Entry 1:
Analysis of Student Growth in Reading and Writing

Entry 2:
Instructional Analysis: Whole Class Discussion

Entry 3:
Instructional Analysis: Small Groups

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**Entry 1: Analysis of Student Growth in Reading and Writing**

**a. Knowledge of Students (KOS)**

- Information for this area is a collection of data.
- Use the following sources: QPA Building Profile, building secretary, district office, district publicity information (pamphlets, web sites), other educational professionals, IEPs, School District Profile, parents.
- Poll and survey students on non-confidential issues: pre- and post-surveys, interest surveys, learning styles, personalities, color theories, etc.
- Perform an Internet search on the city you teach for community data.
- Each section below will affect what and how you teach your specific students. Select only the areas below that are specific to your setting and necessary to demonstrate student impact for the lesson explained in the selected portfolio.
- Use daily journals to supplement information you have obtained from other sources.
- Assign topics for writing that provide insight into the home life, attitudes, and experiences of your students.
- Take notes during class discussions of literature when students express opinions or self-disclose in other ways.
- Include information related to other activities in which the students participate. (E.g., do you have wrestlers who starve themselves and are “cranky” during their competitive season?)
- Discuss those students who need additional help, come in after school often, need further explanations on every assignment.
- Make associations between siblings of these students you might have previously taught and check for information you may have gathered from them that could be pertinent to your present students.
- Contact coaches and other teachers who also have your student; attend sporting events and programs to see students in other venues.
- Keep track of conferences and telephone conversations or e-mail correspondence with regard to students, especially those from parents/guardians.
- Some of this information could be included in the contextual information:
  - Gender and age (include physical/psychological ages, e.g., 8-year-old thinks s/he is 16)
  - Community (urban/rural/suburban/exurban)
  - Employment opportunities
• Geographical (environmental influences: ocean, mountain, prairie)

• Cultural life experiences (e.g., gang-related environment, extended families for generations, level of diversity, access to museums and other institutions)

• Academic ranges
  ▫ Strengths and weaknesses
  ▫ Honors, advanced placement, prerequisites
  ▫ Reading level/math level/writing level (e.g., comfort within each, proficiency within each)

• Student interests
  ▫ Art/sports/games/stories/etc.

• Special needs
  ▫ Medications
  ▫ 504 – IEP
  ▫ Para support
  ▫ Emotional level
  ▫ Physical development level
  ▫ ESL/ELL
  ▫ Student life experiences (e.g., foreign/foster/migrant/mobility/military)
  ▫ Gender issues

• Family
  ▫ Economics of household
  ▫ Free and reduced lunch
  ▫ Level of education of parents
  ▫ Structure (e.g., two parents/single parent/grandparents/foster/migrant/siblings/lifestyles)

• Cultural mindset (e.g., Ruby Payne—Understanding Poverty [poverty/middle class/wealthy])

• Level of technology (e.g., understanding, use and access to computers, internet, emails)

• Ethnicity and languages spoken/written in the home

b. Goals/Connections (G/C):

♦ Determine a pretest/diagnostic tool.

♦ Develop specific goals for each lesson (in the unit); know specific connection to student needs.
♦ Explain why the lesson activity was a need for that student/group of students (rationale).

♦ Provide examples of what and how lessons/activities were planned based upon student strengths, weaknesses, and interests.

♦ Explain how you determined student strengths and weaknesses.

♦ Tell what students did.

♦ Explain how the lesson met the goals (overall and individual).

♦ Explain why lessons were sequenced in a specific way; connect this to student needs and instructional goals.

♦ Refer to goals of your own school improvement plan and pre-determined goals, as well as your own particular goals.

♦ Use student evaluations from previous classes to determine changes that need to be made in your classroom or items you need to retain.

♦ Encourage students to participate in goal setting; include students’ areas of concern.

♦ Include modifications made in instruction to better address goals/needs of students.

c. Analysis of Student Responses (ANA)

♦ Essential concepts: the “so what?” factor; what the assessor is going to see and what it means; explain—DON’T DESCRIBE!

♦ Commentary should so clearly explain the evidence that there are no surprises for the reader.

♦ Explain whether students achieved or did not achieve the goals you set.

♦ Cite the specific evidence that indicates goals were met.

♦ Indicate lessons learned when goals were not met; suggest remedial measures.

