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What to Do First

In general, it is important for candidates to approach the portfolio systematically and to remember the following points:

- Careful reading and study of the Standards is an essential first step.
- Formulating a plan for responding to all of the portfolio entry directions before beginning to respond to any single entry makes success much more likely.
- Reading through all of the entry directions before beginning to make choices about documentation will make the process of response much more efficient.

For candidates who are beginning the portfolio process, it is important to focus on the Standards for the certificate area chosen and then achieve an understanding of the portfolio process and the nature of the evidence this portfolio asks candidates to gather.

The information provided in Get Started is meant to help you prepare for completing your portfolio. In this section, you will find tips and practice activities for studying the Standards, writing about teaching, and videotaping. Completing the practice activities will help you become more familiar and comfortable with the tasks you will be required to complete for each entry.

Reading the Standards is recommended before you move onto the writing and videotaping guides. By becoming familiar with the Standards you will be prepared to apply what you've read to the practice activities. A link to the Standards has been provided below.

Get Started also includes the forms you will need to complete and return in the Forms envelope. Be sure to carefully follow directions regarding these forms.
Get Started

Studying the Standards

One of your most important initial tasks is to study thoroughly and carefully what the Standards articulate and to understand how they might be reflected in actual day-to-day practice. All NBPTS Standards are based on the Five Core Propositions that first appeared in the National Board's policy statement What Teachers Should Know and Be Able To Do. These propositions define the "knowledge, skills, dispositions, and commitments" of teaching:

- Teachers are committed to students and their learning.
- Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.
- Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.
- Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.
- Teachers are members of learning communities.

Studying the Standards includes the following sections:

- Tips for Studying the Standards
- Things to Keep in Mind
Get Started

Tips for Studying the Standards

1. Look carefully at the Five Core Propositions that outline what teachers should know and be able to do. Jot down at least one specific act or activity that you and/or your colleagues do regularly that illustrates each proposition.

2. For each Standard in the set of Standards for your content area/developmental level, ask yourself the following questions:
   - What would an accomplished teacher know and be able to do with respect to this Standard? Be very specific.
   - How might an accomplished teacher demonstrate proficiency with respect to this Standard? How could such a teacher prove to you that he or she was meeting this Standard?
   - What might a teacher do or say that would give convincing evidence that this Standard was not being met? What is the rationale for that judgment?
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Things to Keep in Mind

The following paragraphs contain reminders of some issues that will be helpful for you to remember throughout the process of completing your portfolio entries. It is important for all candidates going through the assessment process to focus on the Standards for the certificate area chosen. The Standards lay the foundation for the certificate.

Note that the purpose of the Written Commentary is to provide you with an opportunity to give details about the context in which you teach and your instructional practice. The Written Commentary is an essential window into how you analyze and reflect on your practice—it is your opportunity to reveal how and what you think about your work.

The direct evidence of your teaching that you present (student work samples or videotaped lessons) is critical to your entry. Student work samples that you have annotated provide assessors with evidence of your ability to pose meaningful assignments that elicit student understandings (and may possibly reveal misunderstandings) and of your ability to offer constructive feedback to your students. Videotaped lessons enable assessors to see and hear exactly what occurs in your classroom: how you interact with students and how students interact with each other in the classroom environment you have created.

The assessment of your entire entry (Written Commentary, student work samples or videotape, and instructional materials) is based on the evidence that you provide of your teaching practice, not the level of your students' performance. For guidance on selecting your evidence, see the section "Making Good Choices" in each entry.

As you work on completing your portfolio entries, you should reflect on ways to improve your responses by asking yourself these questions:

- Does the entry, taken as a whole, accurately represent my teaching?
- Are there important aspects of my teaching that the entry does not capture?
- Could I select student work samples or videotape opportunities that would better fit the guidelines given in the portfolio instructions?
- Do I address each of the questions listed in the Written Commentary instructions?
- In what ways could I improve my responses to the questions in the entry directions?
- In what ways might my responses be incomplete or unclear to someone who understands my teaching only by the work I am submitting in this entry?
- Have I accurately described my students' language abilities, and the role of both first and second languages in my class (if appropriate)?

If you have trouble answering these questions, a colleague or mentor may be able to help you.
Get Started

Writing About Teaching

Throughout the directions for the portfolio entries in the NBPTS certification assessment, you are encouraged to describe, analyze, explain, or reflect. Much of the evaluation of the work you select as representative of your practice for the purposes of the assessment depends on your ability to provide insight into not just "what is happening" in your classroom, but the rationale for those events and processes. You do this, in the assessment, through the individual analyses submitted with each sample of instruction. For example, bilingual teachers should describe, analyze, explain, or reflect upon the developing bilingual capabilities of their students as part of the circumstances of their teaching.

In the documents that accompany your samples, you are asked to describe your work, analyze it, and reflect on it. Because it is not always a part of the daily practice of teaching, some teachers may have little practice in such description, analysis, and reflection. Therefore, before you begin the assessment itself, it may be helpful to gain some practice in this kind of thinking and writing.

It is essential to understand at the outset that your Written Commentary on your teaching is the final visible result of a great deal of less visible labor. That labor is the kind of work that the optional practice activities in these preparation materials are designed to help you complete. Although you will not submit the practice activities provided in this section, we encourage you to use them to familiarize yourself with the kinds of thought and writing that are required in the portfolio entries. In addition, writing examples and suggestions are provided in this section to help you present a clearer picture of your practice to assessors.

Thinking analytically about teaching is complicated because teaching itself is complicated. The questions we have provided to assist you in getting beneath the surface of the daily details of your teaching are intended to help you begin the work of analysis. Systematic and probing questions about why, how, and so what are the key elements in analyzing your practice and beginning to reflect on it.

It is important to remember that the only information available to assessors is what you provide in your videotapes, student work samples, instructional materials, and Written Commentary. This means that your written work is your main vehicle for communication with assessors. Regardless of the strength of the evidence that you present in each portfolio entry, a crucial element in your Written Commentary is your analysis of what happened in your featured teaching. This means that you must present evidence to assessors and demonstrate to them that you understood this information and used it appropriately in your teaching.

Thus, this brief guide to writing about teaching is really a guide to the summary activity that is preceded by all of the hard work of thinking, talking, discussing, prewriting, and rethinking that the preparation activities are designed to help you do.

Writing About Teaching includes the following sections:

- Description, Analysis, and Reflection
- Writing Examples for Description, Analysis, and Reflection
- Reviewing Your Writing
- Analysis Practice
Description, Analysis, and Reflection

There are essential differences between descriptive and analytical writing. As you prepare your Written Commentary and your analyses, you need to keep these differences in mind. The directions given in the assessment materials will call for one or another kind of writing; an appropriate response to these directions is essential to a full presentation of your work.

Basic definitions of "Description," "Analysis," and "Reflection" appear below, followed by more detailed sections describing each type of writing.

**Description**: A retelling of what happened in a classroom situation. This kind of writing is meant to "set the scene" for assessors. Your description should be logically ordered and detailed enough to allow assessors to have a basic sense of your classroom situation so that they can understand what you are conveying in your Written Commentary. See the "Description" section, below, for more detailed explanations.

