

edTPA™



## *Making Good Choices*

A Support Guide for edTPA Candidates

September 2015

**SCALE**

Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, & Equity

edTPA stems from a twenty-five-year history of developing performance-based assessments of teaching quality and effectiveness. The Teacher Performance Assessment Consortium (Stanford and AACTE) acknowledges the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium, and the Performance Assessment for California Teachers for their pioneering work using discipline-specific portfolio assessments to evaluate teaching quality. The edTPA handbooks have been developed with thoughtful input from over six hundred teachers and teacher educators representing various national design teams, national subject matter organizations (ACEI, ACTFL, AMLE, CEC, IRA, NAEYC, NAGC, NCSS, NCTE, NCTM, NSTA, SHAPE America), and content validation reviewers. The edTPA is built for the profession by the profession. All contributions are recognized and appreciated.

---

Copyright © 2015 Board of Trustees of the Leland Stanford Junior University. All rights reserved.

edTPA is a trademark of Stanford or its affiliates. Use, reproduction, copying, or redistribution of trademarks without the written permission of Stanford or its affiliates is prohibited.

## Table of Contents

Table of Contents .....	3
Introduction .....	4
Getting Started.....	5
Task 1: Planning for Instruction and Assessment.....	9
Task 2: Instructing and Engaging Students in Learning.....	18
Task 3: Assessing Student Learning .....	26
Appendix A .....	32

## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

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. **Read the entire edTPA handbook before you start working on your edTPA.** A thorough read of the edTPA handbook will help you navigate the requirements once you begin completing the assessment. When reading the handbook, do not skip any sections, text boxes, or footnotes. Everything in the handbook provides important information that will help guide you in your decision-making.

As indicated in the subject-specific edTPA handbooks, you can and should discuss with your teacher preparation instructors how the various aspects of edTPA connect with each other and to your preparation coursework and field experiences. 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.

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. *Making Good Choices* examines edTPA tasks within an interactive cycle of planning, instruction, and assessment. 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.

You may find some questions repetitive across tasks. This “repetition” is intentional. The questions that appear across tasks represent threads that tie all the tasks together, e.g., 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. For example, you will respond to questions about how your knowledge of your students was used to plan, instruct and assess. When considering your understanding of your students in Task 1, you should include references to how student assets are reflected in your instructional strategies and materials. When you respond to a similar prompt in Task 2, you should describe and provide evidence for what you and the students actually said and did in the video clips submitted. 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.

---

<sup>1</sup> The September 2015 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	
<b>Planning Ahead</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>How do I get started with my edTPA preparation?</u></a></li> <li>• <a href="#"><u>How do I represent my thinking and teaching in writing?</u></a></li> <li>• <a href="#"><u>When should I discuss students with specific learning needs?</u></a></li> </ul>
<b>Organizing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>What evidence do I have to submit?</u></a></li> </ul>
<b>Understanding The Rubrics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>How do I understand the rubrics?</u></a></li> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Alignment of Rubrics and Commentary Prompts</u></a></li> </ul>

### 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, including all rubrics and any other support materials you may have been given by your preparation program. Be sure that you understand the language of the rubrics so that you understand how you will be assessed on your teaching. When reading through Task 2, make a note on what you must include in the video. When reading through Task 3, note the types of student learning that you will need to assess. 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 Task 1.

[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 penalized for 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:**

- **Read each prompt carefully and be sure to respond using simple straightforward prose.** Incomplete, superficial, and unelaborated responses are not sufficient. Although there may be a few exceptions, one or two sentences for an answer to a prompt will not contain enough information for a reviewer to understand your intentions, what or how you have taught, or what your students have learned.
- **Pay attention to the verbs in the prompts.** They will guide the depth of your writing. 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.
- **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.
- **Move beyond 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.
- **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. It is important that you always back up your assertions about what students understand with specific evidence. **In Task 2,** you will submit video evidence for your teaching. Using time stamps will direct a scorer’s attention to what you want to be sure they notice, as well as provide concrete evidence for your commentary statements. Time stamps can be approximate; they need not be accurate to the second.

