



Stony Brook University

Professional Education Program

Teacher Candidate Work Sample

Introduction

Educators today place a high premium on knowledge of standards and assessment and the ability to design instruction which links the two to enhance student learning. The work sample is designed to help teacher candidates grow professionally by focusing on the complex relationship between standards, assessment and instruction. The work sample also provides the social studies program with an important source of evidence that you have met our graduation standards and that you are capable of effectively applying the knowledge and skills learned at the University to promote student learning in an authentic classroom setting.

Core Elements

The basic principles underlying the work sample are that students learn best when:

- the teacher fully understands the teaching-learning context,
- the teacher sets challenging and diverse learning goals based upon national and state standards,
- the teacher plans lessons and selects instructional strategies that take into account both these learning goals and the different abilities and needs of the students,
- the teacher uses assessments at key points in the instructional sequence to monitor student learning and modify that instruction according to student needs, and
- the teacher can stand back and reflect upon his/her own teaching and use these insights to improve student learning and promote professional growth.

Each of these core elements will be examined in one section of the work sample.

I.Contextual Factors – The Setting for Learning

While schools may be similar with respect to the basic social studies courses they offer, the setting for learning varies greatly from district to district, from school to school within a particular district, and from classroom to classroom within a particular school. The more you know about all of these elements, the better equipped you will be to address successfully the needs of the school and its students.

Community

Describe how the characteristics of the community may impact teaching and learning. You should focus on:

- the location of the school and the district
- the resources of the district and its support of education

- the socio-economic and linguistic profile of the community
- the performance of the school on state assessments
- the percentage of students classified as Special Education/504
- the percentage of ESL students and their level of English proficiency

Much of this information can be found in the report cards issued yearly for each school. These are available on the internet at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/repcrd2005/>.

□ **School, Classroom, and Individual Students**

- Describe the school (size, organization plan, ability grouping, scheduling patterns, disciplinary policies, etc.)
- Describe the physical layout of the classroom(s) in which you are teaching, whether you are required to share this classroom with other teachers, the technology and other resources available
- Describe the classroom climate and any issues relating to student behavior.
- Identify the specific class you will be using for the work sample and discuss the composition of that class. Be sure to take into account students with specific modifications, students with limited English proficiency, and any other relevant student characteristics.

Your presentation should focus on explaining how the characteristics of the community, the school, and the individual students will affect your instructional design.

II. Learning Goals

The work sample focuses on the decision-making processes involved in the planning and delivery of a 2-4 week unit of standards-based instruction. The unit itself should consist of a sequence of interrelated lessons which are organized around a limited number (4-6) central learning goals and which provide the students with the factual knowledge, concepts, and skills necessary to understand these key issues.

In a 7th-grade social studies class, for example, "The American Revolution" would be an appropriate topic for a unit. The big ideas around which this unit could be organized might include: "Why did the colonists rebel against English rule", "Would it have been better to remain British subjects," "How did the Revolution determine what it meant to be an American," "How were the American colonists able to defeat the most powerful nation in the world," "Did the revolutionaries really believe in equality," and "Was the American revolution really a revolution"? These big ideas essentially raise interpretive questions for which there is no single, correct answer. They provide the overarching framework for the unit and connect the individual lessons.

Individual learning goals should focus on specific social studies concepts which students will need in order to make a reasoned judgment concerning the big ideas of the unit. For example, in this unit on the American Revolution, important learning goals might be: "Explain how mercantilism contributed to the discontent of the colonists?" "How did the Enlightenment influence the Declaration of Independence?" "Why did the colonists feel that their rights were being violated by the British?" In most cases, more than one lesson will be required to fully explore the individual learning goals.

Lesson aims are not the same as student mastery of specific course content. Generally, individual lessons should promote higher-level thinking skills and provide factual information as a means of developing these skills. Lessons may also be designed to promote the development of social skills and should help students learn how to make reasoned judgments about complex issues.

In this section, you should:

- Identify which unit will be the basis for your work sample. Describe the fundamental concepts and big ideas around which you are planning this unit and briefly explain how the individual lessons equip the students with the knowledge, concepts and skills necessary to come to grips with these essential questions.
- Based on your pre-assessment of the students (see below) identify 4-6 learning goals for the unit. These will form the basis for your assessment of student learning.
- Use a chart or form of graphic organizer to show how your learning goals are aligned with the relevant national and state standards. Links to national and state standards can generally be found on the Blackboard page for your program under External Links.
- Explain briefly why you think that these ideas are appropriate for your students.

III. Assessment Plan

Well-designed assessments can improve instruction in several ways. They will guide instruction by keeping teaching focused on the goals and standards to be achieved. Assessments are also important because they enable the teacher to see what students have and have not learned, to understand why, and, on the basis of this knowledge, to modify instruction accordingly.