**Analysis**: Analysis deals with reasons, motives, and interpretation and is grounded in the concrete evidence provided by the materials you submit. Analytic writing shows assessors the thought processes that you used to arrive at the conclusions you made about a teaching situation. Analysis demonstrates the significance of the evidence you submit. See the "Analysis and Reflection" section, below, for more detailed explanations.

**Reflection**: A thought process that occurs after a teaching situation. This is the thinking that allows you to make decisions about how you would approach similar situations in the future. You could decide to do something the same way, differently, or not at all. Although reflective thought may occur in many places, the "Reflection" section of your Written Commentary is where you must show assessors how you use what you learn from teaching experiences to inform and improve your practice in the future.

**Description**

When you are asked to describe, be certain that your response meets these criteria:

- accurate and precise enumeration and/or explanation of critical features;
- clear and logical ordering of the elements or features of the event, person, concept, or strategy described; and
- inclusion of all features or elements that would allow an outsider to see as you see whatever is described.

Description is called for when the prompt uses verbs like state, list, or describe, or asks what or which as the opening interrogatory words. You want to be sure that your descriptions are clear and detailed enough to allow someone who does not know what you know to visualize and understand what you are describing.
Analysis and Reflection

"Analysis" and "Reflection" overlap, though they are not identical. "Analysis" involves interpretation and examination of why the elements or events described are the way they are. "Reflection," a particular kind of analysis, always suggests self-analysis, or retrospective consideration of one's practice, in the terms of this assessment. When you are asked to analyze or reflect, be certain that your response meets these criteria:

- The subject of the analysis is available to the reader (e.g., the student work samples, the videotape).
- The focus of your writing is not on what (which is descriptive) but rather on why (which is analytical and reflective).

For example, if you are asked to analyze the success of a particular lesson or some specific teaching, do not explain what happened. This is description. Moreover, simply stating a conclusion ("The lesson was a success") or saying that you observed the fulfillment of your learning goals ("Students gained a better understanding of multiculturalism in our society") without giving evidence or examples to support the statement is not analysis. Assessors need to be aware of specific details about why you interpreted the results of a lesson the way that you did. You also need to explain what interpretation you make of what happened, your sense of why it happened that way, and your understanding of what should come next. You should back up your conclusions with specific evidence or examples that make your point clear to the assessor.

Analysis deals with reasons, motives, and interpretation. All of these are grounded in the concrete evidence provided by your work sample. But the work sample cannot give an assessor your understanding and interpretation of the significance of what you have submitted as samples of your practice. Only your analysis can do this. And your work sample cannot tell an assessor what you have inferred about your practice from what he or she sees—only your reflection can give an assessor that information.

Analysis is called for when a question in the Written Commentary asks how, why, or in what way[s]. When you are asked to identify a particularly successful moment in a sample of teaching and tell us why you regard it as successful, you must analyze. When you are asked for a rationale, you must analyze.

When you are asked what student performance suggests about your teaching, you are being asked to analyze and interpret. This means that you are to use the evidence of student work to explain and illustrate your practice and also to use your practice to explain and provide a context for the student work. Ask yourself:

- What did my students know before this teaching experience?
- What did my students learn because of this teaching experience?
- What did I know about my students and their knowledge before this teaching experience?
- What did I learn about my students and my practice because of this teaching experience?

When you are asked what you would do differently, you are reflecting on and analyzing your practice.
Get Started

Writing Examples for Description, Analysis, and Reflection

This section presents three examples of writing that a teacher might compose for a Written Commentary. The examples represent different ways a teacher might respond to the learning goals/requirements and Standards of a hypothetical portfolio entry (see "Sample Entry for Writing Examples 1, 2, and 3," below). You should read the sample entry first, and then the three writing examples below.

Note: The three writing examples do not represent actual candidate responses, and are not intended to be indicative of Level 3 or Level 4 writing or performance. They also do not represent the only acceptable activities and teaching practices that may be submitted in your portfolio entries. Their only purpose is to illustrate some of the differences between descriptive, analytical, and reflective writing. Also note that the "Sample Entry for Writing Examples 1, 2, and 3" may not reflect the actual requirements and Standards for your certificate area. The Writing Examples are in Adobe® Acrobat® PDF format. To read these documents, you need to install Acrobat® Reader software on your computer. You can download the free software by following the instructions provided by Adobe Systems. A link to Adobe's Web site is provided below.

Sample Entry for Writing Examples 1, 2, and 3

Learning Goals/Requirements: Students will understand the function of the family unit from varied perspectives: its function for the family itself, its role as part of a culture, and as a part of human history. If applicable, students will learn and apply new vocabulary in English that pertains to the family and all subsequent discussion.

Standards

I. Knowledge of Students
II. Respect for Diversity
III. Instructional Resources
IX. Families and Community
X. Reflection & Growth

Writing Examples:

- Example 1
- Example 2
- Example 3
There are 32 students in my class—29 students of various Hispanic backgrounds, and three Vietnamese students. The class is a “sheltered” science class—all of my students are speakers of English as a Second Language. My students range in age from 13 to 17. Their academic and developmental abilities also vary widely, from Tomás, who is barely literate in his first language, to Juan, who is above grade level. Many of my students come from single parent homes and/or homes where drugs or alcohol interfere with the family structure. Five students have children who stay in the school’s nursery during the day; others have responsibility for siblings.

My students bring challenges to the classroom, so I design my lessons in such a way that it is accessible and applicable to their lives, as well as flexible enough to be appropriate for the wide range of learners.

The videotaped lesson was part of a unit that had the overarching goal of examining major body systems and their functions, i.e., skeletal system, respiratory system, etc. I approached this goal through teaching basic first aid, combining TV footage of accident cases with first-aid equipment borrowed from the local Red Cross, and a mini-lesson on each body system as it related to a particular accident case. Since many of my students cared for siblings, it seemed appropriate to teach life skills as part of life science.

In the selected video segment, we began by watching a clip of a popular TV drama show, showing footage of an ambulance squad responding to 911 calls. We watched the clip several times on the classroom TV, always stopping the scene right before the paramedics began to treat the individual. We then discussed the body systems affected. In this instance a child was choking on a small toy.

I guided students to examine what they knew about the body system affected (based on previous lessons and in-class reading). I used their interest to extend their understanding of the respiratory system. I encouraged students to take notes using handouts with partial outlines. I was able to unobtrusively give tailored hand-
outs to particular students who had different learning needs. I provided Tomás, who was developmentally at a second-grade level, a more structured worksheet in Spanish, which he was able to successfully complete. For the benefit of Juan and others, I provided “extra credit” questions on the class’s regular handout, because I wanted to encourage them to push themselves in their thinking processes.

After the class review of the respiratory system, we referred to the literature provided by the Red Cross on how to administer first aid to a choking victim. Since my main goal was teaching science information, I was not concerned with which language(s) students used to assimilate information or demonstrate their knowledge. I was able to provide texts in both Spanish and English (and in this case Vietnamese) by asking community volunteers to translate worksheets. Students read and in pairs discussed circumstances in which they might find someone choking and what they would do. As seen in the videotape during this section of the class, I monitored groups, directing them back to the first-aid pictures and texts, praising good group work and reminding some students of the rules we jointly developed for respecting one another and for learning.

