

TEAM Best Practices Video Library

Assessment *Descriptor 2*



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General Educator Rubric:

Planning Domain

Planning Domain

The Planning Domain is designed to evaluate how effectively teachers prepare and think through the steps for instruction. This domain emphasizes the planning and implementation of the unit or lesson plan rather than the written plan itself. Evaluators should look for evidence of planning in the lesson plan, classroom observation, and planning conference discussions.

Key Considerations:

- **Lesson Planning:** While written plans are important, the primary focus is on how teachers plan for instruction. A detailed, multi-page lesson plan is not necessary; instead, evaluators should consider how well the teacher's planning translates into effective classroom practice. Planning scores should be based on teacher process, evidence collected during observation and conversation, teacher implementation of the plan, student work samples, and assessment samples.
- **Planning Conference:** A pre-conference should occur before an announced observation. This meeting helps the evaluator gather information from the educator about the planning process before observing a lesson. If the observation is unannounced, then the evaluator should have a planning conference after the classroom observation to discuss the educators planning process.



Planning Domain

Indicators:

Instructional Plans:

- Evaluators should assess the strategies teachers use to align their instruction with state standards. This includes both lesson and unit plans.
- Look for evidence that the teacher has thoughtfully prepared to meet the learning objectives.

Student Work:

- Consider the tasks and activities students are engaged in. Student work should provide insight into how well the teacher's planning supports student learning.
- Evaluators should look for evidence that student work is challenging students to use a variety of thinking and problem-solving skills.

Assessments:

- Assessments are crucial for understanding student learning. Evaluators should examine how teachers use assessments to support and enhance student learning.
- Evidence of effective assessment practices can be found in both the planning and execution phases.



Planning Domain

Evaluation Process:

Planning Conference Discussions: These discussions are essential for understanding the teacher's planning process and should inform the planning scores. Explicit and direct questioning opens opportunities for educators to discuss their planning process and the evidence that may not be visible during classroom observations. Evaluators can request a meeting after the instruction to gather additional evidence about the teacher's planning process. This is particularly important for understanding how the teacher plans for the entire unit, not just the observed lesson.

Classroom Observations: During observations, evaluators should focus on how the teacher's plans are implemented in the classroom. This includes looking at student engagement, student work, and assessment outcomes.

Post-Conference: The post-conference should serve as an opportunity for educators to engage in self-reflection regarding their planning and execution. Evaluators should pose thought-provoking, open-ended questions that encourage educators to critically examine the planning practices that have successfully enhanced student learning, as well as identify areas for improvement to further advance student progress toward mastery.



Assessment



Assessment

Assessment is more than just a measure of learning; it's a driving force behind meaningful instruction. When educators plan assessments thoughtfully, they create opportunities to better understand what students have learned and how to support them moving forward. Effective assessment begins before instruction even starts. It is embedded in the planning process and reflects the goals of the unit and the standards students are expected to meet.

The most important question educators should ask when designing assessments is: "What do I want my students to be able to do as a result of my teaching?" And just as importantly: "How will I know they've learned it?" The answers to these questions inform not only the content of assessments but also how the results will be used.





Assessment

Assessments should not be confined to the end of a unit. Performance checks should take place throughout the unit and throughout the school year to gauge progress and guide instruction in real time.

A strong assessment plan incorporates multiple methods of measuring student learning. This could include projects, presentations, written responses, experiments, or essays. Assessments should routinely include written components that give students the opportunity to reflect, organize, and articulate thinking in a tangible product. To ensure assessments are used effectively, educators must be clear in the measurement criteria, detailing exactly what success looks like for students.

Assessment data, both formative and summative, should guide lesson planning, intervention efforts, and decisions about future instruction. In the end, assessment is a tool for growth. When thoughtfully planned and strategically used, it becomes a roadmap to increased achievement and deeper learning.





Assessment

Benefits of Effective Assessment Plans:

- **Aligns instruction with learning goals:** Ensures assessments measure what students are actually expected to learn, based on standards and curriculum.
- **Clarifies expectations for students:** Provides clear targets and success criteria, helping students understand what they need to achieve.
- **Informs instructional decisions:** Guides teachers in adjusting instruction, pacing, and strategies based on assessment data.
- **Supports differentiated instruction:** Identifies students' strengths and needs, allowing for targeted interventions and enrichment.
- **Monitors progress over time:** Ongoing performance checks track growth and provide early warnings when students fall behind.
- **Raises overall student achievement:** When assessments are planned and used effectively, they drive continuous improvement in teaching and learning.