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

## *When should I discuss students with specific learning needs?*

Several times in your handbook, you will be asked to consider the variety of learners in your class – see boxed text below. 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 needs. When filling out the chart in the Context for Learning, make sure you include specific information related to students' required accommodations and modifications. You will come back to the student needs identified in the Context for Learning Information multiple times during this assessment.

**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](#)

## Organizing

*What evidence do I submit?*

**All of the requirements (and information about the optional elements) are listed in the Evidence Chart at the end of each handbook.** Read the Evidence Chart and be sure that you understand the requirements before you start working and verify that you have all the appropriate evidence before submitting your edTPA for scoring. Portfolios with missing or inaccessible evidence will receive condition codes (see the Submission Requirements at <http://www.edtpa.com/Content/Docs/edTPASubmissionRequirements.pdf>).

For edTPA, you will submit artifacts (e.g., lesson plans, video clips, copies of assessments and materials for your lessons) and commentaries. Response templates are provided as a structure for organizing your response. Templates are provided for the Context for Learning Information and the three task commentaries (an additional template is provided for the Elementary Education Handbook for a total of five templates). There are page limits for commentary responses in the templates, but please note that additional information you may be directed to add to the end of commentaries as needed does not count towards those limits (e.g. citations of materials from others, transcriptions of inaudible portions of videos, copies of assessments analyzed). You may find it helpful to use the Summary Chart found at the beginning of your handbook or the Evidence Charts as a checklist.

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

## Understanding The Rubrics

*How do I understand the rubrics?*

Each edTPA task has 5 rubrics (Elementary Task 4 has only 3) and each rubric has 5 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.

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

## 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
<b>Commentary Prompt</b>	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
<b>Commentary Prompt</b>	2 AGR: 2, 3	3 AGR: 4	4a EAL, PE: 4a-b AGR: 5a	4b EAL: 4c PE: 5 AGR: 5b	5 PE, AGR: 6

### Assessment Commentary & Rubrics

Rubric #	11	12	13	14	15
<b>Commentary Prompt</b>	1	2b PE: 2c	2c PE: 2d	3	4

**Key:**

AGR - Agriculture

ETS - Educational Technology Specialist

PE - Physical Education

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.

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

All of the required artifacts and commentary responses are taken into account during the scoring process. The Context for Learning Information, for example, 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. Your lesson plans, assessments, instructional materials, and video are key artifacts in the scoring process. So while you will not find a rubric that “scores” these items in isolation, they inform and are all part of what will be used in evaluating your responses.

## Task 1: Planning for Instruction and Assessment

<b>Key Decisions</b>	
<b>Planning For Alignment and Learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>What is my subject area emphasis?</u></li> <li>• <u>How do I select the central focus, student content standards, and student learning objectives?</u></li> <li>• <u>How do I select a learning segment?</u></li> <li>• <u>What should I include in my lesson plans?</u></li> <li>• <u>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?</u></li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge of Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>What information should I convey about my students when describing my class?</u></li> <li>• <u>How do I support the assertions I make about my students and decisions I make regarding their learning needs?</u></li> <li>• <u>How specific do my references to research and theory have to be?</u></li> </ul>
<b>Academic Language Demands</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>How do I identify the language demands of a learning task?</u></li> <li>• <u>How do I provide support for the language demands identified within a learning task?</u></li> </ul>
<b>Planning Assessments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>What kinds of assessments should I choose for my edTPA learning segment?</u></li> <li>• <u>How do I allow students with specific needs to demonstrate their learning?</u></li> </ul>
<b><u>Planning Task Key Points</u></b>	

## Planning for Alignment and Learning

### *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 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 should be related to the central focus.** The central focus should take into account prior assessment of your students and knowledge of your students' 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 understanding them, you will not fully address your subject-specific learning focus.**

Within your lesson plans you are asked to identify the **state content standards** (or national standards) 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.

**Elementary Candidates Only** – If you are completing edTPA tasks in Literacy, refer to [Appendix A](#) as an additional support for identifying your edTPA central focus, the essential literacy strategy, and related skills.

