to show active engagement of students?
Deepening Student Learning <i>RUBRIC 8</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do I show that I am deepening student understanding?
Subject-Specific Pedagogy <i>RUBRIC 9</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is meant by subject-specific pedagogy?
Analyzing Teaching Effectiveness <i>RUBRIC 10</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is important to consider as I propose changes to the learning segment?
Instruction Task 2 Key Points	

⁹ **NOTE:** Rubric numbering differs throughout the tasks for Classical Languages and World Language, which have only 13 rubrics each.

Video Recording

What are my professional responsibilities for maintaining confidentiality?

You are **required** to obtain consent from students and other adults who appear in the video clip(s) for your edTPA. Respecting students' privacy and protecting yourself and your cooperating teacher are legal, as well as ethical, requirements. Your program will provide you with a consent form to use.

It is vitally important that you only use the video for the purpose of completing your edTPA and that you do not share it with others publicly. **Video of your teaching should *never* be posted in public venues like YouTube, Facebook, etc., or shared with people not involved with the edTPA assessment without additional permission**, as this violates the confidentiality of the children you teach and their families.

While you should remove identifying information from your edTPA, we recognize that videos submitted for scoring may sometimes include unavoidable identifying information, such as when the name of a school is visible on a piece of clothing or on a wall in the background. In those cases, choosing to blur that information will not count as impermissible editing. In addition, if blurring is not possible, you will not be penalized or receive a condition code. You and your students will still be protected, as the scoring system is secure and scorers are also trained to keep portfolio information confidential.

[Back to Instruction Task 2 Key Decisions Chart](#)

What are the features of a quality edTPA video?

There is **no** requirement or expectation for you to create a professional-quality production. The use of titles, opening and closing credits, a musical soundtrack, or special effects must be left to Hollywood, as reviewers will be examining only what the video shows you and your students doing within the learning segment. However, while it is not necessary to be technically perfect, it is important that **the quality of the video (i.e., clarity of picture and sound) be sufficient for scorers to understand what happened in your classroom.**

[Back to Instruction Task 2 Key Decisions Chart](#)

How do I prepare my edTPA video recordings for my learning segment?

- **Read your edTPA handbook carefully to note the limits on length of clips and the teaching and learning emphasis for your subject area. NOTE: These limits may differ for Tasks 2 and 3.**
- **Advise your cooperating/master teacher and the principal at your school of your need to video record lessons for your learning segment.** If the school is new to edTPA, you may ask your university supervisor to help facilitate arrangements.

- Although a camera operator is often unnecessary, discuss any plans for someone to operate the camera. If you use a camera operator, look to people who already have approval to be in classrooms (e.g., your cooperating teacher or your university supervisor). For any others, be sure that you obtain prior approval well in advance and that your invited camera operator knows and follows school procedures for visitors.
- **Collect the necessary consent forms from a parent/guardian for your students (or, if eligible, from the students themselves) and from adults who might appear in the video.**
- **Make arrangements for the necessary video/audio equipment well in advance.** If you do not have ready access to video equipment, reach out to peers, family members, your cooperating/master teacher, university supervisor, or university/school technology staff.
- **Consider the location of the camera relative to the activities you will need to capture. What evidence do the rubrics call for** that the camera will need to capture? Think about where you and your students will be located in the classroom during the activities to be shown in the video and how that may impact filming:
 - Where will the camera/microphones need to be placed in order to optimize sound quality? Ensure that the audio within your video can be clearly heard.
 - Think about where to place any student who does not have permission to be filmed, so that s/he can participate in the lesson off-camera.
 - Ensure that your face will appear in the video at some point, at least once, for identification purposes.
 - Think ahead to consider if you plan to use the video format option to capture evidence of focus student work samples and/or feedback for Assessment Task 3. In that case, if your focus students are not clearly visible in the video(s) you submit as evidence for Instruction Task 2, you will need to capture additional video that shows your focus students for that purpose.
 - Try to plan ahead and minimize the need for a camera operator by scouting locations that you can station the camera in advance. If you do need a camera operator, meet in advance to share the lesson plan and discuss video needs.
- **Practice video recording *before* teaching the learning segment.** Practice will provide a chance to test the equipment for sound and video quality, as well as give your students an opportunity to become accustomed to the camera in the room.
- **Try to record the *entire* set of lessons in your learning segment.** Recording more than what you plan to submit for edTPA will provide you with plenty of footage from which to choose the clip(s) that best meet the requirements for edTPA. It is also helpful to have extra footage to use in case of technical problems or the future need for a retake.
- **Be natural.** While being recorded, try to forget the camera is there (this is good to explain to your students as well), and teach like you normally do. If possible, record other lessons prior to the learning segment so that the camera is not a novel item in the