To conclude the lesson, we discussed crucial differences in administering care to adults and children, linking this to differences in the body systems of children (who are still developing) and adults. We watched the conclusion of the 911 tape and compared our choices to those of the actual paramedics. You can see in the videotape how pleased the students were to see that they had correctly predicted the paramedics’ plan.

Later in the unit, students were assessed summatively both in a written test (in Spanish, English, and Vietnamese, with students free to respond in the language of their choice) with multiple-choice questions and short answers, and also in performance-based tests where groups of students acted out role-plays, as they had in the lessons.

My students present many challenges and many rich opportunities for learning. I designed this lesson to be interesting because they could see applications to
their lives; because it employed multimedia components—television, overhead transparencies, handouts, and brochures; and because they could actively learn through teamwork and hands-on assignments. I tried to design out-of-class work, such as teaching a family member about what was learned in class and reporting back, to be nonessential to the next day’s lesson, so that I did not “lose” those students who, for various reasons, did not do the homework. Homework provided opportunities for enrichment or application, but did not hold back students who cared for siblings and had less time for academic activities in the evenings. These supports did not make the class “easier.” In fact many students still did poorly despite my efforts to engage them. However, this approach to learning seemed to raise class interest in learning, as evidenced through a high level of participation by a majority of students. I could see in their written work that a large number of the students were able to learn most of the information presented, and I experienced fewer classroom management problems than other teachers who have this group of students.

In looking back at this unit on body systems and first aid, I would have liked to build in more pre-testing, to better assess students’ prior knowledge. I would also have liked to bring in a bilingual speaker from the Red Cross, who had a positive relationship with the local Hispanic or Vietnamese community groups. I did not try this initially, since I was unsure of how well-behaved the students would be. I think I would need to discuss guidelines with them for having speakers, and we would all need to agree on a code of behavior, much as we did for the classroom in general (at the beginning of the year). Overall, the lesson was successful, and I tried to apply a similar approach to all of my units in this class.
I teach English Literature at a large urban high school in an economically depressed area. My students are 11th and 12th graders, with varied reading and developmental levels. The majority of students are African American, with four Asian students. Most students come from families who are struggling financially. My students have had to deal with drug-related deaths of friends or siblings, and many drop out of school to seek part-time jobs.

I believe it is important to expose my students to both “classical” literature written by predominantly White, European authors, and also to literature written by people who share my students’ racial backgrounds. I seek to make all texts accessible to my students by having them make connections between the characters in the books and their own daily life experiences. In this unit, we read *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne. The goal of this unit is to have the students gain an appreciation of how an author develops character through a story, and to gain skills in interpreting a text. I chose to assess this through a performance-assessment, which brought characters to life in a talk-show format.

Since many of my students are not schooled in the skills of being organized enough to bring books to school every day, it is more effective to assign in-class reading. This allows me to actively model good reading skills, to provide one-on-one coaching to those who have difficulty, to guide students to navigate challenging vocabulary, and to help them critically analyze the subtext of what they are reading.

We read *The Scarlet Letter* through a variety of activities, including silent reading, reading aloud in turns, and together. We talked about what we had read as a whole group and in small groups, with guiding questions. At one point we made collages representing the key townspeople and their respective roles in the unfolding drama. I used non-literary activities to explore literature because it allowed students with weak reading skills to excel in a reading-focused class. Slow readers were able to keep up with the story through class discussion and
updates, and they could receive praise for their visual depictions of the story. Faster readers used extra class time to write in their reading diaries or to work on related stories, which would be published in our school’s newspaper. By providing a variety of reading-related activities, I could accommodate the different learning strengths of my students and actively engage them around a single text.

As we read *The Scarlet Letter*, we discussed the stigmas that many of the students regularly experience—the racism they experience due to the color of their skin and the classism they experience based on their economic realities. We also talked about in-group and out-group pressures, and how society’s “outsiders” can offer resistance to the so-called norms that exist. Although *The Scarlet Letter* took place in a very different time and with very different characters, my students were able to see how the story might relate to their own experiences.

As a culminating assessment activity in this study of *The Scarlet Letter*, my students and I put together a talk-show performance. Students self-selected to play certain characters. Each character was charged with learning as much as they could about their history, their life issues, and how they could be expected to react in any given situation. The remaining students composed the audience and were responsible for coming up with in-depth questions to get at the heart of the book’s issues—who had the right to judge, how should a community address those who break written or unwritten rules, and so on. Students had to keep a research journal as they researched their character or developed questions as an audience member. I assessed each student on their journal entries and their talk-show performance.

We spent several class periods researching roles and designing a loose script for the performance. Student attendance was higher than usual during this time, because students absent for practice and planning could not readily fulfill their responsibilities for the performance. Students’ own peers encouraged
everyone to attend and stay focused. The project became the students’ own; I became a resource to clarify questions about the text and to remind students to stay true to their characters.

We were fortunate to have block periods for part of the week, so we ran our talk-show during an extended 1 1/2-hour class period. Students played their parts well, and audience members pointed out when students slipped out of character. When an audience member asked a surprising question, the students who were in-character were challenged to respond as their character might, applying their knowledge of how their character had responded to other situations in the book. When the class ended, the talk-show guests were reluctant to “break form” and leave their characters behind. I gained insight into the students through this whole process. A common area of difficulty was writing down what they could explain verbally. Based on this assessment I plan to include more focused journal writing activities.

Bringing literary canons to life through active reading and performance of the stories has helped my students to see English class as something worthwhile. My students still struggle with the realities of disrupted families, multiple part-time jobs, etc., but books have some relevance and can even offer hope or alternatives. I have found that some students will tell me they read at home occasionally or that they read to their siblings. Others have simply found that they have the ability to read a text that they would have felt was “too hard” before. Since reading, discussing, and performing a single text takes several weeks, I might in the future have students read multiple books before organizing a performance where the characters from each text would meet in a talk-show format. I might also vary the performance mode and bring theater to life by asking students to write different endings for a text and then perform those endings.
The school where I work is in a very rural area. The majority of the students come from farming and blue-collar families. There is little opportunity to visit museums or other places of educational interest more often found in cities. My students range in age from 8 to 10, and I teach in a self-contained combined 3rd and 4th grade class. All of my students are White and have all been in the same class together since kindergarten.

My students are all very “practical-natured” and so I try to make our work together in class as relevant as possible. Since it is a combined class, there is a wide range of skills and abilities among the students, and so I often pair weaker and stronger students to work together on projects. Since they have been together for so long, they mostly work well together. I have two students who are ADD. I try to vary activities to accommodate their physical and academic needs along with the whole class.

This year we have been spending a lot of time on numbers, place value, and estimation. Ensuring that students have a good foundation in number sense provides a strong base for future work. I try to vary the activities so that they do not get bored. We had done some work on hundredths, tenths, units, tens, and hundreds earlier in the year, and my goal for this unit was to build on that and to introduce the idea of using estimation to check work. Later in the year we will return to the idea of estimation, but with measurements of distance and volume.

I began the lesson with a question-and-answer session with the students. I tried to make sure that every student had an opportunity to answer at least one question. We began with rounding numbers. I wrote a number on the board and then told them to round it to the nearest 10, 100, or 1000. We then looked at decimal numbers and rounded them to the nearest tenth or hundredth. From there we talked about how to use this to help us estimate answers to multiplication problems. We worked through a couple of problems together. Each student then had to write a word problem and share it with the three other students in his or her group. That way each student had to read and answer 3 problems. It also was an opportunity to practice
writing a short story.