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

## *How do I select a learning segment?*

When selecting a learning segment for your edTPA, identify a central focus for teaching and learning, as well as the corresponding standard(s). **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. **District curriculum guidelines, school goals, grade-level expectations, and student interests must be considered as well. Although your cooperating teacher must not choose a learning segment for you, his/her input is useful in guiding you to consider all of the relevant factors in your selection.**

[Back to Planning Task 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):**

- **State-adopted or national standards**
- **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. Scorers will not search your lesson plans for explanations and rationale.** Use the commentary prompts to explain your thinking and justification for your plans.

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

## **Knowledge of Students**

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

The Planning Task (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 Task 1, **your responses to the Context for Learning Information prompts and the relevant Task 1 commentary prompts should provide detail** on the class demographics, 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 to meet 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 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 their prior academic learning, describe what the asset or prior learning encompasses and 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 Task 1).

**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.

[Back to Planning Task 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 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. **Formal citations are not required.**

The theoretical concepts and lines of research included in your edTPA **should support/inform your instructional decisions**. **Do not merely cite a textbook author, name-drop** (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 learner toward meeting the lesson objectives.**

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

## **Academic Language Demands**

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

Academic language is the means by which students develop and express content understandings. Academic language represents the language of the discipline that students need to learn and use to participate and engage in meaningful ways in the content area. **Your plans for academic 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 of a learning task include the receptive language skills (i.e., listening, reading), productive language skills (i.e., speaking, writing), and/or representational language skills (e.g., symbols, notation) needed by students to engage in and complete the learning task successfully. Academic language demands are so embedded in instructional activities that you may take many for granted, especially when you are a subject matter expert.

edTPA requires you to identify particular academic language demands within your learning segment and plan supports so your students can use the language you have identified. These demands include a language function and essential academic vocabulary and/or symbols, as well as syntax and/or discourse.

**The language function is the PURPOSE or reason for using language in a learning task.** In other words, how do the students need to communicate their understanding of content? Often, the standards and/or objectives from the lessons for the learning segment will include language functions embedded in the form of active verbs (e.g., students will be able to explain, infer, compare, justify). **You will identify ONE major language function all students need to develop in order to learn the content within your learning segment.**

Next you will be asked to choose a task from your learning segment where students have an opportunity to practice your identified language function. Considering both your chosen language function and learning task, you will identify additional language demands that students will need to understand and use including:

1. **vocabulary and/or symbols; and**
2. **syntax and/or discourse.**

**Examine all your instructional materials (texts, assessments, and other resources)** to document which content-specific vocabulary you will need to teach and consider how to support your students in understanding and using this vocabulary during your learning segment.

**Syntax and discourse pose additional language demands for your students during content learning. Syntax is the set of conventions for organizing words, phrases, and symbols together into structures** (e.g., sentences, formulas, staves in music). For example, syntax refers to the structure of a sentence—its length, word order, grammar, arrangement of phrases or notes on a staff (in music), active or passive voice, etc. If the syntax of a sentence is challenging the reader or writer, then the learner is confused about the structure and meaning of the sentence. After carefully examining the texts of your lessons, the ways you explain key ideas, and your expectations for what you want the students to write, determine which sentence patterns, grammatical structures, or symbolic conventions might be unfamiliar or difficult for your students so you can plan your language supports accordingly.

**Discourse refers to how people who are members of a discipline talk and write.** It is how they create and share knowledge. Each discipline or subject area has particular ways of communicating what they know and how they know it. **Discipline-specific discourse has distinctive features or ways of structuring oral or written language (text structures) that provide useful ways for the content to be communicated.**

For example, scientists and historians both write texts to justify a position based on evidence or data. In both disciplines, they use the same language function—i.e., justify—but the way they organize that text and present supporting evidence follows a different structure or discourse pattern. Are there discourse structures that you expect your students to understand or produce in your learning segment? If so, these discourse structures and how you support students to use them should be described.