Conduct a pre-assessment to determine what students do and do not know about the learning goals of the unit. A pre-assessment might be as simple as asking the students to write down what they know about the topic, or it might involve a set of carefully structured questions. The important thing is that the pre-assessment provide a baseline of prior student knowledge as it relates to your learning goals.

Your assessment plan for the unit should be based on the learning goals identified above. Assessments may be informal, such as student answers to teacher questions, games, and observation of students as they work on a class activity. The unit should also include traditional assessments such as quizzes, tests, reports, as well as other authentic assessments. You should employ multiple forms of assessment, and these assessments should be embedded in instruction to insure the value of this information to both you and your students.

- Provide a brief description of your assessment plan which explains how your assessments will, in fact, measure what you teach. You may wish to use a chart for this.
- Your assessment plan should also indicate how assessments can be adapted to meet the needs of individual students.

- Create a rubric for at least one of the major assessments in order to establish clear criteria for various performance levels.

IV.Design for Instruction

Using your knowledge of the teaching-learning context and the results of your pre-assessment, design and teach a 2-4 week unit of instruction which will help all of your students achieve the standards-based learning goals outline above. These lessons should form a coherent, connected instructional sequence from the first day until the last day of the unit.

Your planning for this unit should include a variety of learning activities linked to the unit learning goals. The design of the unit should indicate an in-depth understanding of content and the ability to make these ideas relevant and accessible to your students. You should carefully select instructional activities that will help your particular students achieve the identified learning goals. These activities should demonstrate that you are sensitive to the characteristics and needs of your students. Your lessons should employ a variety of instructional strategies. The unit should include at least one lesson using web-based technology to enhance instruction and one lesson using cooperative learning. Your lessons should also show that you are able to consistently incorporate literacy into content area instruction.

This section of the work sample should include all lessons taught as part of this unit together with all supplementary materials and assessments.

V.Analysis of Student Learning

The purpose of this section is to show that you are able to analyze your own teaching.

This section has three main components:

- For the entire class, use a visual means (chart, graph) to quantify student learning with respect to the unit learning goals.
- Then select a minimum of 3-5 students of different ability levels on the basis of a characteristic which you believe to be relevant to student achievement (language proficiency, ability level, learning style, etc.) and monitor their learning during the unit. To demonstrate that you are capable of effectively teaching diverse students, explain which instructional strategies were most and least effective for these individual students, and give possible reasons for these learning outcomes. In your written report, do not use the actual names of your students.
- Evaluate the success of each of the lessons comprising the unit using the attached form. Things you should consider include:
 - Was my lesson introduction/motivation effective? How do I know?
 - What went well? badly?
 - To what extent were the students productively engaged?
 - Did I alter my goals or instructional strategies as I taught the lesson? If so, where and why?
 - Were there any unanticipated occurrences?
 - Did any classroom management issues arise? If so, how did I respond and was this response effective?

- Was I able to effectively manage my time and achieve appropriate closure to the lesson?

VI.Reflection and Self-Evaluation

The purpose of this final section is to show that you are capable of using the insights gained through the Analysis of Student Learning to enhance your own teaching and grow professionally. Reflect on the following topics:

- ❑ If you were to teach this unit again, how might you revise your learning goals, instructional design decisions, or assessment system? Explain your reasoning.
- ❑ Drawing on both your analysis of student learning and your narrative self-evaluation of the lessons you taught, explain how teaching this unit has helped you grow professionally.
 - Identify specific areas (assessment, individualization of instruction, content knowledge, etc.) where you feel you need improvement in order to become an accomplished classroom teacher, and explain how your weakness affected your instruction.
 - Identify specific areas where you think your teaching was particularly strong. Provide evidence to support your claim.
 - What specific insights or experiences did you gain from this unit that wish that you had had before you began student teaching?

Suggested Length:

- 1.Contextual Factors - The Setting for Learning (2 – 4 pages)
- 2.Learning Goals (3-4 pages)
- 3.Assessment Plan (2-4 pages)
- 4.Design for Instruction (3-4 page narrative plus lesson plans and accompanying material)
- 5.Analysis of Student Learning (3-4 pages plus visuals)
- 6.Reflection and Self-Analysis (2-4 pages)