After that, I gave each group a set of “snap” cards. Half the cards had multiplication problems, and half the cards had estimated answers. Students placed cards down one at a time in their group and when two cards “matched” they could shout SNAP. If they were correct, they got to keep all the cards on the pile; otherwise they forfeited a turn. The winner ended up with all the cards.

As the students played the game, I moved around the room, listening to them, and occasionally bringing them back on task. Listening to the conversations in each group allowed me to assess that they really understood the concept and could apply it. I used several different sets of snap cards that were of varying degrees of difficulty. My fourth grade groups used harder sets, since they were more advanced mathematically. As an extension to this lesson, I also worked with the fourth grade students separately to introduce the idea of estimating as a way of checking the reasonableness of answers to division problems.

Each week I like to give the class a homework problem that usually involves their parents or caregivers. For this week, I asked them to talk with an adult to find out a real-life example of when he or she used estimation at work. I asked each student to write up a short paragraph explaining it and to give an example. I set aside class time for everyone to work on their writing. Pairs of students read each other’s paragraph to edit them and make sure they made sense. During the following week I read three or four of these each day to the class, and we talked about them. That way, even though we had moved on to a different math topic, I was able to reinforce the concepts of estimation for several more days. Also, I posted each student’s writing on our work-board and encouraged the class to read them in their spare time.

Looking back on this unit, I feel that the students were able to refresh their understanding of previous math lessons and also to develop skills of estimation. By having them write stories on real-life examples, they were able to see the

Example 3 (Continued)
The game of snap was a fun activity, but one that really required them to think hard. I could really see them concentrating and correcting each other when someone made a mistake. I was able to provide on the spot help to students that were having problems. It also helped me see which students were stronger in mental math.

If I were to teach this lesson again, I would do it earlier in the year, as I found it really helped some of my weaker students to revisit number sense and place value. I also would include a more formal evaluation to assess all students, rather than just listening to their answers in class. A couple of the students are quite quiet, and I did not get to hear much from them. Overall, I feel that I met my goals and that my students’ mathematical understanding was strengthened.
Reviewing Your Writing

An important step in writing, regardless of the skill or experience of the writer, is to review the writing with an objective mind. Even professional writers can become so involved in their writing that they sometimes forget to include information that the readers don't know. For some, reviewing with objectivity requires "distance," or time away from the project. If you have time, set the writing aside for a day (or more) and do not think about it. The next time you read it, you should have an easier time realizing where you left out important information, where a transition is missing, or where something is unclear.

If you do not have time to get some distance between yourself and the writing, have at least one other person read your work. This person should be someone who will be thorough and constructive with his or her feedback. Your goal in having someone else read your work is to discover things that need improvement that you may not be able to see. Explain the basic entry instructions to this person, and let him or her review the National Board Standards for the entry. Remind this person to keep in mind that this writing (along with the other items required by the entry) is all the information an assessor will have about your practice, and that you need feedback about this writing, not about you or your teaching practice. Have this person mark places he or she doesn't understand or where he or she "would like to know more." This kind of feedback may indicate to you that a passage needs further detail or explanation.

You will find that different people provide different insights about what might improve your writing. Another teacher would give a much different critique than someone who is not a teacher. Realize that both kinds of feedback are valid and important. All NBPTS assessors are teachers in your certificate area who have undergone extensive training in NBPTS scoring procedures. However, non-teachers may be able to see "skips" in logic or notice areas of your writing that need further explanation. In addition, a colleague from your school may not need much explanation of a situation unique to your teaching environment because he or she is already familiar with it.

Once you have received feedback, understand that it is simply the opinions of unique readers of your writing, and that it is up to you to decide how to use this information. You may find that you receive feedback that seems to contradict other feedback you received. At this point, read the writing from both points of view. Follow the suggestions that make sense to you, or make changes to your writing that you feel would clear up whatever problem exists in the writing. Sometimes, a reader is unable to pinpoint the exact source of a problem in writing, but knows that some problem exists. It may take some thought and work on your part to determine which changes will be most beneficial to your writing. You may need to do several drafts of your writing to accomplish the one you feel best demonstrates what you are trying to show about your teaching, and that demonstrates the Standards for the entry have been met.

It is important to keep in mind that a writer must eventually send his or her writing out into the world. In this case, it means that you must mail your portfolio to NBPTS by the deadline for portfolio submission. You may want to give yourself an earlier deadline for finishing your Written Commentaries to give yourself time to review your writing and get feedback from others. The goal of the NBPTS portfolio entries is to submit the best evidence of your teaching possible during the time allotted for completion of your portfolio.
Analysis Practice

The purpose of the resources and materials that follow is to give you an opportunity to practice some important skills you may rarely have time to use and further develop. Most teachers have little opportunity in their demanding professional days to systematically analyze all of the information students produce about who they are, what they know, and the state of their learning. It is even more unusual for teachers to have the time or occasion to write down their analytical insights about students and their work.

The resources and activities that follow offer a framework for thinking analytically about student work, particularly student responses to assignments, class work, assessments, and other instructional materials. A critical component of the assessment materials you will submit is the commentary you write about students and their work. Because this kind of writing may be unfamiliar to teachers, some practice is likely to be both helpful and reassuring. But beyond the purposes of the assessment, this kind of thinking and writing about your teaching will repay the time you spend on it tenfold. You may be surprised by the depth and breadth of your perceptions about student work once you begin to focus analytically, and, in turn, student work will become a much more interesting and critical resource of pedagogical information for you than it has been.

One element of analysis is development of your own repertoire of questions and strategies for understanding the work students produce. The other essential element is creating rich and interesting opportunities for student responses, particularly in the occasions for response, or the prompts or problems posed for students as they explore and master new ideas.

About Analysis

The work of analysis is largely invisible. By the time you are ready to write down what you have seen, connected, interpreted, and realized, most of the effort is over. Often people write down the first stages in an analytical examination of instruction, and what they produce is a description of what they have seen rather than an analysis. Learning to be patient is crucial as you observe the evidence, describe it accurately, ask questions of it to make connections with other information and knowledge you have, and try out and reject or confirm hypotheses about student learning. Only after all of these stages can a thorough analysis be written. And if you are also reflecting on your practice as a part of that analysis, a further prewriting step is required. As you retrospectively connect what you did with what you see in evidence of student learning, you must examine the effectiveness of your actions, the possible different options, and their potential effects.

Given the significant portion of silent—but essential—cognitive work that must take place to produce an analysis that will serve to broaden and deepen your practice and thus to enhance future student learning, it is very important to recognize that this process is the heart of an analytical approach to any complex professional activity. To help develop your confidence that the process is worthwhile and in your ability to complete it, we have devised some activities that take you through the process step by step. All of these activities use examples based on written student work. The principles apply to all instructional materials, and can be beneficial when used in conjunction with the video practice resources in Get Started.
Analysis Practice includes the following sections:

- Analysis Activity 1
- Analysis Activity 2
- Analysis Activity 3
- Analysis Activity 4
Practice Activities

Activity 1

Observation and Description

Choose an assignment from one of your classes that you thought elicited considerable information about your students' understandings. Gather together three different students' responses to the assignment. Be sure to choose three students who pose differing instructional challenges to you as a teacher.

