Entry 1

Analysis of Student Growth in Writing

Accomplished English Language Arts teachers understand their students and center their classrooms around students to help develop student literacy. They know that not all students learn in the same way and encourage self-directed learning on the part of each student.

Accomplished English Language Arts teachers understand that writing is a diverse, complex, and recursive thinking process, and that there are forms, approaches, tools, styles, and conventions used in writing in different genres that can assist authors in communicating their ideas for a wide variety of purposes and audiences. They nurture their students’ enthusiasm for writing by motivating them to write about issues that matter in their lives.

Accomplished English Language Arts teachers have a command of a wide range of assessment methods and strategies aligned with their goals. They provide students with constructive feedback, highlighting successes and prompting student reflection about ways to improve. They use assessment findings to help shape instructional planning. They reflect on their practice, can talk persuasively about why they make the pedagogical decisions they do, and comment on ways to improve their practice.

The following Standards represent the focus of this entry:

I. Knowledge of Students  
II. Knowledge of the Field  
VI. Instructional Resources  
VII. Instructional Decision Making  
IX. Writing  
XIII. Assessment  
XIV. Self-Reflection

What Do I Need To Do?

In this entry, you will demonstrate how you teach your students to write. Although accomplished English language arts teachers integrate reading and writing, this entry is divided in half (reading, then writing) for the purpose of discussion and analysis in order to give assessors a clear picture of your approach to writing. You will describe the goals for your teaching, the teaching context or assignment (prompt) that led to the students’ responses, and your analysis of the students’ growth and development as individuals who can effectively communicate in writing. You must also explain how the entire entry, taken together, is indicative of your instruction in writing.

For this entry you must submit the following:

• **Written Commentary (8 pages maximum)** that analyzes four responses (two from each of two students). These students might be members of the same class or might be drawn from two different classes that you teach.

• **One packet for each student** containing the student’s responses to the writing assignments/prompts, the assignments/prompts themselves, and the rubrics or scoring criteria you used to score the student’s responses.
How Will My Response Be Scored?

Your response to this entry will be scored based on the following NBPTS Early Adolescence/English Language Arts Standards:

I. Knowledge of Students

II. Knowledge of the Field

VI. Instructional Resources

VII. Instructional Decision Making

IX. Writing

XIII. Assessment

XIV. Self-Reflection

It is strongly recommended that you review these standards before you begin and periodically as you prepare your response to this entry.

Your response will be judged on the extent to which it provides clear, consistent, and convincing evidence of your ability to develop students’ writing skills.

The Level 4 rubric, the highest level of the rubric, specifically requires clear, consistent, and convincing evidence in your response that you:

• acquire knowledge of each student’s background and skills as a writer and effective communicator;
• thoughtfully analyze student writing samples to discover what the writing suggests about each student’s growth and development as a writer;
• establish high, attainable, and worthwhile writing goals with each of your students and make curricular choices and use instructional resources designed to enable these students to achieve those goals;
• establish an instructional context that encourages student development in the process of writing for multiple purposes and audiences;
• constructively respond to students’ communication skills, directing their attention to the salient features of the writing and communication process, prompting them to reflect more deeply on how they can be improved, and encouraging revision in thinking and writing;
• use formal and/or informal assessment methods to monitor student progress, to encourage student self assessment, and to plan instruction; and
• engage in insightful reflection and well-informed analyses of classroom practices, including a clear rationale for why those practices are appropriate for the students.

Composing My Written Commentary

The Written Commentary has been divided into sections with specific questions to help organize and direct your response. Your Written Commentary must address the following italicized questions and be organized into three sections using the headings that appear in boldface below.
1. Instructional Context
2. Analysis of Student Work
3. Reflection

Consistent headings will help assessors locate the required information more easily. Statements in plain text that immediately follow an italicized question will assist you in interpreting the question. It is not necessary to include the italicized questions within the body of your response.

The entire Written Commentary must be no longer than 8 typed pages. Suggested page lengths for each section are included to help you make decisions about how much to write for each of the three sections. (See "Format Specifications" for more detail.)