Work Sample Scoring Rubric

	Inadequate	Meets Standards	Exemplary
I.Contextual Factors – The Setting for Learning			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Analyzes demographic, cultural and linguistic characteristics of the community and the school <input type="checkbox"/> Describes resources of community and support of learning <input type="checkbox"/> Describes aspects of school organization that impact instruction <input type="checkbox"/> Describes the students in target class and their skills, prior learning, and learning differences <input type="checkbox"/> Analyzes how the above factors will influence learning goals and instructional design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two or more of the indicators for the description of learning context are not met or represent poor quality work, and narrative displays an inadequate understanding of the school, its community, and the students being taught, and/or a lack of care and time. • Candidate analysis of instructional implications of the community, school and classroom description is superficial, incomplete and/or fails in other ways to provide an adequate foundation for instructional planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the major indicators for the description of learning context are met, and those that are not met are considered minor or reasonable. Narrative displays adequate description and analysis of the school, its community, and the students being taught. • Candidate addresses instructional implications of the community, school and classroom description, but analysis may be general and intuitive rather than specific and theoretically informed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All indicators for the description of learning context are met to an exemplary degree, and narrative demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the school, its community, and the students being taught. • Candidate applies pedagogical theory in a sophisticated way to analyze the impact of setting and student skills, prior learning and learning differences on learning goals and instructional design.
II.Learning Goals			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Describes the fundamental concepts and big ideas and explains the significance of the unit <input type="checkbox"/> Identifies 4-6 significant, varied and challenging learning goals <input type="checkbox"/> Aligns learning goals with national, state and professional standards <input type="checkbox"/> Develops lessons that support the unit learning goals in ways which are appropriate for students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrative displays weak content knowledge and little awareness of the major issues to be addressed in the unit and may not adequately explain either how the unit fits into the curriculum or the ways in which individual lessons and the instructional sequence support learning goals. • A substantial proportion of learning goals do not address significant issues and/or their relation to relevant standards is unclear or absent. • Learning goals do not consistently relate to the major issues and concepts, are not clearly formulated, and/or fail to ask meaningful questions in ways that are appropriate to the students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrative displays adequate content knowledge and an awareness of the key disciplinary concepts, but may not fully articulate the contribution of the unit to the curriculum or the ways in which individual lessons and the instructional sequence support learning goals. • Most learning goals address significant issues and are aligned with relevant standards. • Learning goals generally relate to the major issues and concepts, but may be overly general, address only factual knowledge, or not clearly convey the significance of the topic to the students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrative displays sophisticated knowledge of the content to be taught and the fundamental concepts of the discipline and clearly articulates significance of the topic within the overall curriculum and the ways in which individual lessons and the instructional sequence support learning goals. • All learning goals address significant issues or understandings and are clearly aligned with relevant standards. • Learning goals translate content knowledge into challenging and meaningful questions appropriate to the students.

	Inadequate	Meets Standards	Exemplary
II.Learning Goals – continued			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Develops lessons that are clearly written, utilize higher order thinking skills, and allow students various means to demonstrate proficiency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson aims generally do not promote development of higher-order thinking skills and/or their relation to learning goals is weak. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most lesson aims promote the development of higher-order thinking skills and support unit learning goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All lessons are clearly written, promote higher-order thinking skills and support unit learning goals.
III.Assessment Plan			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Develops clear and well-designed pre- and post-assessments that are aligned with learning goals ❑ Unit employs multiple forms of traditional and authentic assessment ❑ Establishes clear criteria or various performance levels ❑ Adapts instruction and assessment based on needs of individual students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre- and post-assessments are poorly designed and/or not aligned with learning goals and results do not inform instructional decision-making. • Unit relies upon a small number of traditional assessments which may not either adequately promote or assess student learning. • Either does not employ rubrics or fails to incorporate them in any meaningful way into instruction. • Generally does not adapt assessments to meet student needs or does so in inappropriate ways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre- and post-assessments generally address the learning goals and are consistent with instructional decision-making, and results are sometimes used to inform instructional decision-making. • Unit generally relies on traditional assessment tools (multiple choice, short answer, essay) that may not provide students with the opportunity to apply and extend their knowledge. • Employ one or more rubrics to help the student understand the individual learning goals and how they will be assessed. • Provides some accommodations in assessment to meet the needs of individual students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre- and post-assessments are well designed and aligned with learning goals and results are used to inform instructional decision-making. • Unit employs multiple forms of traditional and authentic assessment to assess and promote student learning and modify instruction. • Designs and employs multiple rubrics to guide student learning, assess performance proficiency, and provide feedback and incorporates self-assessment into learning goals. • Consistently provides well-reasoned accommodations in assessment to meet the needs of individual students.
IV.Design for Instruction			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Integrates assessments that are aligned with relevant standards and learning goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not effectively implement assessment plan and/or does not use assessment results to inform classroom practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implements the assessment plan and provides feedback to students, but may not be able to consistently use assessment results to identify and respond to learning differences or to provide concrete feedback relative to identified learning difficulties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently uses the assessment plan (Section III) to identify student learning differences and difficulties, to inform and modify instruction, and to provide constructive feedback relative to identified learning difficulties on an ongoing basis.