1. Look carefully at the assignment or prompt to which the student work you have chosen responds. Answer the following questions with specific details about the assignment. (The word "assignment" is used generically to mean an occasion, prompt, or other eliciting device for substantive student response):
   - What was the goal of this assignment?
   - Why is this an important goal for student learning of the subject?
   - How was this assignment connected to other activities, in or out of class?
   - What subject-specific concepts did students need to know in order to complete this assignment successfully?
   - If appropriate, what were the English language development goals? Were they met?
   - What misconceptions would you predict might appear in student responses to this assignment?
   - In what ways did you intend for this assignment to extend students' thinking about the topic?

2. What did each student do correctly? Incorrectly?
   - Student 1
   - Student 2
   - Student 3

3. For each of the students you have chosen, jot down brief descriptions of the following features of the response to your assignment.

   Most striking feature of the response:
   - Student 1
   - Student 2
   - Student 3

   Patterns in the response:
   - Student 1
   - Student 2
   - Student 3
Misconceptions each response reveals:

- Student 1
- Student 2
- Student 3

Insights each response reveals (if any):

- Student 1
- Student 2
- Student 3

What feedback did you give each student?

- Student 1
- Student 2
- Student 3
**Practice Activities**

**Activity 2**

**Interpretation: What Does Each Student's Response Tell You?**

Using the same three student responses, jot down answers to the following questions for each student. Here the emphasis is on your interpretation of what you see.

**Ask Yourself:**

- How can you interpret the response from the student?
- What frame of reference is available to you to aid in that interpretation?
- What are the cues the student and the work give you?
- Using what you know about the connections that need to be made in order to understand ideas in particular domains appropriate to the content area, what does each student's response tell you?
- How can your colleagues assist you in your interpretive work?

1. What is each student's most essential misunderstanding or difficulty?
   - Student 1
   - Student 2
   - Student 3

2. How does each student's response fit into what you already know about this student's understandings and performance? Be specific.
   - Student 1
   - Student 2
   - Student 3

3. In two sentences for each student, describe what each learned from this assignment, judging from the responses.
   - Student 1
   - Student 2
   - Student 3

4. What does each student need to do next to move his or her understandings forward?
   - Student 1
   - Student 2
   - Student 3
Practice Activities

Activity 3
How Does Each Student's Response Illuminate Your Practice?

In this activity use what you have observed of each student's work and how you have interpreted those observations to illuminate your goals and your strategies for reaching those goals. The focus of this analysis is the degree to which the student's work shows that your goals for the assignment and for your instruction prior to the assignment were met.

1. For each of the three students, write a brief but very specific diagnosis of the degree to which this student work shows that your goals for the assignment were met.
   o Student 1
   o Student 2
   o Student 3

2. Explain briefly how your instruction prior to the assignment was designed to prepare these students to complete this assignment successfully.

3. For each of the three students, give your best diagnosis of the performance they have exhibited on this assignment. What parts of your instruction and/or preparation for this assignment do you think need reteaching or reinforcement for each student?
   o Student 1
   o Student 2
   o Student 3

4. Given each student's performance on this assignment, what goals should you set for each of these students in the immediate future? the more distant future?
   o Student 1
   o Student 2
   o Student 3

5. What was your feedback strategy for each of these students?

6. Why did you choose that strategy for these particular students?
Get Started

Practice Activities

Activity 4

Reflection

The final stage in analyzing student responses is reflection on your practice. It is in this final stage that you ask—in light of what the student responses have told you about the students' understandings, difficulties, misconceptions, and gaps—what you might do next, or differently, or additionally for these students. It is the habit of reflecting on decisions made in the midst of the teaching day that distinguishes the analytical teacher. And it is reflective practice that moves accomplished practitioners constantly forward, as teachers become their own observers and coaches, congratulating themselves for making choices that advance student learning in particularly efficacious ways and encouraging themselves to try yet another strategy when they aren't satisfied with students' progress.

The following questions are designed to help you reflect on your practice with the three students that have been the focus of these activities. These questions, however, are questions that could be asked at the end of each teaching day about each class you teach. Once you begin to think in these terms, you need not write down the answers. You will find that the habit of reflection generates so many new ideas and strategies that you will hardly find the time to try them all. Look back at the three student responses to your assignment. Briefly answer each of these questions about these students, their responses, and your own sense of your practice.

1. What did each student learn from this assignment and the instruction that preceded it? Be specific.
   - Student 1
   - Student 2
   - Student 3

2. What did you learn from each student's response?
   - Student 1
   - Student 2
   - Student 3

3. What would you do differently in light of the student responses to this assignment?

4. In light of your analysis, reevaluate your feedback strategies. Would you alter them in any way? If so, how and why? If not, why not?

5. Would you give the same assignment again? If so, would you prepare students for it differently? If so, how? If not, what assignment would you give in its place? Why?
Get Started

Tips for Videotaping

Candidates are asked to submit videotapes of their teaching in two or more of the portfolio entries required for National Board Certification. This requirement presents challenges for teachers as they strive to capture the many different aspects of their classroom for others to observe.

It is important to remember that the purpose of a videotape is to provide as authentic and complete a view of your teaching as possible. National Board assessors are not able to visit your classes; a videotape is the only indication that they have of how you interact with students, the climate you create in the classroom, the ways in which you engage students in learning. A picture is "worth a thousand words" in conveying to others how you practice your profession, the decisions you make, and your relationships with students.

However, until both you and your students gain experience, a videotape is likely to present a highly inauthentic view of your teaching. When a video camera is in the classroom for the first time, many students will behave differently. Some will become quiet and slide down in their seats as though hiding. Others will ham it up and play to the camera. And many teachers find themselves inhibited and acting in different ways (perhaps more formally) than they usually do. It is normal to find the initial experience with a video camera uncomfortable. We do not see ourselves quite the way others see us, and the difference can be a shock. It takes some getting used to, and practice is the only remedy. The same can be said of students; only multiple opportunities with a video camera will enable students to behave naturally in its presence.

For all these reasons, then, it is highly advisable to practice with a video camera. Place the camera and tripod (or locate a position, for example, on top of a file cabinet) where the camera will receive a good picture of the entire classroom. Tape several classes and watch them alone. You will become accustomed to how you look and sound, and you will begin to notice what the students are doing and how their learning could be improved (See "Video Practice" for more information.)

It is a good idea, then, to make several practice tapes before you make any that you might want to use for your portfolio. This practice will enable both you and your students to become familiar with both the mechanics of videotaping and with maintaining a natural demeanor in front of the camera.

Tips for Videotaping includes the following sections:

Practical Matters
Technical Matters
Get Started

Practical Matters

Before embarking on a series of videotape sessions (even those for practice) you will have to address a number of practical matters such as those outlined below.

Permission

Before videotaping, obtain a Student Release Form for each student who might appear on a submitted tape. Any adult who may be included in a videotape should also sign an Adult Release Form. This is true even if you are making the tapes only for practice, since you might make a tape suitable for submission when you are only intending to practice.

