



Student Work Analysis Protocol

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Rhode Island Department of Education & the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment, Inc.

Overview

The Student Work Analysis Protocol presented here provides a process that Mentors and Beginning Teachers can use to discuss and analyze student work. It is intended to be applicable across subjects and grades, including literacy, mathematics, science, the arts, and others.

Analyzing student work gives educators information about students' understanding of concepts and skills and can help them make instructional decisions for improving student learning. The success of this process is dependent on a culture in which all educators are collaborative and focused on reflective practice to improve student learning.

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Terminology

The following provides a clarification of some of the terms used in this document:

Assessment – an instrument or process for documenting in measurable terms what students know and can do. Educational assessments can take many forms, including but not limited to, written tests and assignments, performance tasks, classroom work and observations, and portfolios.

Educator – indicates those individuals who are analyzing student work during a student work analysis session. This can include the Beginning Teacher and Mentor, as well as administrator, special education teacher, and specialists (reading, media, speech pathologists, etc.).

Protocol – a vehicle for building the skills and culture necessary for collaborative work. It can help to ensure equity and parity thus allowing the Beginning Teacher and Mentor to build trust by actually doing substantive work together. Protocols create a structure for asking and responding to challenging questions, reflecting on an issue or dilemma, and gaining differing perspectives and new insights.

Student Work – the student's response to the task.

Task – refers to any assignment that requires a response from students. This may be in the form of a constructed response, problem solving, or performance.

Why Analyze Student Work?

Engaging in a collaborative process of looking at student work allows the Mentor and Beginning Teacher to analyze the learning experiences the teacher has designed for their students and determine their effectiveness. When teachers collaboratively analyze student work they can build understanding and agreement about the consistent use and interpretation of a rubric with the goal of improving student learning. This process encourages beginning teachers to consider:

- What are my students' strengths with regard to the required knowledge and skills?
- What are my students' learning needs with regard to the required knowledge and skills?
- Do students have sufficient foundational content and process skills to approach new learning?
- How can I support student learning through scaffolding and differentiation?

The most important benefit of analyzing student work is improved student learning.

According to Langer, Colton, and Goff (2003), "the most important benefit of collaboratively analyzing student learning is that at-risk students learn more." In addition, through a student work analysis, students *and* teachers have increased clarity about intended outcomes.

Other benefits for Beginning Teachers working with Mentors may include:

- Increased **professional knowledge** about curriculum, students, methods, strategies, assessments, and contextual factors.

- Greater understanding of **alignment among standards, curriculum, instruction and assessments** and how to fill gaps for students, as well as how to assess based on instructional expectations.
- Positive opportunities to **collaboratively share expertise** and move away from isolated teaching.
- Higher consistency of **curriculum alignment within and across grade levels** are established.
- **School improvement goals and resource allocation** are driven by classroom data.
- **Professional development** planning is targeted to teachers' needs based on student evidence.
- A **collaborative culture** of inquiry about student success is developed.

Formative Analysis of Student Work

Formative analysis of student work through a collaborative process allows Mentors and Beginning Teachers to:

- Discuss what different levels of student work look like,
- Identify possible explanations for students' performances, and
- Discuss options for adjusting and strengthening instruction.

In addition, when setting targets for lesson objectives and student learning, knowing students' starting points enables Beginning Teachers and Mentors to approximate the amount of progress that students should make during the interval of instruction. One way to organize baseline data is to identify four levels of preparedness for the curricular focus of the objective statement/content standard:

Not Met	Students <i>have not mastered</i> pre-requisite knowledge or skills necessary, are far below standard or objective
Partially Met	Students have <i>mastered some or a few of the skills</i> , work may be approaching standard or objective
Met	Students <i>meet the objective or standards</i> of the task, demonstrate adequate knowledge or skills.
Exceeded	Students <i>have already mastered</i> some key knowledge and skills of the objective and, in fact, exceed the expectations.

Of course, in any given classroom there may be many, few, or no students in each of these categories. The use of the Analysis of Student Work Protocol will help determine the levels of preparedness both as baseline information, as well as to monitor student progress throughout the interval of instruction.¹

¹ For more information on baseline data and setting SLO targets see: *Using Baseline Data and Information to Set SLO Targets: A Part of the Assessment Toolkit*, www.ride.ri.gov/EdEval-OnlineModules

Student Work Analysis Process

During the Student Work Analysis process, Mentors and Beginning Teachers begin by:

- Gaining clarity around the expectations for student performance on a task and its corresponding rubric².
 - The Mentor will ask questions to assist the Beginning Teacher in understanding what is being assessed and in describing what constitutes a proficient response.
- Without scoring, do a quick “sort” of students’ work by overall degree of objectives exceeded, met, partially met, or not met.
 - You may also need to create a “not sure” pile. After the quick sort, the papers that were in the “not sure” pile should be matched with the papers in one of the existing piles.
- Once the papers are sorted, a few samples from each level (not met, partially met, met, exceeded) are reviewed and the prerequisite knowledge that students have acquired based on the assessment are discussed and recorded.
- Misconceptions or wrong information are also discussed and recorded.
- Finally, the Mentor and Beginning Teacher consider the learning needs for the class overall, noting patterns and trends, as well as the learning needs for each targeted group. These are recorded with the intent of acting upon them.
 - The Mentor should support the Beginning Teacher in developing strategies to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of learners in all four groups.

