

edtpa instruction commentary example

edTPA instruction commentary example is a critical component of the edTPA assessment process for teacher candidates. This performance-based assessment, designed to evaluate a teacher's readiness for the classroom, emphasizes the importance of reflective practice. In this article, we will explore the structure and purpose of the edTPA instruction commentary, provide examples, and discuss how to effectively develop your own commentary to meet the assessment's rigorous standards.

Understanding the edTPA Framework

The edTPA is a portfolio-based assessment used in teacher preparation programs across the United States. It was developed by Stanford University and is designed to assess a candidate's teaching effectiveness through a series of tasks that are aligned with key teaching standards.

Key Components of the edTPA

The edTPA consists of several components, including:

1. Planning: Candidates must demonstrate their ability to create lesson plans that align with learning objectives and standards.
2. Instruction: This section evaluates the candidate's teaching practices, including how they engage and support students during instruction.
3. Assessment: Candidates must show how they assess student learning and use that data to inform future instruction.
4. Reflection: Reflective practice is crucial; candidates must analyze their teaching effectiveness and plan for future improvement.

The instruction commentary is a pivotal element that focuses on how candidates implement their lesson plans and engage students in learning.

Purpose of the Instruction Commentary

The instruction commentary serves several essential purposes:

- Demonstrate Teaching Competence: It allows candidates to articulate their teaching methods and strategies clearly.
- Reflect on Practice: Candidates must analyze their instructional decisions and their impact on student learning.
- Connect Theory to Practice: The commentary provides an opportunity to relate educational theories and frameworks to real classroom experiences.

Structure of the Instruction Commentary

The instruction commentary typically consists of several prompts that guide candidates in discussing their teaching practices. While specific requirements may vary by subject area, the general structure includes:

1. Contextual Information: A brief overview of the instructional context, including the grade level, subject matter, and student demographics.
2. Instructional Strategies: A detailed description of the teaching methods and strategies used during instruction.
3. Student Engagement: An analysis of how students were engaged in the learning process.
4. Assessment of Learning: An evaluation of how student learning was assessed and how that information will guide future instruction.

Example of an edTPA Instruction Commentary

To illustrate how to effectively craft an edTPA instruction commentary, let's consider a hypothetical example from a middle school English Language Arts lesson on literary analysis.

Contextual Information

In my seventh-grade English Language Arts class, I taught a lesson on analyzing character motivations in the novel "The Giver" by Lois Lowry. The class consisted of 25 students, including three English Language Learners (ELLs) and two students with individualized education plans (IEPs). The objective was for students to identify and analyze how the main character's motivations influenced the story's plot.

Instructional Strategies

During the lesson, I employed several instructional strategies:

- Direct Instruction: I began with a brief lecture introducing character motivations and their significance in literature. I used examples from "The Giver" to illustrate my points.
- Guided Practice: Students worked in pairs to identify key quotes that revealed the protagonist's motivations. I circulated the room to provide support and clarification as needed.
- Collaborative Learning: After the guided practice, each pair presented their findings to the class. This allowed for peer-to-peer learning and encouraged discussion about different interpretations.
- Differentiation: For ELL students, I provided visual aids and sentence starters to facilitate their analysis. For students with IEPs, I ensured that the tasks were scaffolded to match their individual learning goals.

Student Engagement

Throughout the lesson, I observed high levels of student engagement. The collaborative presentations sparked lively discussions, and students were eager to share their insights. I noticed that the ELL students, in particular, became more confident when they had the opportunity to collaborate with peers. Their partners supported them by providing language assistance and validating their contributions.

To further gauge student engagement, I utilized informal assessments such as thumbs-up/thumbs-down signals during the guided practice to check for understanding. This formative assessment allowed me to adjust my instruction in real-time, addressing any misconceptions immediately.

Assessment of Learning

At the end of the lesson, I assigned a short written reflection where students had to articulate one character motivation and its effect on the plot. This assessment not only measured their understanding of the lesson but also provided insight into their analytical skills. I planned to review these reflections to identify common themes and areas where students struggled, which would inform my subsequent lessons on literary analysis.

Reflecting on Instructional Decisions

In my instruction commentary, it is crucial to reflect on the effectiveness of my teaching decisions. After analyzing student engagement and assessment results, I noted the following:

- Strengths: The collaborative learning structure effectively engaged students and fostered a deeper understanding of character motivations. The use of visual aids assisted ELL students in accessing the content.
- Areas for Improvement: Some students struggled to articulate their thoughts during the presentations. In future lessons, I plan to incorporate additional modeling of how to express their analyses clearly and concisely.

Conclusion and Future Directions

The edTPA instruction commentary example exemplifies the importance of reflective teaching. By critically analyzing my instructional strategies, student engagement, and assessment practices, I can continually improve my teaching effectiveness. Moving forward, I will focus on enhancing student presentation skills and providing more targeted support for struggling learners.

In summary, crafting a strong instruction commentary for the edTPA involves a clear structure, thoughtful reflection, and a commitment to ongoing professional growth. By

following the guidelines and examples outlined in this article, teacher candidates can develop commentaries that not only meet assessment criteria but also foster a deeper understanding of their teaching practice.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the edTPA instruction commentary?

The edTPA instruction commentary is a reflective component of the edTPA portfolio where teacher candidates articulate their instructional decisions, analyze student learning, and evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching practices.

Why is the instruction commentary important in the edTPA process?

The instruction commentary is critical because it demonstrates a candidate's ability to reflect on their teaching, connect theory to practice, and provide evidence of student learning, which are key competencies for effective teaching.

What are some key elements to include in an edTPA instruction commentary example?

Key elements include a clear description of the lesson context, analysis of student responses, specific instructional strategies used, adjustments made during instruction, and reflections on student engagement and learning outcomes.

How can candidates effectively analyze student learning in their commentary?

Candidates can effectively analyze student learning by providing specific examples of student work, discussing how the instructional strategies impacted learning, and identifying patterns or trends in student responses that indicate understanding or misconceptions.

What are common mistakes to avoid in the edTPA instruction commentary?

Common mistakes include being too vague, failing to connect instructional choices to student outcomes, neglecting to include evidence from student work, and not providing sufficient reflection on the teaching process.

How long should the edTPA instruction commentary be?

The edTPA instruction commentary typically consists of several sections, with word limits varying by subject area, but generally, candidates should aim for around 3-5 pages total,

ensuring clarity and conciseness.

Where can candidates find examples of successful edTPA instruction commentaries?

Candidates can find examples of successful edTPA instruction commentaries through their educator preparation programs, online resources provided by the Stanford Center for Assessment, and various educational websites that focus on teacher preparation.

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