♦ Cite modifications you made in the midst of the lesson.

♦ Cite evidence using content and details from student responses for making conclusions and for making modifications (rationale for judgments and change).

♦ Remember to avoid descriptions and concentrate on explanations.

♦ Tie your analysis to your understanding of the students, the environment, and the goals you have set or need to set for the future.

♦ Explain your input/comments; explain why you’re silent or fail to respond or offer comments, if that’s the case.
♦ Explain how your actions enhanced learning.
♦ Explain everything you did or did not do.
♦ Accentuate the positive aspects, but don’t neglect to notice and address the negative ones.
♦ Discuss how prior discussions and use of various terms you’ve covered previously are cropping up in their responses.
♦ Discuss victories students have achieved that might not be apparent.
♦ Use opportunities to illustrate your knowledge of your content area.
♦ Be certain to use the vocabulary and terms indicated in the NBPTS standards.

d. Reading Process (RP)
♦ Select the students whose work you’ll showcase carefully—both of them should not be your highest achieving ones.
♦ Indicate the opportunities for student input as you discuss the choice of texts.
♦ Illustrate the ways you encourage independent thinking and provide a supportive atmosphere for active sharing of interpretations of text.
♦ Illustrate your understanding of students’ interests and reading levels.
♦ Offer examples of various uses of non-print media in your classroom besides the example you need to discuss for this entry. In other words, make it clear this assignment is not an unusual practice in your class.
♦ Select examples of student work that clearly illustrate the variety of genres you cover in your classroom.
♦ Select goals that are individualized, as well as those you have designed for the entire class.
♦ Use this opportunity to illustrate your interest in cross-curricular activities to engage your students (history, drama, art).
♦ Highlight successes of student and address the problems s/he is encountering.
♦ Make sure your comments on the student papers are easily read and understood; it’s an opportunity to make your point and not use the limited space you have for explanation in your commentary.
♦ Be certain your rubric clearly addresses the goals you outlined for the project.
♦ Indicate how the particular student you’re showcasing might have differed in his/her interpretation with other members of the class, or with your own interpretation, yet show how you encouraged free thinking (or outside the box thinking).
♦ Employ literary terms and point out students’ understanding of them when used in their writing or products.

♦ Discuss the difficulty or simplicity of the texts used and how they are appropriate for the particular student or class.

e. Writing Process (WP)

♦ Explain how the assignments you’re highlighting help facilitate teaching the writing process in a way that meets individual needs.

♦ Though you may not showcase all the varied assignments, you can refer to previous assignments and strengths or weaknesses the individual students demonstrated on those assignments. (Strengths or weaknesses that were instrumental in prompting the assignment you’re submitting for analysis.)

♦ Use handwritten notes on the student papers as they’re corrected to save space in the commentary.

♦ Use instructions and peer editing sheets and rubrics to further illustrate goals for the students, in order to save commentary space.

♦ Highlight strengths and discuss remediation exercises for weaknesses in the writing.

♦ Be certain to use terminology associated with the writing process and language of the standards in remarks and explanations.

♦ Demonstrate efforts you’ve made to determine previous problems and illustrate your knowledge of previous writing experiences for your students. (Examine writing samples from previous years; peruse students’ portfolios if they are maintained from year to year in your school.)

♦ Consider discussion of journal writings or free-writing exercises to discuss importance of audience and its influence on student writing.

♦ Discuss use of graphic organizers and prewriting exercises, including them in your student samples, when possible.

♦ Consider each of the areas covered in the rubric and illustrate the methods you’ve used for addressing each of them.

♦ Refer to efforts made to increase or expand vocabulary, and/or to improve grammar, to vary sentence structure.

♦ Recreate key elements of conversations with students concerning their writing.

f. Assessment (ASMT)

♦ The word “evidence” refers to materials sent with portfolio to verify commentary. The word “tools” refers to materials, approaches, strategies used to demonstrate performance.
♦ Change all questions to statements/commands.
♦ Give evidence the assessment measured what you needed it to measure.
♦ Identify which part of the assessment measured which goal/s.
♦ Be specific; avoid vagueness or generalities.
♦ Illustrate the variety of rubrics and measuring devices used to accommodate the varied needs and strengths of students (performance-based).
♦ Discuss discrepancies or commonalities in oral discussions as they relate to written responses.
♦ Provide valid evidence.
♦ Illustrate use of many writing experiences: narrative, persuasive, interpretive, analysis, comparison/contrast, etc.