**Remember: The language demands you identify should be important to understanding the central focus of the learning segment and should be embedded in the learning tasks in which students will be engaged. All students, not only English Learners, have language development needs (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) and need to be taught how to demonstrate these skills in your subject area.**

*How do I Identify 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 Learning Task: *Evaluate a friendly letter***

Identified Language Demand	Instructional Support
<b>Function:</b> evaluate	Discuss what “evaluate” means, model how to evaluate a well written “paragraph”
<b>Vocabulary:</b> greeting, salutation, body...	As class, define vocabulary and create word wall for vocabulary list
<b>Discourse:</b> 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.

(NOTE: Academic Language rubrics in Early Childhood handbooks address children’s vocabulary only. World Language and Classical Language handbooks do not include these rubrics because language functions, vocabulary, syntax and discourse are the focus of these fields.)

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

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

You may need to design alternate assessments for one or more students. In that case, the assessments must still measure how well students understand what they are learning; however, it may be necessary to design assessments that reduce barriers to demonstrating learning and allow students with specific needs to express their understanding in alternate ways.

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

Planning Task Key Points	
What to Include	What to Avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Plans for instruction</b> that include a focus on thinking skills (explanation, synthesis, evaluation)</li> <li>• <b>Rationale</b> for your instructional choices (all rationale should be written in your commentary, not your lesson plans)</li> <li>• <b>Explicit justification</b> of why your instructional strategies, materials, and planned supports are appropriate for YOUR students</li> <li>• Lesson plans that are a maximum of 4 pages each</li> <li>• Copies of all planned assessments</li> <li>• Copies of key instructional materials</li> <li>• Up to 9 pages of commentary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instruction or assessment that focuses primarily on memorization or rote application of procedures</li> <li>• 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)</li> <li>• Deficit or stereotypic descriptions of students</li> <li>• Lack of alignment between standards, objectives, learning tasks, and/or assessments</li> </ul>

## Task 2: Instructing and Engaging Students in Learning

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

## 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 important concerns. 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.

[Back to Instruction Task 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. Read your edTPA handbook carefully to be sure your clips are the appropriate length and that they feature the teaching and learning emphasis for your subject area.**

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

- **Advise your cooperating/master teacher and the principal at your school of your need to video record lessons for your learning segment.** Although a camera operator is often unnecessary, discuss any arrangements that you plan to make 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.** Respecting students' privacy as well as protecting yourself and your cooperating teacher are professional responsibilities that should not be ignored.
- **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 technology staff.

- **Consider the location.** Think about where you and your students will be located in the classroom during the activities to be shown in the video. **What evidence do the rubrics call for** that the camera will need to capture? Where will the camera/microphones need to be placed in order to optimize sound quality? Try to plan ahead and minimize the need for a camera operator by scouting locations in advance. In particular, think about where to place any learner who does not have permission to be filmed, so that s/he can participate in the lesson off-camera. If you do need a camera operator, meet in advance to share the lesson plan and 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.
- **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 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.** As you view and listen to the video clips, note any inaudible portions where understanding what was said would 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, but the majority of the video should be clearly audible and show both you and your students.
- Your video clips are the primary sources of evidence used in scoring Task 2. The evidence you need to collect for edTPA Task 2 should demonstrate how you engage students while teaching. Read the handbook instructions carefully. Read each prompt **AND** read each rubric to fully understand all of the evidence that your video should demonstrate. When choosing your clips, 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 your prompt, consider using time stamps from the video to support your written commentary and direct a scorer's attention to what you want him/her to see. Consult the Evidence Chart in your handbook for specific requirements for your clips.
- **Choose clip(s) that meet requirements for content and length.** Review the video, using any notes you have made, to identify excerpts that portray the subject specific focus required in Task 2. Then go back to select the clip(s) and identify starting and stopping times for the excerpts. Any break in the continuity of events signals the start of

a new clip to scorers, so count the number of clips/excerpts carefully. Caution: you may receive condition codes if you exceed the number of clips permitted, if the total time of your clips exceeds the maximum, OR if the total number of minutes represented in your clips is less than three minutes.