1. Instructional Context

In this section, address the following questions about your selected class:

• What are the number, ages, and grades of the students in the class featured in this entry and subject matter of the class? (Example: 21 students in grades 8 and 9, ages 13 through 15, American literature)

• What are the relevant characteristics of this class that influenced your instructional strategies for this lesson: ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity; the range of abilities of the students; the personality of the class? What are the instructional challenges represented by these particular students?

• What are the relevant characteristics of the students with exceptional needs and abilities that influenced your planning for this sequence of instruction (for example, the range of abilities and the cognitive, social/behavioral, attentional, sensory, and/or physical challenges of your students)? Give any other information that might help the assessor "see" this class.

• What are the relevant features of your teaching context that influenced the selection of this instruction? This might include other realities of the social and physical teaching context (e.g., available resources such as technology, scheduling of classes, room allocation—own classroom or shared space) that are relevant to your response.

[Suggested total page length for Instructional Context: 1 page]

2. Analysis of Student Work

Answer the following questions in a section labeled The Student as Writer. Within each of this sections, be sure to identify the students as Student A or Student B as you write about them. Cite specific examples from the students’ responses to illustrate points in your analysis.

The Student as Writer. In this section, address the following questions as they relate to the student responses to your writing assignments. Be sure to address the questions for each student.

• What about the student as an individual (experiences, skills, interests) provides insight into his/her writing samples and your analysis of them?

• What are your instructional goals to promote growth for this student as a writer? What assignments and strategies did you use to accomplish this?

• What characteristics of these writing samples demonstrate the student’s growth and development as a writer?
• How did your assessment and feedback to the student promote growth as a writer? Explain how your assessment approach(es) and any related feedback connect with your instructional goals.

• Given this student’s responses, what will you do as a teacher to build on what the student has already accomplished as a writer?

[Suggested total page length for Analysis of Student Work: 4 pages (2 pages for each student)]

3. Reflection

Using the four student responses that you have submitted to illustrate your discussion, address the following questions:

• To what extent did you achieve the goals you set?

• Taken in total, what do all of these student responses say about your strengths and weaknesses as a teacher of reading and writing? Consider the four student responses together with the teaching context that shaped them.

[Suggested total page length for Reflection: 3 pages]

Making Good Choices

Selecting two students

You will need to select two students whom you will feature. These students should represent different instructional challenges to you as a teacher. It is important to choose students whose responses give you an opportunity to discuss your practice. Remember, the focus of this entry is on your ability to provide students with instruction that supports their growth and development as readers/interpreters of texts and as writers. For this reason, the best-performing students in the class may not be the best choices for this entry. The focus is on your practice, not on the level of student performance.

To prepare for this entry, you may want to select several students as potential cases and collect or make copies of their work over a period of time. As you collect the work, you might want to record your reasons for selecting that particular student and his or her work, and the details that might be helpful in completing your analysis. For example, you may want to take notes on your learning goals, what came before and after the assignment, and how you assessed the assignment and responded to the student.

Selecting the texts and the writing prompts

For the Writing Component, select responses that show your understanding of the writing process. You do not need to include multiple drafts for each response. Carefully selected pages from each draft or from writer-response forms such as peer conference and self-editing forms can provide effective evidence. Writing prompts should provide students with opportunities to communicate their ideas effectively for multiple purposes and audiences.

You may submit responses to the same two writing prompts for both students, or you may submit responses to up to four different writing prompts for both students. You will be scored on your strategies for teaching students to communicate their ideas effectively in writing. Selecting two different kinds of prompts for each student may give you a good opportunity to show your range of teaching strategies to foster students’ development as writers. However, one or more of the prompts may be used for both students, if doing so allows you to demonstrate how you deal differently with the same kinds of writing with different students. Either approach meets the requirements of this entry.
Note: Each student response must be accompanied by its assignment/prompt. Each assignment/prompt must be no longer than one page.

Selecting two responses for each student
You must choose two writing samples for each student. Each student response must be no longer than 3 pages.