♦ Individualize assessments.
  • Options to paper and pencil
  • Evidence based on student abilities
  • Students have different goals (IEP)
  • Differentiated instruction
  • Evidence of student growth

♦ Clarify modifications and/or accommodations and why.

♦ Explain future instruction.
  • How has student growth or lack of growth modified future instruction?
  • Reflect effectiveness of instruction.
  • Identify if you need to change the instructional method, the materials, the environment, or the instructor.

♦ Assessment tools (may or may not be submitted with a portfolio entry) could include:
  • Concrete—a physical product
  • Data
  • Portfolio
  • Student developed
  • Videos
  • Measurable
  • Observable
  • Quantifiable
  • Tape recordings
♦ Student growth should be tied to goal(s).
  • Identify specific references to student growth as cited in the evidence.
  • Explain how student(s) demonstrated higher level thinking skills (problem solving, critical thinking skills, etc.).

♦ Reflect student ability to generalize to different environments (learning transfer).
  • Community-based assessment
  • Exhibit skill throughout the school, at home
  • Include information from parents
  • Report from other staff (SLP, para-educator, etc.)
  • Different conceptual contexts
  • Application of newly acquired knowledge to different situations

♦ Show need for further instruction.
♦ Discuss pre- and post-testing.
♦ Provide immediate feedback to student. (Include student conferences.)
♦ Show relevance to student. (Discuss student input and student-designed assignments or rubrics.)
♦ Use formative and summative assessments.
♦ Be aware of native language or preferred method of communication (e.g., Braille, written, typed, verbal).
♦ Is assessment process/environment safe, inviting, and familiar?
♦ Illustrate how assessment identifies the student's strengths, interests, preferences and needs.

♦ Again, use opportunities to discuss particular KOS (Knowledge of Students) when accommodating or allowing students to revise or rewrite.
♦ Consider video taping of class discussions and oral presentations so students can self-assess.
♦ Grade oral discussions rather than using only written tests.

g. Planning (P)

♦ Relate everything you plan to “the big picture” (your overall goals and objectives for your students).
♦ Consider learning objectives.
♦ Include information that indicates your KOS.
♦ Strive for creativity and variety; consult with co-workers, visit teacher-oriented websites.

♦ Review standards and align activities with those that accomplish only the goals appropriate for your class.

♦ Vary individual activities with collaborative efforts and cooperative learning.

♦ Include references to those activities that are predetermined by the school board or school administration, especially if they do not align with your own goals.

♦ Consider student-initiated projects: job fairs, videotapes of students, audio, demonstrations by students, student hallway displays.

♦ Include activities such as the following: role playing, demonstrations, discussions, in-class writing and salon discussions, cooperative learning, collaborative writing, reciprocal reading, graphic organizers, web resources (pre- and post-tests already developed), practice SAT and ACT tests, student-written tests.

♦ Include ideas and joint projects that incorporate other disciplines.

♦ Check on availability of resources early in the semester to improve options (consider Arts/Partners, field trips, outside speakers, drama presentations or productions—those non-print resources that are essential).

♦ Assign writing sample early in the semester to better assess students’ strengths and weaknesses. (Take reading survey and include oral readings also.)

♦ Review evaluations from previous students to determine what worked and what those students found helpful as you plan for current students.

♦ Remember to allow for scheduling problems, especially as they pertain to technology.

h. Instructional Resources (IR)

♦ Make determinations according to rationale, currency, relevance, affordability, availability, safety, student interest, and reliability.

♦ Always have an alternate plan.

♦ Tie every activity to the goals you have set and the standards for NBPTS.

♦ Consider the learning objectives, KOS, and keep in mind “the big picture.”

♦ Possible resources include the following items: texts, trade/library books, videos, Internet, websites, other teachers (all disciplines) CD Rom, Curriculum resources and ancillary items, library and research instruction, journals with particular prompts to gain KOS and estimate student needs, outside speakers, other institutions in town, university/museum, para-educators, student teachers, parents with particular gifts or vocations, class web pages,
Blackboard activities, T.V. programs, adaptations of novels, newspapers, periodicals, e-mail, Arts/Partners or other community programs and assets (songwriters, actors, artists of all types), Professional Learning Communities, web quests, computer games. Educational videos/popular film/video, outside experts.