	Inadequate	Meets Standards	Exemplary
IV.Design for Instruction – continued			
<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates in-depth knowledge of content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Displays gaps in subject area knowledge, unable to effectively communicate central concepts of discipline, or adequately respond to student questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates adequate knowledge of discipline and curriculum, but may not be able to situate the lesson or unit within a broader conceptual framework or anticipate and respond to student learning difficulties and misconceptions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates sophisticated knowledge of key disciplinary concepts, is able to contextualize instruction, and is able to anticipate and respond to student learning difficulties and misconceptions.
<input type="checkbox"/> Presents a coherent instructional sequence <input type="checkbox"/> Employs multiple instructional strategies including cooperative learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sequence and coherence of lessons is weak and lesson plans are not adequately developed. Unit may not employ multiple strategies or implement them successfully. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lessons are related to the unit learning goals and lesson plans are adequately developed. Unit employs and adequately implements multiple instructional strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit represents a coherent, well-developed instructional sequence and lesson plans are fully developed in content and pedagogy Unit demonstrates good execution of wide variety of instructional strategies.
<input type="checkbox"/> Includes adaptations and accommodations for exceptional students <input type="checkbox"/> Integrates technology to enhance instruction <input type="checkbox"/> Incorporates literacy into content area instruction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No modifications designed or implemented. Lessons may not employ web-based technology or fail to do so successfully. Lessons do not regularly incorporate literacy and/or do not do so in ways which enhance instruction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some modifications designed and implemented. Lessons successfully employ web-based technology to enhance instruction. Lessons generally incorporate literacy though integration into content area instruction may be artificial. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lessons consistently demonstrate the ability to design and implement adaptations to the needs of exceptional learners in appropriate ways. Lessons employ web-based technology in innovative ways to enhance instruction. Lessons consistently incorporate literacy in ways which reinforce content area learning.
V. Analysis of Student Learning			
<input type="checkbox"/> Charts student learning with respect to learning goals is charted for the whole class and selected individual students <input type="checkbox"/> Interprets results of quantitative and qualitative analysis to assess impact of instruction on student learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student learning is not charted for class and students and/or work is sloppy or incomplete. Narrative analysis of learning outcomes is incomplete, does not identify salient factors and/or explain how they influenced student learning using evidence drawn from unit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student learning is charted for whole class and individual students. Narrative displays knowledge of class and individual students, identifies salient factors influencing student learning, and provides plausible explanations of differences in student learning outcomes based on evidence drawn from unit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student learning is charted in creative and illuminating ways for whole class and individual students. Narrative displays detailed knowledge of class and individual students, identifies salient factors influencing student learning, and make explicit use of pedagogical theory and based on evidence drawn from unit to explain differences in student learning outcomes

	Inadequate	Meets Standards	Exemplary
V. Analysis of Student Learning – continued			
<input type="checkbox"/> Brief reflections are provided for each lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflections on individual lessons are missing and/or demonstrate a lack of time or care, and they show an inadequate understanding of teaching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All lessons are analyzed with regard to planning, instruction, and class management, and they show a maturing understanding of teaching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All lessons are analyzed in a detailed and thoughtful manner with regard to planning, instruction, and class management, and they show an exemplary understanding of teaching.
VI. Reflection and Self-Analysis			
<input type="checkbox"/> Reflects on implications of the Analysis of Student Learning (section V) for future teaching and professional development and supports reflections with evidence drawn from the unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrative is incomplete or missing, displays a weak understanding of candidate's strengths and weaknesses, and does not make concrete connections between student learning and goals for professional growth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrative shows a developing understanding strengths and weaknesses and the ability to translate these insights into concrete goals for professional growth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrative shows a sophisticated understanding of strengths and weaknesses supported by evidence and the ability to translate these insights into concrete goals for professional growth.

Lesson Planning Form

Course: _____

Unit: _____

Date: _____

Big Ideas or Essential Questions	Content Standards	Lesson Objectives	
Motivation	Learning Activities		Assessment

TWS/Individual Lesson Reflection

Respond to the following questions as you reflect upon the lesson taught on the other side of this page.

1. Did I achieve the overall objectives of the lesson? How do I know?
2. What parts of the lesson were effective?
3. What parts of the lesson did not succeed as well, and why?
4. How would I evaluate my introduction to the lesson?
5. To what extent were students productively engaged during the lesson?
6. What changes did I make in the lesson as I taught it? Specify where and why.
7. Were there any unanticipated occurrences?
8. Did any classroom management issues arise? How did I respond?
9. Did I achieve appropriate closure to the lesson?
10. If I were to teach this lesson again, what changes would I make?