classroom—to you and your students. If using a camera operator, advise him or her not to interject into the lesson in *any* way.

- **Be sure that the video clip(s) you select and submit have quality audio.** Good audio allows individuals viewing the clip(s) to hear individual voices of students as they are working on a task or with each other. It is often helpful to view your recording after each day so that you can check for audio quality and note, with time stamps, possible examples of evidence for later consideration in choosing the clip(s) you submit.
- **Transcribe inaudible portions.** The majority of the video should be clearly audible and show both you and your students. As you view and listen to the video clip(s), note any inaudible portions where transcription is necessary to help an educator better understand and evaluate the teaching and learning. You may either provide a transcript or add captions for these portions. Be selective—you do not need to address all inaudible comments; select those that were important for moving the lesson forward. In addition, transcription for this purpose should be limited to addressing audibility concerns; further analysis or explanation of your teaching belongs in the commentary.
- **Address any portions of the video that require translation.** Captions or transcriptions may be necessary if the instruction is in another language than English. See the [Submission Requirements](#) and your handbook for specific direction on when translation to English is needed.
- Your video clips are the primary sources of evidence used in scoring Instruction Task 2. The evidence you need to collect for Instruction Task 2 should demonstrate how you engage students while teaching. Read each prompt **and** read each rubric to fully understand all of the evidence that your video should demonstrate. When choosing your clip(s), **consider what the students are doing**. It is helpful to watch your clips to be sure that they provide evidence for all of the required elements. When responding to a prompt, provide time stamps from the video to support your written commentary and direct a scorer's attention to what *you want him/her to see*.
- **Choose clip(s) that adequately capture the relevant evidence while meeting requirements for content and length.** Review the video footage, using any notes you have made, to identify excerpts that portray the subject-specific focus required in Instruction Task 2. Then go back to select the clip(s) and identify starting and stopping times for the excerpts. Pay close attention to the minimum and maximum time, length, class/group size, and/or file limits within the Evidence Chart in your handbook:
 - You may receive condition codes or risk the evidence you submit only being scored up to the stated time or length limits if you exceed the number of clips permitted OR if the total time of your clip(s) exceeds the maximum. If your field allows multiple clips, the length of each clip may vary. Read the instructions carefully to find whether the maximum length is **per** clip or for the **combined** length of the clips.
 - Conversely, you may also receive condition codes if you do not meet the *minimum* requirement for video length for Instruction Task 2. Condition codes

will be applied if the total number of minutes represented in your clip(s) is less than three minutes and there is not enough scoreable evidence.

- Each clip should be continuous, without any disruption in the footage for the duration of that selected segment. Any break in the continuity of events signals the start of a new clip to scorers, so count the number of clips/excerpts submitted as evidence carefully. Caution: Breaks within a clip due to impermissible editing may also cause scorers to apply condition codes, as indicated in the submission requirements.
- Be mindful of class/group size requirements, as per your handbook. The minimum number of students must be present in at least one of your video clips. In addition, any significant attrition (or placement-specific circumstance) that leads to class/group size significantly varying from what was described in your context for learning/planning should be explained in your commentary.
- **Be sure to review the instructions for downloading the video and audio from the camera if you are not already familiar with them and ensure that you backup your files once downloaded.** As soon as the video recording is downloaded, make a backup copy on a hard drive, a USB drive, or a CD/DVD.