For the Writing Component, choose samples that will allow you to show the range of writing instruction in your classroom. Remember, the focus for the writing component is on the decisions you make regarding the student’s growth as an effective writer and communicator.

The samples you choose should illustrate different challenges, problems, or topics in the teaching and learning of writing. Be certain to select samples that are substantial enough to support the level of analysis required in the Written Commentary.

Note: For both the Reading and Writing Components, each student response must be accompanied by the rubric or scoring criteria you used to evaluate it. Each rubric must be no longer than one page.

Format Specifications
This section presents detailed guidelines for preparing your entry materials. Please follow these guidelines carefully.

Written Commentary
"Writing About Teaching" in Get Started provides useful advice for developing your Written Commentary. Your response will be scored based on the content of your analysis. However, it is important to proofread your writing for spelling, mechanics, and usage. Your response must meet the requirements listed below:

• Be organized into the section headings given in the "Composing My Written Commentary" section:
  1. Instructional Context
  2. Analysis of Student Work
  3. Reflection

• Be typed in double-spaced text on 8.5" X 11" paper with one-inch margins on all sides using Times New Roman 12 point font. Print on only one side of each page. Pages with pictures or text on two sides will count as two pages. Consult "Formatting Written Materials" in Specifications for more specific instructions.
• Be written in English.
• Have all pages sequentially numbered.
• Preserve the anonymity of the students. Do not use students' last names.
• Be no longer than 8 typed pages in total. If you submit a longer Written Commentary, only the first 8 pages will be read and scored.

The Written Commentary you submit for this entry must meet all of the requirements above. If it fails to do so, your score may be reduced.

Student Work Samples, Assignments/Prompts, Rubrics
The student work samples that you submit must satisfy the following criteria:
• Represent each student’s original work. The original student work or clear copies of student work are acceptable.
• Come from students who are in the class that is the basis for your Written Commentary.
• Be from two different students, responding to the four activities that you are featuring in this entry.

**Writing Component**

- Assignment/Prompt for writing assignment #1 *(one page maximum)*
- Student Writing Sample in response to assignment/ prompt *(three pages maximum)*
- Rubric for assignment/prompt *(one page maximum)*
- Assignment/Prompt for writing assignment #2 *(one page maximum)*
- Student Writing Sample in response to assignment/ prompt *(three pages maximum)*
- Rubric for assignment/prompt *(one page maximum)*

**Note:** The writing assignment numbers are not meant to prescribe the order in which you need to present the assignments. They are only meant to provide a means of organizing and labeling your materials.

The student work samples, assignments/prompts, and rubrics must be prepared as follows:

• Be clearly labeled (Student A or Student B) on all pages and show the student’s first name only. Delete students’ last names, teachers’ names, or any identifying information about the students’ families.
• Be 8.5" X 11" A smaller item (e.g., a photograph) must be affixed to an 8.5" X 11" sheet of paper.
  - **Note:** If a student work sample, assignment/prompt, or rubric was created in PowerPoint, HyperStudio, or other similar media, you may format up to 6 slides on one 8.5" X 11" sheet. Each sheet will count as one page toward your page total.
  - **Note:** If an assignment/prompt contains Web pages, each Web page printout (one 8.5" X 11" sheet) will count as one page toward your page total.
  - **Note:** Do not photocopy full-size pages of assignments/ prompts in a reduced format in order to fit more than one assignment/prompt onto a single sheet of paper.
  - **Note:** Do not send videotapes, audiotapes, models, etc. If a student creates such a product, have the student write a one-page description of the assignment and what the student made. You may include photograph(s) or student made drawings to accompany the description, if appropriate. The one-page description counts toward your page total.
  - Be legible.
  - Have all pages sequentially numbered.
• Be no more than 10 pages of student work samples, assignments/prompts, and rubrics for each student. Cover sheets do not count toward this total. No materials will be returned.

The student work samples, assignments/prompts, and rubrics you submit for this entry must meet all of the requirements above. If they fail to do so, your score may be reduced.

**Failure to submit a Written Commentary, student work samples, assignments/prompts, and rubrics will make your response to this entry unscorable.**