Descriptor 2:

Assessment plans have measurement criteria



Descriptor 2: Assessment plans have measurement criteria

Measurement criteria are essential to effective assessment because they define what success looks and sounds like to ensure that student performance is evaluated consistently and fairly. Without clear criteria, it's difficult to determine whether students have truly met the learning goals outlined in the standards. Well-defined measurement criteria provide transparency for both teachers and students. They guide instructional planning, help students understand expectations, and make feedback more meaningful.

These criteria also support objective scoring by outlining specific indicators of proficiency, which is especially important when assessing complex tasks like writing, presentations, or projects. Ultimately, measurement criteria transform assessments from vague judgments into purposeful tools for learning, allowing educators to identify where students are excelling and where they need targeted support.



Evaluator Expectations

Evaluators should look for clear, specific indicators that define how student performance will be assessed. The evaluators will also look for consistency between the criteria and the standard being assessed, ensuring that the criteria reflect both the content and the depth of understanding expected. In conversations, the evaluator should ask questions about how the measurement criteria were developed, how they are communicated to students, and how they support equitable and objective assessment. Evidence of student self-assessment or peer review using these criteria can also demonstrate their active role in the learning process.

Examples of questions:

- How have you developed clear measurement criteria?
- How does your measurement criteria relate to the daily objective or content standard goals?
- How will you check for understanding during the lesson? At the conclusion of the lesson? At the conclusion of the unit?
- How will you communicate the measurement criteria to your students?

Educator Expectations

Educators can present several types of evidence to an evaluator, including examples of how they define and determine mastery of daily learning objectives, broader unit goals, or specific state standards.

Evidence might take the form of clearly defined rubrics or detailed descriptions of what mastery looks like for a given task or standard. Educators may also include specific benchmarks, such as percentage scores or performance levels that indicate proficiency. Importantly, educators should show how these expectations are communicated to students through posted criteria, classroom discussions, or formative tools so that students clearly understand what success looks like. This helps ensure that learning targets are transparent and that students are active participants in monitoring their own progress toward mastery.

Evidence Capture Example

As you watch this video, note how the educator describes the criteria she uses to assess students' mastery of communication standards. The educator's criteria measures accuracy of writing to produce time expressions, both general and specific. She also describes how she looks for students to be able to talk in the third person, singular and plural. Finally, she shares how she looks for consistency in student verb conjugations as well as accurate employment of the vocabulary that was used within the unit.



Video featuring 2023-2024 South Central Core Region Teacher of the Year Emily Fowler under the guidance Penny Love, Principal of Culleoka Unit School, Maury County Schools

Evidence Capture Example

As you watch this video, note how the educator describes her success criteria for the end of the unit assessment and the written response assessment. The educator explains the rubric she uses to measure performance skills such as body position and playing accurate notes from the page. The educator also discusses her expectations for student self-reflection of how they connect their mastery level from the first lesson to the growth seen in the end lesson.



Video featuring 2024-2025 East Grand Division Teacher of the Year Natalie Elkins under the guidance of Kathryn Lutton, Principal at Holston Middle School, Knox County Schools



Evidence Capture Practice

- Watch the video and capture evidence of descriptor 2.
- Video featuring 2022-2023 TAHPERD President/ OPEN National Trainer Derek Zachary under the guidance of Dr. Melissa Palk, Principal of Northeast Elementary School, Putnam County Schools.



**Share evidence you captured of
descriptor 2.**



Possible Evidence Captured

Example(s) of descriptor 1 in the video:

- The educator shares his measurement criteria for assessing students' ability to dribble:
 - Athletic stance (knees bent)
 - Eyes forward
 - The use of finger pads on the ball instead of their palm





Evidence Capture Practice

- Watch the video and capture evidence of descriptor 2.
- Video featuring 2024-2025 Mid-Cumberland Core Region Teacher of the Year Ellie Lee under the guidance of Dr. Takisha Ferguson, Principal at Smyrna Middle School, Rutherford County Schools.



**Share evidence you captured of
descriptor 2.**



Possible Evidence Captured

Example(s) of descriptor 1 in the video:

The educator shares her success criteria for measuring students' ability to understand dramatic irony. She states that student understanding will be evident if they are able to explain with specific textual or illustration-based pieces of evidence that directly support the argument of why they feel sympathy or antipathy.





Connections to Other Indicators

This descriptor is closely aligned with the following indicators:

- **Standards and Objectives:**

- Expectations for student performance are clear.
- There is evidence that students demonstrate mastery of the daily objective that supports progress towards mastery of the standard(s).

- **Expectations:**

- Teacher sets high and demanding academic expectations for every student.
- Students complete their work according to teacher expectations.



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