[Back to Instruction Task 2 Key Decisions Chart](#)

What resources do I need to consider (equipment, software, and tutorials)?

edTPA does not specify the use of any particular equipment, software, tutorials, etc.; although only certain file types are accepted, as outlined in the Evidence Chart in the edTPA handbooks. An expensive camera is not necessary for the demands of this assessment. Many cameras in laptops, tablets, and phones are capable of producing a picture and sound quality that is suitable for your video needs. However, certain situations (e.g., groupings where the students are not facing the camera microphone, table groups where many students are talking at once, lots of ambient noise) may necessitate the use of some kind of external microphone. **The only way to know for certain what is working is to try out the equipment in advance of teaching your learning segment.**

Video equipment and cropping your clips for edTPA: Since the clip(s) you submit for your edTPA must consist of a continuous teaching without any edits, you will need to use cropping tools to extract a clip from the longer video you record. If you are new to video recording or to the camera you are using, be sure to read the instruction manual that comes with the camera. Even if the manual has been lost, most manuals are available online at the manufacturer's website. Manufacturers may also have online tutorials to help you learn how to use the camera. YouTube has a plethora of videos that demonstrate how to set up and operate a camera.

The free video editing software that comes with most computers is perfectly adequate for preparing and saving the clip(s) in the format required in your edTPA handbook. PCs have the

program Windows Movie Maker (found in the START menu under PROGRAMS), while Macs provide you with iMovie. There are many online tutorials that will support you in learning how to use these programs. Contact your edTPA coordinator and program IT support for suggestions.

[Back to Instruction Task 2 Key Decisions Chart](#)

Learning Environment

What do I look for when selecting my clip(s) that demonstrate respect and rapport?

Establishing respect and rapport among and with students is critical for developing a mutually supportive and safe learning environment. Respect is the **positive feeling of esteem or deference toward a person** and the specific actions and conduct representative of that esteem. Rapport is a **close and harmonious relationship** in which members of a group **understand each other's ideas**, respectively **collaborate and communicate**, and **consider** one another's feelings. Both respect and rapport are demonstrated by **how you treat students and how they treat each other**, and both should be evident in your video. As you go through your footage, you will want to find clips that not only feature respectful interactions between you and your students, **but also examples of respectful interactions among your students and/or your interventions to create and maintain an environment of respect. In your commentary responses, cite specific scenes from the video clip(s) you select for submission that illustrate the respect and rapport you have established with your students.** Time stamps can be approximate; they need not be accurate to the second.

[Back to Instruction Task 2 Key Decisions Chart](#)

How do I demonstrate a positive learning environment that supports and challenges students?

One of the important characteristics that must be included in your video is evidence that you have created a learning environment that **challenges** students and supports them as they work to meet the challenge. You will want to choose clips that provide evidence that the learning environment you created not only supports students in learning but also challenges them to learn at a deeper level. **Challenge can be demonstrated by including questions or opportunities for students to learn content or demonstrate learning beyond their current performance level.** It should be apparent from your students' and your actions in the video that the **learning environment is primarily designed to promote and support student learning as opposed to managing student behavior.** While it is important that students stay focused, the atmosphere should be challenging in a way that keeps students engaged and learning.

[Back to Instruction Task 2 Key Decisions Chart](#)

Engaging Students

How do I select my video clip(s) to show active engagement of students?

Your video clip(s) should reveal the subject-specific student thinking, analysis, and judgment required in your learning segment. The video clip(s) should **feature instruction where there is student-teacher interaction and/or student-student interaction and where students have opportunities to engage in learning tasks that help them learn what you have planned**. Both goals can be achieved through lessons in which you probe students' thinking and/or facilitate students in probing each other's thinking so that they can display their depth of understanding of the content you are teaching. **Lessons that require students to only focus on recall of facts or to practice a set of narrow skills are *not* appropriate choices for an edTPA learning segment or video.**

In addition, your video clip(s) should provide evidence of how you **engaged students in a learning task** (an assignment, a discussion, etc.)—that requires the students to **do more than just participate**. In other words, the **students should be shown actively using some higher level thinking skills so that they are developing their conceptual understanding of the content**. In order to provide context for the new learning, you will need to make **specific connections** in the clip(s) to their prior academic learning and personal, cultural, and community assets.