² If a rubric is not available, an effort should be made to create an applicable rubric for scoring the student work before undertaking the Student Work Analysis process or attempting to score the student work.

Student Work Analysis Protocol³

Teacher: _____ Mentor: _____

Subject Area: _____ Grade Level: _____

Unit/Topic: _____

Formative or Performance Task: _____

Date of Assessment: _____ Date of SWA: _____

Which standards (CCSS or content standards) or curriculum expectations are being assessed?

A. Expectations for Meeting Standard:

Read the assessment prompt, task, and/or rubric and explain:

- What are the students expected to do?
- What do you consider to be a proficient response on this assessment? Exactly what do students need to say or write or do for you to consider their work proficient?
- Did the assessment give students a good opportunity to demonstrate what they know?

B. Diagnosing Student Strengths and Needs:

Read the student work and without scoring, do a “quick sort” of students’ work by the general degree of the objectives exceeded met, partially met, not met. You may need a “not sure” pile. After sorting, any papers in the “not sure” pile should be matched with the typical papers in one of the other existing piles. Student names should be recorded in the columns in order to monitor progress over time.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Exceeded
___% OF CLASS	___% OF CLASS	___% OF CLASS	___% OF CLASS

³ Adapted by the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment from the (add in citation for Maryland doc) and the Center for Collaborative Education (2012). (Permission to reproduce and use is given when authorship is fully cited.)

Student Work Analysis Protocol (continued)

C. Describe the performance of representative samples from each group:

Choose a few samples to review more in-depth from each level (not met, partially met, met, exceeded) and discuss and identify the prerequisite knowledge that students demonstrated that they knew. It may be best to begin with the sample student(s) work that “meet” the objective or standard.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Exceeded

D. Interpret Misconceptions and Learning Needs:

Using the reviewed samples from each level, discuss and identify the misconceptions, wrong information, and what students did not demonstrate that was expected.

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Exceeded

Student Work Analysis Protocol (continued)

E. *Identifying Instructional Next Steps*

After diagnosing what the students in each group know and still need to learn, discuss the learning needs for the students in each level considering the following questions:

Based on your diagnosis of the student(s) performance:

- What patterns or trends are noted for the whole class?

- What instructional strategies will be beneficial for the whole class?

- Based on your diagnosis of student responses at each level (not met, partially met, met, exceeds), what instructional strategies will students at each level benefit from?

Not Met	Partially Met	Met	Exceeded

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Example SWA Conversation Questions for Mentors

Begin the Conversation

- Which standards (CCSS or content standards) or curriculum expectations are being assessed?

A. Expectations for Meeting Standard:

Read the assessment prompt, task, and/or rubric and explain:

- What are the students expected to do?
- What do you consider to be a proficient response on this assessment? Exactly what do students need to say or write or do for you to consider their work proficient?
- Did the assessment give students a good opportunity to demonstrate what they know? Discuss the assessment itself.

B. Diagnosing Student Strengths and Needs:

Discuss how to analyze the performance levels in order to sort them.

- What do you see in (this) student's work in relation to the expectations and criteria?
- What are the differences between the not met and partially met level? Between the partially met and met? Between met and exceeds?

C. Describe the performance of representative samples from each group:

- How does the representative student(s) work match the performance expectation?
- What does the student seem to understand?
- What is completely missing?
- What can the representative student in each category do? What strengths?
- Do you see any patterns?

D. Interpret Misconceptions and Learning Needs:

- What misconceptions do you see in the student(S) work?
- What gaps need to be addressed?
- What strategies or practices could increase conceptual understanding or skill development?
- What strategies have you noticed works best for this/these students?
- Any other factors that may have contributed to this work?

E. Identifying Instructional Next Steps:

- What patterns or trends are noted for the whole class?
- What instructional strategies would be beneficial for the whole class?
- What are some ways to differentiate instruction for each of the groups?
- What other supports might students in the not or partially met groups need to progress towards meeting the objective?
- What enrichment or next steps will you offer to those who exceeded the standard or objective?
- What support might you need to help your instruction meet student needs?