♦ In order to engage students and enlist their interest and “buy-in,” consider activities that normally appeal to them: those related to current events, music, fashion, movies; those that engage the multiple intelligences; suggestions from brain research; personal interests (those gleaned from your student information sheets); those chosen by students; those that appeal to a variety of levels; hands-on activities; activities that are related to real life.

♦ Measure engagement by non-verbal indicators as well as verbal ones.

♦ Give close consideration to classroom environment; make it warm and inviting.

♦ Consider the arrangement of seating and re-arrange when needed.

♦ Model the behavior your expect: respect, greeting students warmly, learning names quickly, welcoming attitude, non-threatening demeanor.

♦ Allow students freedom to work together when possible.

♦ Know the target or purpose for the activity.

♦ Always be aware of safety issues.

♦ Design the layout of the room for effective traffic flow.

♦ Be sure students feel emotionally safe.

♦ Foster a cooperative/collaborative atmosphere.

♦ Consider strategies for grouping students.

♦ Plan for essential materials/equipment to facilitate learning.

♦ Organize room for content area.

♦ Make appropriate accommodations.

♦ Model respect for diversity.

♦ Incorporate fairness, access, and equity.
  • Fairness–students get what they need for success
  • Access–students have equal opportunities in learning experiences
  • Equity–leveling the playing field

i. Reflection (R)

♦ Identify and provide evidence from the student work/growth that dictates the next step(s) in this instructional sequence.
♦ Discuss how you will reteach specific information.
♦ Describe extension activities based on student interests/needs.
♦ Fill in gaps/provide clarification of concepts.
♦ Show how you will modify pacing (accelerate or slow down instruction).
♦ Identify possible alternative approaches that could impact student learning of this particular group of students.

♦ Strategies/alternative approaches could include:
  • Comparing/contrasting
  • Peer editing
  • Graphic organizers
  • Collaborative/cooperative learning
  • Differentiated instruction
  • Hands-on
  • Incorporation of technology

♦ JUSTIFY THE REASONS FOR THE USE OF THE IDENTIFIED STRATEGIES.

♦ Reflect on your teaching practice; identify the strengths and stretches that did/did not impact students learning throughout the instructional sequence.
  • Point to specific parts that were successful/impacting AND explain why.
  • Point out specific parts that were not as successful/impacting as hoped or anticipated AND explain why.
  • Factors could include:
    ○ activities
    ○ questions
    ○ sequence of activities/assignments/instruction
    ○ resources used or not used

♦ Identify adaptations/modifications made along the way or possible adaptations/modifications that could be made and state why they are/would be appropriate.

♦ Cite specific student feedback used to influence instruction.

♦ Explain how you could move this lesson from good to great.

♦ Identify what you learned (good and/or bad) from this lesson that can be transferred to future lessons.

♦ Identify peak moments in this instructional sequence that raised your own
personal definition of quality instruction.

♦ Continually refer back to the standards, your own goals, and your KOS as you reflect on your successes or needs for modifications.

♦ Take into consideration the variety of genres of literature and the varied reading levels of students as you reflect upon your teaching and the students’ progress.

♦ Avoid description. Stay focused on what happened, why it happened, how you will continue or adapt to gain better results.
Entry 2: Instructional Analysis: Whole Class Discussion

a. Knowledge of Students (KOS)

♦ Refer to suggestions provided in Entry 1.

b. Goals/Connections/Rationale (G/C/R):

♦ Refer to suggestions provided in Entry 1.

♦ Explain why the whole group discussion was a need for that student/group of students (rationale).

♦ Examples of how discussion was planned based upon student strengths, weaknesses, and interests.

♦ Be sure to carefully monitor all student behavior—even those not speaking or not engaged. Then discuss how to remedy their lack of participation or explain why on this particular day they were not engaged.

♦ Discuss evidences you find of students utilizing prior knowledge.

♦ Discuss specific victories you see in the video.

♦ Try to make the video a "normal" part of the equipment in the room so students are not intimidated or prone to "perform" for the camera.

♦ Expect the worst that can happen to happen and be prepared to adapt.

♦ Be careful to include the vocabulary and terminology you expect the students to know as you respond.

c. Instructional Sequence (IS)

♦ Keep explanation bare and brief.