[Back to Instruction Task 2 Key Decisions Chart](#)

Deepening Student Learning

How do I show that I am deepening student understanding?

The video clip(s) should show how you elicit and build upon student responses during instruction related to your central focus for student learning. You should ask questions at a variety of levels of thinking and show how you probe for responses that demonstrate deep thinking and conceptual understanding.

You can cite any of the interactions in the video (ideally, including time stamps) to **highlight how you prompt, listen to, and respond to students in such a way that you are supporting them to develop and build on their new learning**.

Choose video clip(s) with teaching strategies and/or student learning tasks that demonstrate support for learning. The teaching strategies that you choose will determine how well you can show that you are deepening student understanding. **Strategies that do not allow you to engage in discussion or conversation with students or monitor small group discussions among students may limit your ability to demonstrate that you are deepening student understanding.** For example, if you deliver a mini-lecture followed by a discussion during which you check for student understanding, you should focus the video clip on the discussion rather than on the mini-lecture (which can be described in the commentary as context). How you

structure that discussion is also important. A video clip filled with students answering yes/no questions, reciting information, reading aloud without conversation, writing silently, etc., will not reveal how you deepened their understanding of the content to be learned. Rather, the video recorded discussion should represent an opportunity for students to display or further their depth of understanding.

[Back to Instruction Task 2 Key Decisions Chart](#)

What is meant by subject-specific pedagogy?

Each handbook is designed for a specific discipline/subject area and educational level. Each discipline requires teachers to understand content-specific pedagogy—effective methods of teaching for the specific discipline and developmental level of the students. Subject-specific pedagogy includes not just effective approaches to teaching your content, but effective approaches to teaching your students how to think in your subject area. Carefully review the Instruction Task 2 instructions in your handbook that address subject-specific pedagogy, along with the accompanying rubric, to determine the subject specific pedagogy/ies you are expected to demonstrate within your clip(s).

[Back to Instruction Task 2 Key Decisions Chart](#)

Analyzing Teaching Effectiveness

What is important to consider as I propose changes to the learning segment?

You should describe what you have learned about **teaching the central focus** of the learning segment based on your observations of how your students responded to the instructional strategies, learning tasks, and materials in the video clip(s) submitted. **Be specific about any changes you would make if you were able to teach the lesson(s) again.** The changes *may* address some logistical issues (time management, giving directions, etc.), but should **mainly focus on how you would improve the instruction, learning tasks, and/or materials to address and support students' individual and collective learning needs in relation to the central focus.**

You will also need to cite evidence that explains **why** you think these changes will work. Cite specific examples using time stamps from the video clip(s) of student confusion, misunderstanding, and/or need for greater challenge that informed your proposed changes. Lastly, explain how principles of research and theory informed your decision-making about the changes. [\(Click here to return to the Planning Task 1 explanation of citing research.\)](#)

[Back to Instruction Task 2 Key Decisions Chart](#)

Instruction Task 2 Key Points	
What to Include	What to Avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Video evidence that explicitly depicts you addressing the subject-specific requirements for Instruction Task 2 as described in your handbook• References in your commentary responses to specific examples found in your video clip(s)• Time stamps identifying evidence from the video clip(s) in every response	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sharing your video publicly on YouTube, Facebook, or any other website (you must respect the privacy of students)• Choosing a video clip that shows you making significant content errors• Showing disrespect to students or allowing students to be disrespectful to each other• Choosing a video clip during which the focus is largely classroom management• Choosing a video clip that does not reflect your subject-specific focus