If possible, you should secure permission from the parents or legal guardians of all your students to cover taping as needed. A Student Release Form and an Adult Release Form are included in "Cover Sheets and Forms" in the entry directions. Explain to the parents or legal guardians that you are using the tapes for discussions with other teachers about the best ways to teach, and that the students will never be identified by their full names in the tapes. You should try to help them understand that the videotapes are not about the students, but are intended for professional discussion. If, for some reason, a student's parents refuse to grant permission, you will have to take care that the student is seated out of the camera's range.

Equipment

Use the best videotaping equipment and videotapes available when making your videotapes. Purchase a few new, standard VHS videotape cartridges to use for taping, even during practice sessions, in case a lesson you intend to tape for video practice turns out to be suitable for submitting with your portfolio. Previously used tapes from home may be worn out or may contain other taped material. Although the appearance of unrelated material before or after your video segment will not reduce your score, using a new tape will enable you to make a higher-quality tape, and eliminate the chances of any unintended distractions appearing on the videotape you submit. Do not submit videotape evidence on Super VHS videotape cartridges. We recommend that you copy your selected footage onto a new VHS videotape cartridge prior to submission for scoring. To ensure that your videotapes can be viewed properly at scoring, do not submit evidence using miniature or adapted formats, such as VHS-C or Super VHS. You should videotape using "Standard," not "Extended" play.

It is often difficult to hear students speaking, so you should make sure that the system you use has a sensitive microphone. Some hand-held cameras have reception that is sensitive enough; with others you will want to locate a separate microphone. The only way you will know is to experiment.

If you are filming small student groups, you should carry a hand-held microphone while circulating among the groups to record your voice and the voices of the students.

If you own a video camera, you may want to use it in your classroom. That way, you will not have to learn to use new equipment. On the other hand, your school may have better equipment, which you could borrow. In that case, you should arrange for such equipment from the relevant department.
The minimum equipment needed to videotape your class includes:

- a video camera
- new, blank, standard VHS videotape cartridges
- a tripod
- an extension cord
- headphones to monitor the sound being recorded. Many different types of headphones will work that are relatively inexpensive and readily available, such as those from personal cassette players or tape recorders.
- an external Pressure Zone Microphone® (PZM®), that can be placed near students and connected to the camera a distance away. Information about PZM® and other microphones can be found at www.crownaudio.com/mics.htm (link provided below). You can also check with other audio retailers to find the appropriate microphone for your use. Helpful hints on how to use this relatively inexpensive microphone are provided in the "Audio" portion of this section.

Camera Person

As you work out the details of videotaping in your classes, you may find others who have the time and expertise to offer you assistance. If a local college or university offers courses in video communication, there may be students there who would be grateful for the opportunity to help with camera work. Alternatively, such courses within a high school may supply students looking for experience. For advice, consider speaking with your school or school district library media specialist or AV specialist; these people may have helpful suggestions.

Copying Your Videotapes

Before submitting any videotapes as part of the portfolio, you should make a copy. Only very rarely are tapes lost or damaged; however, if that should happen, your copy would provide an essential backup that could then be submitted.

In order to transfer video segments onto one tape, and to make a backup copy of your tape, you will need:

- two VCRs (one for playback and one for recording) or a camera (for playback) that allows you to record onto a VCR
- cables to connect the two VCRs or a camera and VCR
- a TV monitor
- new, blank, standard VHS videotape cartridges

Set up the two VCRs or camera and VCR by connecting the "AUDIO OUT" from the playback VCR or camera to the "AUDIO IN" plug on the VCR used for recording. Then, connect the "VIDEO OUT" from the playback VCR or camera to the "VIDEO IN" plug on the VCR used for recording. Lastly, attach the playback VCR to a monitor by connecting the VCR's "CABLE OUT" plug to the monitor's "ANTENNA" or "CABLE IN" plug. It may also be helpful to consult the instructions that come with the VCR and camera or to get technical assistance transferring and duplicating videotapes.

Cautions for Submissions

1. Review the entire videotape before submitting the original. Remember that you are to submit only the segment that is to be used for scoring.
2. Make sure that your tapes do not exceed the entry time limits stated. While submitting a tape that exceeds the time limit does not disqualify your entry, scorers will not view tapes beyond their stated time limit.
3. All tapes must be continuous and unedited unless explicitly directed otherwise in the entry instructions. Edited tapes will make your entry unscorable. Do not stop and restart the camera or the sound—this is classified as an edit.
Get Started

Technical Matters

After your students (and you) have become accustomed to videotaping, you will want to be able to produce videotapes of adequate quality to do justice to your teaching. While you should be aware that professional quality is not expected, there are a few technical matters that can improve the quality of your tapes.

Video

The quality of the video portion of a videotape is an important element of the overall effect. Only practice can yield good quality. As you gain experience, consider the suggestions below.

Tips to Improve Video Quality

1. **If possible, use a tripod.** A fixed position will eliminate the most obvious problem of video quality, namely the wobbly effect of an unsteady hand.

2. **If chalkboard writing is important to the lesson, be sure that it is captured on the videotape and is legible.** This may require refocusing the lens on the board. In addition, sometimes writing is legible to the eye but not to the camera. You may have to move the camera to reduce the amount of glare on the board, or use dark markers on chart paper taped to the chalkboard.

3. **In general, the camera should be pointed at the speaker.** That is, when the teacher is speaking, the camera should be aimed at the teacher. When students are speaking, the camera should capture them. This general principle will be difficult to achieve, however, if the camera is positioned at the back of the room. A side position will be more effective.

4. **Set the zoom lens to its widest setting if it is necessary to move the camera while taping.** This will cut down on the shakiness of the recorded image.

5. **Increasing the amount of light in the classroom will improve the video recording.** Therefore, be sure to turn on all the lights and, if possible, open your curtains or blinds.

6. **If you are using an older camera, you may have to adjust it for the light source each time you shoot.** Newer cameras, however, may have a switch for recording in incandescent, fluorescent, or daylight, or may be completely automatic.

7. **Avoid shooting into bright light.** If there are windows on one side of the classroom, try to shoot with your back to the light.

Audio

Audio quality can present the most troublesome aspect of classroom videotaping, and it is extremely important. If you or your students cannot be heard, it is difficult for assessors to recognize and score your performance. Flat, echoing walls and multiple students talking simultaneously make good sound retrieval a challenge in classroom videotaping. Yet, clarity of conversations is extremely important for scorers who need to interpret the content of the dialogue.

Built-in microphones come with most recent-model cameras. However, reliance on the built-in microphone for classroom videotaping requires very careful monitoring of audio quality. Even with professional taping, it is often difficult to hear everything that students say. Only you can determine whether a given level of sound quality enables a listener to understand most of what is being said. If you
find that the built-in microphone is inadequate, you should experiment with an external microphone, that is, one that can be placed nearer to the students and connected to the camera.

When taping, always test the sound quality and keep the following tips in mind.

**Tips to Improve Audio Quality**

1. **Always keep the microphone close to the action.** The location of the microphone is key to capturing quality audio. Remember that the closer the microphone is to the action, the better the sound recording will be. If you are circulating among student groups, for example, and you want to capture your interactions with a group, consider carrying an external microphone. The microphone can be suspended from the ceiling in the center of the room for whole class videotaping.