- **Be sure to review the instructions for downloading the video unless you use the camera often.** As soon as the video recording is downloaded, make a backup copy of the video on a hard drive, a USB drive, or a CD/DVD.

For a video tutorial that highlights what to consider for successful recording in the classroom, go to this link: <https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/videotaping-tips-for-teachers>

[Back to Instruction Task 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 there are formatting requirements outlined in the Evidence Chart in the edTPA handbooks. An expensive camera is not necessary for the demands of this assessment. Many low-end cameras 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.

- [Tutorials for using Windows Movie Maker to edit your video \(click here\)](#)
- [Tutorials for using iMovie to edit your video \(click here\)](#)

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

## Learning Environment

*What do I look for when selecting clips 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 among your students. 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 will direct a scorer's attention to what you want to be sure they notice, as well as provide evidence for your commentary statements. Time stamps can be approximate; they need not be accurate to the second.

[Back to Instruction Task 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 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 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 to **highlight how you prompt, listen to, and respond to students in such a way that you are supporting them to build on their new learning**. When responding to this prompt, **consider using video time stamps to support evidence of your interactions** and direct a scorer's attention to what you want him/her to see.

**Choose video clips 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 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 conduct 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 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 this section of your handbook and the accompanying rubric to determine the subject specific pedagogy/ies you are expected to demonstrate within your clips.

[Back to Instruction Task 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 timestamps from the video clips 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 explanation of citing research.)**

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

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

## Task 3: Assessing Student Learning

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

### **Analyzing Student Learning**

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

For 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. 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.**

**NOTE:** Early childhood candidates – in addition to the large group assessment, you must submit additional evidence of children’s learning. Refer to the Early Childhood handbook to verify the multiple sources of evidence required for your edTPA 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.

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.

[Back to Assessment Task 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. Your **evaluative criteria should align with the objectives of the learning segment. It should measure the outcomes of your learning segment as related to the central focus.** Importantly, the evaluation criteria should **address the elements of the subject-specific emphasis as defined in your edTPA handbook.**

[Back to Assessment Task 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 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:** While most handbooks ask you to select the focus students after analyzing the whole class data, if you are providing a video work sample, required in some fields such as Physical Education, you must select your focus students earlier in the process. Consult your handbook carefully to see what formats are required or accepted. If you must select a focus student in advance, consider prior performance to select a range of students.

[Back to Assessment Task 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? 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)? 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 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 feedback actually given to the focus students.**

At the very least, your feedback should make the focus students aware of their strengths **AND** their errors. **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 non-specific 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 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 address how the **focus students 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 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 (identified language function, vocabulary, and additional identified 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 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 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 clips from Task 2 (Instruction) – Provide time stamps
- An additional video clip submitted just for Task 3 – Academic Language (See handbook for instructions and provide time stamps as necessary)
- Student work samples from 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)** you identified in your Planning Task commentary in relation to content. **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 Language handbooks do not include these rubrics.)

[Back to Assessment Task 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 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 explanation of citing research.](#))

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

<b>Assessment Task Key Points</b>	
<b>What to Include</b>	<b>What to Avoid</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of <b>ONE</b> assessment that allows students to display a range of understanding of the specified subject-specific elements of your central focus</li> <li>• A focus on important trends in student performance, supported by examples from the work samples from the <b>ONE</b> chosen assessment</li> <li>• Focus students whose work samples represent a range of performance on the <b>ONE</b> chosen assessment</li> <li>• Concrete evidence of feedback <b>for each focus student</b></li> <li>• Concrete evidence of academic language use (video clip and/or student work samples)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A lengthy list of learning objectives, many of which are not closely related to the assessment analyzed</li> <li>• An assessment that only allows students to display a narrow range of knowledge and skills</li> <li>• An assessment that was completed by a group of students, not individually</li> <li>• 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)</li> <li>• Misalignment between evaluation criteria, learning objectives, and/or analysis</li> <li>• Feedback that is developmentally inappropriate or disrespectful to students, or that contains significant content inaccuracies</li> <li>• Identifying next steps for learning that are not related to your analysis of student learning</li> </ul>

# Appendix A

## ELEMENTARY LITERACY edTPA LEARNING SEGMENT CENTRAL FOCUS CONSIDERATIONS

It is vital to remember your edTPA should focus on literacy elements. While literacy instruction is sometimes integrated with content area instruction in the elementary classroom, only the teaching and learning related to students' literacy development will be documented for your edTPA materials.