Assessment Task 3: Assessing Student Learning

Key Decisions	
Analyzing Student Learning <i>RUBRIC 11¹⁰</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kind of student work should I analyze for my edTPA? • How specific should the evaluation criteria be? • How do I choose the student work samples (focus students)? • How detailed should the whole class analysis be?
Feedback <i>RUBRICS 12 & 13</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What types of student feedback should I include in my edTPA? • How do I explain how my students will understand and use the feedback I give?
Analyzing Students' Academic Language Understanding and Use <i>RUBRIC 14</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do I identify evidence of my students' understanding/use of academic language?
Use of Assessment to Inform Instruction <i>RUBRIC 15</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do I need to think about when determining "next steps" for my teaching?
Assessment Task 3 Key Points	

¹⁰ **NOTE:** Rubric numbering differs throughout the tasks for Classical Languages and World Language, which have only 13 rubrics each.

Analyzing Student Learning

What kind of student work should I analyze for my edTPA?

For Assessment Task 3, you will select **one** assessment that was given to the whole class during your learning segment. The assessment must reflect each student's individual work; it **cannot be the work of pairs or groups** of students. Because this task focuses on *your* ability to analyze student work, self- and peer-assessments are not appropriate. You will analyze **the work of all of the students in the class** and **you will select three student work samples for more detailed analysis and discussion using the one assessment. The work sample must be the actual student work** analyzed. Checklists and rubrics may also be submitted, but only if they are accompanied by the work samples that were analyzed using these assessment tools.

Depending on the field, student learning can be captured through video clips, audio files, photographs, or other media. Check your handbook for details about requirements and options in your subject area.

NOTE: Early childhood candidates—Refer to the Early Childhood handbook to verify the multiple sources of evidence required for your Assessment Task 3. Physical Education candidates must submit a video work sample and 1–2 written work samples in order to assess all three learning domains. Refer to these handbooks to identify the multiple sources of evidence required for your Assessment Task 3.

The **one** assessment you choose to analyze should **align with the central focus and one or more of the stated learning objectives** of your learning segment, and should provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate an understanding of those objectives. **The assessment you choose may be formal or informal, formative or summative, but it needs to result in evidence of student learning according to the evaluation criteria you describe.**

You are expected to analyze your students' thinking and learning—not just, for example, assess whether they can recall a set of important facts or essential vocabulary terms. **The assessment you design and analyze should allow the students to demonstrate their thinking in some way.** Keep in mind that you 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, performance tasks, projects, problem sets, lab reports, or other more complex assessments.

[Back to Assessment Task 3 Key Decisions Chart](#)

How specific should the evaluation criteria be?

The evaluation criteria you use should make clear to you (and ideally to your students) the features or qualities of the students' work that will be assessed: for example, the accuracy of students' responses; the quality of their communication; the depth, originality, or creativity of their ideas; where the students are in their conceptual development for a particular idea; or the mechanics of doing a task. Most importantly, your **evaluative criteria should**

- **align with the objectives of the learning segment;**
- **measure the outcomes of your learning segment as related to the central focus;**
- **address the elements of the subject-specific emphasis as defined in your edTPA handbook.**

Your handbook glossary also provides a definition of evaluation criteria.

[Back to Assessment Task 3 Key Decisions Chart](#)

How do I choose the student work samples (focus students)?

After analyzing the whole class data, review the patterns of learning you found. Choose three work samples from focus students that illustrate identified **patterns from your analysis**. You want to choose work samples that are representative of the whole class and show the range of performance on the assessment so that you can point to specific examples of the understandings, misunderstandings, and patterns of errors that you discuss in the whole class analysis.

At least one of the student work samples must be from a focus student with a significant learning need. **California candidates must include a work sample from at least one English learner.**

NOTE: Most handbooks ask you to select the focus students after analyzing the whole class data. However, if you are providing a video work sample, you must select your focus students earlier in the process in order to ensure you will have video evidence of their work/performance. Consult your handbook carefully to see which work sample formats are required or accepted for your subject area. If you must select a focus student in advance due to video requirements or the nature of student work (such as an oral presentation that you plan to film), consider prior performance to select a range of students.