2. **Use an external PZM® microphone,** since this is the most effective way to enhance the sound quality of your videotape. The built-in microphone of most cameras is generally not adequate, because it is attached to the camera, which is frequently not close enough to the person speaking. This means that the microphone picks up background noise and misses important conversations. Most PZM® microphones look like small Ping-Pong paddles and lie flat to pick up sound that reflects off of large, flat surfaces, such as table tops or walls. For almost all video cameras, the external PZM® microphone is plugged into the "EXT MIC" jack on the camera. When plugged in, the built-in microphone on most newer cameras automatically turns off and only the sounds from the external microphone will be recorded. Be sure to check this feature of your camera before you begin taping.

3. **Eliminate noises that may interfere with taping.** If the camera or external microphone is picking up extraneous noise, consider temporarily turning off fans, air conditioners, fish tanks, etc., while you are taping. Also, whenever possible, avoid taping when you must compete with outside noises, such as lawn mowing, recess, or band practice.

4. **Have the camera person wear headphones** to monitor the sound during videotaping and to rectify audio problems as they occur.

5. **Be sure that all cables are secured** and if necessary use masking tape to hold them in place. Before each taping session, you should check the equipment to be sure that all cables are secured. Many audio problems are the result of faulty connections, not poor equipment quality.
Directions for setting up an external microphone, and the necessary equipment, are provided in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Using An External Microphone</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equipment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 omnidirectional dynamic microphone</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 heavy-duty extension cable</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 adapter</td>
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</table>

**Whole Class Videotaping**

The following are recommendations for videotaping whole class teaching activities such as demonstrations, discussions, etc.:

- **Camera placement**—it is optimal to place the camera on a tripod at the side of the room, and if possible, set it up high on a counter or table.
- **Set the lens to a wide angle**—it is important for scorers to be able to see you and your students together, how your students react to what you are doing, and to see their engagement in learning.
- **Avoid trying to follow a conversation back and forth between different people**—you will find that the camera always arrives late to the action.
- **Microphone placement**—with masking tape, firmly attach the PZM® microphone up high on the front wall or on any other flat surface that faces toward the majority of speakers.

View of whole classroom showing best camera placement.
Small Group Videotaping

Small group videotaping in NBPTS assessments is intended to focus attention on student interaction in collaborative learning situations and your facilitation of such learning as you move around the classroom. It is intended to capture a particular kind of classroom structure: one in which you interact with many small groups as they pursue independent work. The following are recommendations for videotaping small group teaching activities such as discussions among several students, or groups of students, working on a project:

- **Camera placement**—if you can plan ahead and determine the group of students that you will videotape, it is optimal to place the camera on a tripod at one point in the group of people. Alternately, the camera can be hand held and/or braced against a wall to steady the view.
- **The camera should be a distance away from the group and show as many participants as possible**—for scorers it is important to see the facial expressions of students and to understand how you work with them. Be sure that the people who are interacting in the small group (both you and your students) can be seen and heard.
- **If the group is looking at or referring to an item**—zoom in at the beginning of the conversation and maintain a close focus long enough for scorers to be able to understand the ensuing conversation. Then, zoom out and keep the lens set wide.
- **Microphone placement**—carry the PZM® (or other external microphone) so that it is always closest to you and to the group with whom you are interacting. It is essential for scorers to clearly hear the participants' conversations.
Get Started

Video Practice

The purpose of this section is to present strategies to guide you as you practice making and analyzing videotapes of your teaching. We encourage you to practice by videotaping as many lessons as possible. None of these must be "teacher in the front of the class" lessons, but they can be.

The directions in this section are relatively open-ended; we encourage you to experiment in order to find the most effective use of videotape for your particular situation. However, be sure to base your video practice sessions on the Standards for your certificate area, since the videotape materials you will eventually submit must reflect the elements of teaching practice that are judged essential to the National Board's vision of accomplished teaching. It is these elements, based on the Standards, that assessors will look for in the materials you submit.

The strategies presented in this section will give you important practice observing your own teaching, allowing you to reflect on the opportunities you decided to pursue and those you decided not to take. In the process of observing your teaching, you will practice analyzing your teaching in a way that you cannot accomplish without a videotape—that is, by watching what you do and when you do it as the lesson unfolds.

Analysis Into Practice

We have provided an Analysis Into Practice Form that offers one way for you to define the particular features of your practice that you would like to polish. The form is deliberately general to allow you to determine the direction of your action plan. One useful way to think about this tool is to look back at the questions for analysis and identify those areas that you would most like to improve in your practice. You can then use the form to chart your course of action.

Video Practice includes the following sections:

- Practical Matters
- Analyzing Your Videos
- Analysis Questions
ANALYSIS INTO PRACTICE

COURSE OF ACTION FORM

In the boxes below, list two specific areas in your practice that the videos made you want to improve or further develop, and answer the questions below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area 1</th>
<th>Area 2</th>
</tr>
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</table>

Identify an end goal (i.e., what you would want to see in your practice as evidence of development).

How will you reach this goal?

Identify an end goal (i.e., what you would want to see in your practice as evidence of development).

How will you reach this goal?

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Get Started

Practical Matters

So that you and your students become familiar with videotaping, we encourage you to arrange to videotape as many different classroom sessions as possible. The directions below apply to each of the videotapes you produce. To get the maximum benefit from this practice, you should videotape a minimum of three different classroom sessions. You should also videotape varied teaching formats: full-group instruction, cooperative-group work, small group instruction. The purpose of the practice is to make you comfortable with videotape as a medium of conveying your practice.

Videotaping Your Classes

A. Review "Tips for Videotaping."
B. Select the sessions you will videotape. This practice exercise will be most beneficial if you videotape multiple sessions from as wide a variety of lessons or students as your teaching assignment permits. The classes you choose need not be the most advanced, but the topics of the lessons you videotape should be ones that are important for the students at their level of learning and in which they are likely to be engaged.
C. If possible, arrange for someone (another teacher or a student) to actually do the videotaping. Arrange for that person to be available for several sessions. Review videotaping procedures with that individual, give him or her a copy of the "Notes for Videocamera Operation" in the "Cover Sheets and Forms" section of the entry directions, and encourage him or her to read "Tips for Videotaping." Inform this person to avoid stopping the videotape so that no content is lost and your tape does not appear to have been edited.
D. For each session that you videotape, jot down a few notes that will help you recall that session for the analysis of your tape. To guide your note-taking, review "Analysis Questions," which outlines the content of your analysis of the videotape. At a minimum, we recommend that your notes include the following:
   o any particular instructional challenges offered by the students;
   o the learning goals (lesson objectives) for the lesson;
   o your opinion about the overall success of the lesson (i.e., were the learning goals achieved?) and the evidence you have for your opinion; and
   o a description of any instructional materials used in the lesson.

Be sure to label the tapes and your notes in such a way that you can quickly and correctly match them up with each other.
Get Started

Analyzing Your Videos

A. Watch your videotapes carefully. You may want to watch them several times. We suggest that you initially watch each tape with the sound turned off. This should give you greater awareness of your and your students' nonverbal behavior, such as facial expressions and body language.