Choose <b>either</b> comprehension or composition as the central focus.	<b>Comprehension</b>	<b>Composition</b>
<p>Identify <b>ONE essential literacy strategy</b> for student learning across the 3-5 lessons.</p> <p><b>Keep it simple!</b></p> <p>The lists on the right provide examples and are <b>not all inclusive</b>.</p> <p>See Common Core Standards or your state approved standards for additional ideas.</p>	<p><b>For Example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze characters or arguments</li> <li>• Analyze text structures</li> <li>• Summarize plot or main ideas</li> <li>• Compare characters or versions of stories</li> <li>• Compare points of view</li> <li>• Argue/persuade using evidence</li> <li>• Infer meaning from evidence</li> <li>• Describe a process or topic</li> <li>• Sequence events or processes</li> <li>• Support predictions based on evidence</li> <li>• Interpret a character's actions or feelings</li> <li>• Draw conclusions</li> <li>• Retell a story</li> <li>• Identify story elements, character traits, or themes</li> <li>• Identify characteristics of informational texts</li> </ul>	<p><b>For Example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brainstorming or other ways to gather and organize information for writing</li> <li>• Note taking from informational text to support writing topic</li> <li>• Using graphic organizers for prewriting</li> <li>• Revising a draft</li> <li>• Using a rubric to revise</li> </ul>
<p>Choose one or more <b>related skills</b> that directly support your students to develop</p>	<p><b>For Example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Print concepts</li> <li>• Decoding/Phonics</li> </ul>	<p><b>For Example:</b></p>

<p>or refine the learning strategy.</p> <p>The skills should be appropriate to grade-level student readiness and scope of lessons in the learning segment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phonological awareness</li> <li>• Word recognition</li> <li>• Fluency</li> <li>• Miscue self-correction</li> <li>• Language conventions</li> <li>• Word analysis</li> <li>• Syllabic, structural, or morphological analysis (affixes and roots)</li> <li>• Vocabulary meaning in context</li> <li>• Text structure features</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation)</li> <li>• Applying text structure features</li> <li>• Editing/Revising</li> <li>• Sentence fluency</li> <li>• Organizing text (topic sentences, transitions, paragraph structure, etc.)</li> <li>• Recognizing attributes of genre</li> <li>• Using descriptive language</li> <li>• Word choice</li> <li>• Using active voice</li> </ul>
--	---	--

### Make Reading/Writing Connections

Literacy naturally explores the relationship of reading and writing. Supporting students in making reading and writing connections is critical for developing strong literacy skills. For example, many of the skills that are taught in reading instruction also are beneficial to young writers. Students should understand through explicit connections that the processes of reading and writing are interdependent and mutually beneficial. In working under this umbrella of a reading-writing interdependence, students are better able to construct meaning from what they read or in what they write.

Through writing about their reading, students have opportunities to develop and demonstrate academic language. They practice the vocabulary associated with literacy skills and strategies and express their understandings about reading through writing. Students demonstrate understandings of syntax and grammar, text structure, and genre, as well as other features of “author’s craft.”

**Examples of activities that promote Reading-Writing Connections:**

- Reading and researching informational text to inform an essay
- Writing interpretations or analysis of informational text
- Writing dialogue between characters of a story
- Writing letters to characters or authors
- Writing letters to the newspaper editor in response to a story in the news
- Journal writing: making predictions, making personal or text-text connections
- Note taking
- Writing book reviews
- Writing from the perspective of a character
- Writing alternative endings for a story
- Writing in a style that emulates a text, a genre or an author
- Writing responses to persuasive essays