[Back to Assessment Task 3 Key Decisions Chart](#)

How detailed should the whole class analysis be?

Your analysis will examine data/performance from the whole class, with a more detailed examination of the three focus student work samples to select appropriate examples to illustrate key points in your analysis. Once you have assessed each focus student's work sample, you need to present both a quantitative and qualitative analysis of how well all your students performed. These analyses can help you move to a discussion of **patterns of learning**.

Consider asking yourself the following questions when reviewing student data: What did many or most students understand and how can you use the work sample(s) to demonstrate that understanding? What were common errors or partial understandings? How can you use the focus student work samples and your knowledge of their instruction to hypothesize why students might have made those errors? What, if anything, did students who succeeded or made errors have in common (e.g., strong or struggling readers, English learners, understanding of an underlying concept that allowed them to understand other concepts)? Your response should indicate that you understand how well your students have understood the content and what they need to continue to work on.

You do not need to provide multiple examples in your analysis to illustrate a point; one clear example will suffice. **In your analysis, be sure to address all your evaluation criteria and all the bulleted items of the subject-specific elements in your handbook.**

[Back to Assessment Task 3 Key Decisions Chart](#)

Feedback

What types of student feedback should I include in my edTPA?

The feedback to focus students should offer students **clear and specific information on their performance related to the lesson objectives** and should align with the evaluation criteria for your analyzed assessment. You should not provide a description of the feedback, but rather submit the specific feedback given to the focus students. **The feedback can be written on work samples, provided orally within video work samples, or provided in separate video or audio files, as long as it is the actual feedback given directly to the focus students.**

Effective feedback to students on the work samples will denote areas where they did well and where they need to improve related to the specific learning objectives. Marking the percent correct and providing nonspecific comments such as "Good job" are not sufficient, as students will have little idea of what exactly they did well. In contrast, specific comments such as "Effective word choice" or "Well-supported conclusion" **direct attention to the details of their performance related to the central focus**, thereby deepening their understanding of the qualities of their work.

The same goes for feedback that focuses on areas that need improvement. Citing only the number of problems/questions a student got wrong is not sufficient. In order to identify an area

for improvement, students need to know specifically what it is that needs attention. For example, comments such as “Your topic sentence needs more focus” or “Let’s review the relationship between slope and the y-intercept, because I see you are making the same error in several problems (items 2, 7, and 12)” give students information necessary for targeting their improvement.

[Back to Assessment Task 3 Key Decisions Chart](#)

How do I explain how my focus students will understand and use the feedback I give?

The purpose of giving feedback is to help your students understand what they know and can do and what they still need to work on. Research shows that the opportunity to apply feedback promotes learning. When responding to this prompt, make sure you describe specific opportunities for the **focus students to understand and use feedback**. What are you going to do to ensure that students understand the feedback that they were given? Think about strategies for feedback that address common themes across most of the class and also attend to unique student work. Then think about the upcoming lessons and the feedback given to the students. What opportunities are there in the next lessons for the focus students to apply the feedback? Would revision of the work sample be a more powerful learning experience? Is there additional support that might scaffold the application of the feedback and accelerate learning? Do the focus students have different needs that imply different choices? **Your explanation should demonstrate that you have considered how and when students might best apply the feedback to support or extend their learning.**

[Back to Assessment Task 3 Key Decisions Chart](#)

Analyzing Students’ Academic Language Understanding and Use

How do I identify evidence of students’ understanding/use of academic language?