B. Twenty-minute tapes will be sufficient for your analysis. Select several of your tapes for analysis, keeping in mind the suggestions about representing multiple class sessions and course offerings. All videotapes should be continuous and unedited.

C. After you have chosen the videotapes that you will use, answer the "Analysis Questions" that follow. Your responses should be straightforward and written in non-technical language.

D. When you have finished answering the questions, review your writing. Read through what you have written with as fresh a view as possible. Imagine as you read that you do not know anything about the unit or the students you have selected. Is your writing clear? Can you follow your thinking?
Get Started

Analysis Questions

Videotaped teaching sessions offer particularly strong evidence of a teacher's knowledge and ability. The following questions are designed to focus attention on aspects of teaching that are described in the National Board Standards. We suggest that you use these questions to hone your skills as an observer and analyst of your own teaching. These questions will also be useful in guiding discussion of your videotapes and those of others in your professional collaboration group, if you are working with such a group.

1. What is the extent of classroom involvement (e.g., are the same students doing all the talking)?
2. Are the students engaged in the lesson? How can you tell? What do students' facial expressions and body language tell you about your instruction?
3. What kinds of questions do you ask? Can all questions be answered with a single word? How long do you wait for responses? Do you ask students to explain and/or defend a particular answer or approach? Do you ask students to compare or evaluate alternative interpretations or strategies?
4. Were there any opportunities for students to ask questions? How would you categorize the students' questions (e.g., did they indicate confusion and a need for clarification or understanding and extension)?
5. What roles (e.g., expert, facilitator, co-learner) did you play in the videotape? Was each role appropriate for the situation?
6. What kinds of tasks did you ask students to do? Did you capitalize on their previous knowledge and experiences?
7. What instructional opportunities did you take advantage of? Why?
8. What instructional opportunities did you not take advantage of? Why?
9. What evidence did you see of the students taking intellectual risks? Does the class look safe as an environment for getting something wrong? Do students talk to each other as well as to you?
10. Do you push students to take risks, to speculate, to offer conjectures about possible approaches, strategies, and interpretations?
11. Were the learning goals for the lesson achieved? Did you adjust the lesson so your goals could be achieved by every student? What is the evidence for your answers, both in the videotape and from other sources?
12. Explain how your design and execution of this lesson affected the achievement of your instructional goals. (Your response might include—but is not limited to—such things as the anticipation and handling of student misconceptions, the unexpected questions from students, the unanticipated opportunity for learning that you captured, or your planned strategy and its outcomes in the lesson.)
Cover Sheets and Forms

All of the cover sheets and forms listed below are submitted in the **Forms envelope**. The uses of the cover sheets and forms in this section are described briefly below. More information about the forms in this section may be found in "Completing Portfolio Forms" in the **Intro**.

The cover sheets and forms in this section are in Adobe® Acrobat® PDF format. To read these documents, you need to install Acrobat® Reader software on your computer. You can download the free software by following the instructions provided by Adobe Systems. A link to Adobe's Web site is provided below.

As you read the descriptions below, you may find it helpful to refer to the Assembly Checklist for Forms and **Pack & Ship**. The checklist shows how the cover sheets and forms in this section are organized for submission.

**The Forms Cover Sheet**

This cover sheet heads all other cover sheets and forms found in this section.

**The Candidate Final Inventory for Release Forms**

This sheet serves as a master inventory for the following forms:

- the four Candidate Release Forms (found in the "Cover Sheets and Forms" section of the entry directions);
- the four entry-specific Candidate Final Inventories (found in the "Cover Sheets and Forms" section of the entry directions); and
- the Candidate Attestation Form (found in this section).

**The Candidate Release Forms Cover Sheet**

This cover sheet heads the four Candidate Release Forms, which are found in the "Cover Sheets and Forms" section of the entry directions.

**The Candidate Final Inventory Forms Cover Sheet**

This cover sheet heads the four entry-specific Candidate Final Inventories, which are found in the "Cover Sheets and Forms" section of the entry directions.

**The Candidate Attestation Form**

This sheet, on which you attest that you have obtained releases as instructed in this portfolio for individuals whose images or work appear in your entry materials, is the final sheet submitted in the Forms envelope. You must submit this form with your portfolio, or your portfolio will not be scored.

Please refer to the Assembly Checklist for Forms and **Pack & Ship** for detailed instructions and diagrams that show you how to arrange your materials before placing them in the envelopes provided.
It is crucial that you package your entries correctly. We provide detailed instructions for assembling and packaging your entries to ensure your entries are easily inventoried. Staff at the NBPTS Processing Center and scoring sites need to follow a detailed, ordered list when checking in your portfolio. Therefore, it is important to make sure that no materials are left out of an entry's envelope and that no materials are placed in the wrong entry envelope. **Incorrectly packaged entries may not be scorable.**

**Forms**

- Forms Cover Sheet
- Candidate Final Inventory for Release Forms
- Candidate Release Forms Cover Sheet
- Candidate Final Inventory Forms Cover Sheet
- Candidate Attestation Form
NATIONAL BOARD FOR PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS

Adolescence and Young Adulthood

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

FORMS
Cover Sheet

PLACE BAR CODE LABEL HERE
You must complete, sign, and submit this form in the Forms envelope. Please verify that each component below is included in your Forms envelope by checking the box next to the component. Be sure to sign at the bottom.

- A Candidate Release Form for:
  - Entry 1: Analysis of Student Growth in Reading and Writing
  - Entry 2: Instructional Analysis: Whole Class Discussion
  - Entry 3: Instructional Analysis: Small Groups
  - Entry 4: Documented Accomplishments: Contributions to Student Learning

- Candidate Attestation Form
  This form must be included with your portfolio. If you fail to do so, your portfolio will be unscorable.

- Candidate Final Inventory Form for:
  - Entry 1: Analysis of Student Growth in Reading and Writing
  - Entry 2: Instructional Analysis: Whole Class Discussion
  - Entry 3: Instructional Analysis: Small Groups
  - Entry 4: Documented Accomplishments: Contributions to Student Learning

By my signature below, I affirm that all of the above checked materials are included in the materials I am submitting to NBPTS.

Signature: ________________________________________________________________

Candidate ID #: ___________________________________________________________

Date: _____________________________________________________________________
Candidate ID # ______________________________

NATIONAL BOARD FOR PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS

Adolescence
and
Young
Adulthood

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

CANDIDATE FINAL INVENTORY FORMS
Cover Sheet

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Get Started
CANDIDATE ATTESTATION FORM:
ATTESTATION OF COMPLETED RELEASE FORMS

You must obtain signed permission forms from the parents/legal guardians of all children and from any adults who appear in your videotapes, or who are shown in any photographs with your response. You also must obtain signed permission forms from the parents/guardians of students whose work is included as materials in any of your portfolio entries. Keep these permission forms on file. Your signature below verifies that you have followed all of the necessary procedures.

I hereby affirm that I have followed the privacy conventions and permission requirements of my program and/or school district. I certify that I have secured and am holding on file signed copies of all necessary permission forms from all responsible individuals.

________________________________________________________________________

Candidate’s Full Name (Please type or print)

________________________________________________________________________

Candidate’s Signature

________________________________________________________________________

Candidate ID Number

Submit this form with an original signature in the Forms envelope provided.

If you fail to do so, your portfolio will not be scored.