♦ Make references to specific needs of students and why this particular discussion was important to assess student progress or to enhance it.

♦ Indicate preparation for this discussion and use opportunities to highlight successes that are not evident in the video. (That quiet student who never spoke previously, etc.)

♦ Indicate departures from your initial plan, if these occur.

d. Integration Across ELA Strands (INT)

♦ Describe how the discussion will aid in eventual writing or further reading assignments.

♦ Point out use of literary terms or other vocabulary students are beginning to "own."

♦ Watch for opportunities to point out students who are becoming better listeners and attending to their peers, relating to particular ideas they’re hearing.
Illustrate how articulation of concepts indicates higher-level thinking skills.

Indicate how preparation facilitated the discussion and indicate what those preparations entailed.

Discuss how you’ve prepared students to acknowledge one another’s comments and to listen carefully.

Explain how you hold students accountable for information they glean from these discussions.

e. ANALYSIS (ANA)

Refer to suggestions provided in Entry 1.

Have a colleague view the video and add what he/she sees that you may have missed.

Explain/address those students who do not participate or who seem to be disconnected from the class; reflect on what you could have done differently to include or engage them.

Cite the verbal and nonverbal communications, but explain and don’t just describe them; address feedback between teacher-to-student, student-to-student, and student-to-teacher.

Pay attention to the content and details in the conversation.

Do not simply ignore those who act out or misbehave, indicate your reasons for addressing them as you have.

Bring into your explanation individual idiosyncrasies you have observed about particular students, if those idiosyncrasies are apparent.

f. Learning Environment (LE)

Explain how you use various methods to encourage varied personalities in the classroom.

Indicate how previous small group discussions have contributed to comfort in a larger setting.

Indicate steps you’ve taken to “level the playing field.”

Avoid making comments that seem to be value judgments.

Concentrate on specifically indicating what was helpful about student comments.

For the more reticent speakers, compliment their attentiveness and encouraging non-verbal signals to those who are speaking.

Ask questions that stimulate discussion and can’t be answered with yes or no or one-word responses.
♦ Conduct this lesson in a format familiar and often-used in your classroom when you’re not filming.

g. Instructional Resources (IR)
♦ Refer to suggestions provided in Entry 1.

h. Content Knowledge (CK)
♦ Be thoroughly familiar with the information you expect students to discuss. (If it’s a piece of literature, carefully review criticisms and supplementary materials.)
♦ Review any technical or archaic terms that may need explanation or be difficult for students.
♦ Be alert for opportunities to tie new ideas to former teaching and experiences of the students.
♦ Illustrate KOS by tying comments into their particular interests and activities.
♦ Pounce on opportunities to compliment use of literary terms and recently acquired vocabulary when used by the students; use the terms whenever possible in your own comments and responses.

i. Reflection (R)
♦ Refer to suggestions provided in Entry 1.
Entry 3: Instructional Analysis: Small Groups

a. Knowledge of Students (KOS)
   - Refer to suggestions provided in Entry 1.

b. Goals/Connections (G/C):
   - Refer to suggestions provided in Entry 1 and Entry 2.
   - Explain why the small group discussion was a need for that student/group of students (rationale).
   - Relate determinations regarding grouping to your goals for each student.

c. Instructional Sequence (IS)
   - Refer to suggestions provided in Entry 2.
   - Explain how this will aid in future assignments and how previous assignments contributed to the success of this one.
   - If a written assignment will follow, explain how this discussion will aid students in that endeavor.

d. Integration (INT)
   - Refer to suggestions provided in Entry 2.
   - Point out use of literary terms or other vocabulary that students are beginning to use.

e. Analysis (ANA)
   - Refer to suggestions provided in Entry 1 and Entry 2.
   - Explain everything you did or did not do—especially how groupings were made.

f. Learning Environment (LE)
   - Refer to suggestions provided in Entry 2.
   - If students do not seem to be staying on task, remind them you will hold them accountable for the information they need to be gathering.
   - Emphasize the need for all to contribute to the good of the group.

g. Instructional Resources (IR)
   - Refer to suggestions provided in Entry 1.

h. Content Knowledge (CK)
   - Refer to suggestions provided in Entry 2.
♦ Try to avoid asking the same questions over and over to every group; clearly show respect for the diverse interests and skill levels.

i. Reflection (R)

♦ Refer to suggestions provided in Entry 1.