In your Assessment Commentary, you will respond to a prompt asking for evidence of the extent to which your students succeeded in their use of academic language (the identified language function, vocabulary, and additional language demands) to develop content understandings. In your analysis, you need to explain how your students used academic language, and **you must support your explanation by citing specific evidence from video clip(s) (from Instruction Task 2 or a new clip) and/or student work samples.**

When referencing specific evidence from the video clip(s) or the work samples, describe the extent to which students are able to understand and use the language and how it relates to their developing understanding of the content. Are they struggling with some vocabulary words and able to use others accurately in context and if so, what does that mean about what they are understanding and not understanding about the content? What quote from a video or work sample demonstrates this? Ask these questions when you consider how to analyze and provide evidence of your students’ language understanding and use in relation to language functions, discourse, and/or syntax. **Remember to focus on the language use of your students—how they**

are developing use of the language you wanted them to learn and use; not your own language use.

You can provide evidence from any or all of the following sources:

- The video clip(s) from Instruction Task 2—provide time stamps
- An additional video clip submitted just for Assessment Task 3—academic language (see handbook for instructions and provide time stamps as necessary)
- Student work samples from Assessment Task 3

Remember that your evidence of student language use, no matter what source/s you use, needs to go beyond students parroting back definitions of unfamiliar words. Rather, the examples should show evidence of students' language use (e.g., speaking or writing or performing) in ways that are helping them understand and practice **the language demands (function, vocabulary, discourse/syntax)** of your learning segment in relation to content learning. **Remember to consider how the evidence you provide relates to how your students are developing content understandings.**

NOTE: Academic language rubrics in Early Childhood handbooks address children's vocabulary only. World Language and Classical Languages handbooks do not include these rubrics.

[Back to Assessment Task 3 Key Decisions Chart](#)

Use of Assessment to Inform Instruction

What do I need to think about when determining “next steps” for my teaching?

Informed by your analysis of the students' performance in the learning segment (Assessment Commentary Prompt 1), "next steps" should detail the instructional moves you plan to make going forward for the whole class, with particular emphasis on the focus students and other individuals or groups of students with specific needs. Be sure to reference both student learning needs *and* strengths in your commentary.

The next steps that you propose should follow very specifically from the data analyzed in Prompt 1 of Assessment Task 3. What did some or all of the students do well? What didn't they understand or do well? In future lessons, how can you challenge students who did well? What will you do in order to help students meet the learning objectives they were unable to meet?

Think about your focus students and their performance. What does their performance suggest that you need to do in next lessons? Are there other students in the class who could benefit from the same changes, follow-up, review, or challenge? How can you support the further development of students with differing needs? What does the research and theory you learned suggest would be effective strategies to meet these varied needs? Be sure to explain how you chose your next steps based on your analysis of student strengths and needs as well as research and theory. ([Click here to return to the Planning Task 1 explanation of citing research.](#))

[Back to Assessment Task 3 Key Decisions Chart](#)

Assessment Task 3 Key Points

What to Include	What to Avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of one assessment that allows students to display a range of understanding of the specified subject-specific elements of your central focus (EXCEPTION: See handbooks for Early Childhood and Physical Education for requirements for multiple assessments.) Focus student work samples that represent a range of performance on the chosen assessment(s) A focus on important trends in student performance, supported by examples from focus students' work samples Explanation of any modifications made to a chosen assessment in order to address student learning needs (i.e., differentiated versions of the same assessment) Concrete evidence of feedback for each focus student Concrete evidence of academic language use (from video clip and/or student work samples) and support for that use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A lengthy list of learning objectives being measured, many of which are not closely related to the analyzed assessment An assessment that only allows students to display a narrow range of knowledge and skills An assessment that was completed by a group of students, not individually (Condition Code G may be applied if at least some portion of the submitted assessment evidence does not demonstrate your analysis of individual learning.) Self-assessments, peer assessments, and checklists or rubrics without the student work analyzed Superficial analysis of student learning (e.g., there is no citation of evidence from student work samples or the analysis focuses on trivial aspects of the performance) Misalignment between evaluation criteria, learning objectives, and/or analysis Feedback that is developmentally inappropriate or disrespectful to students, or that contains significant content inaccuracies Vague descriptions of how focus students will understand and apply the feedback they received for the assessment analyzed Analysis of your use of academic language instead of students' use Identifying next steps for learning that are not related to your analysis of student learning