Exemplary Planning Commentary: Elementary Mathematics

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1a. Central focus of the segment

The Decimal System unit of study is the second unit in the Montessori math curriculum; the first unit is developing number sense of one to ten. The central focus of the Decimal System unit is for the students to gain familiarity with the quantities and their names. There are 14 lessons in this unit, I will focus on three of those lessons: Nine Layout (lesson 1), Forty-Five Layout (lesson 2), and Addition with the Golden Beads (lesson 3). The students will use math manipulatives called the Golden Beads (which are very similar to the Place Values blocks) and the numeral cards that are associated with the Golden Beads. A place value chart is also used for Addition with the Golden Beads. The numeral cards and the Golden Beads are the most concrete representation of the decimal system. These materials provide the students with the sensorial experiences of gaining conceptual understanding of quantity. The students learn how to compose and decompose quantity (through the use of the Golden Beads) and numerals (through the use of numeral cards). They also learn the association between the quantity and the numeral. As students work towards counting fluency by ones, tens, hundreds, and thousands, they practice the syntax of numbers. In developing number sense, students will work towards applying what they learned about numbers and their place value to adding four-digit numbers.

1b. Connecting lesson plans to concepts, procedures, and problem solving

The central focus is derived from Common Core State Standard (CCSS) 2.NBT.A.2 Count within 1000; skip count by 5s, 10s, and 100s and CCSS 2.NBT.A.3 Read and write numbers to 1000 using base-ten numerals, number names, and expanded form. Learning target for lesson 1 is for students to associate quantities with the printed symbol. Lesson 2 learning target is for students to associate the quantities with numeral cards from 1 to 9000. Lesson 3 learning target is for the students to experience the addition operation of adding together different small quantities to form one larger quantity. All these three lessons uses the Golden Beads, which are tools to teach children the decimal system (place value). As children practice independently or with a peer, with the composition and decomposition of numbers, they develop procedural fluency as stated in the CCSS.

In Lesson 2, the students create a big display of numbers. When students work with ordering the Golden Beads, they see a specific dimension of the Golden Beads that pertains to a specific place value—with units being the smallest place value which has the smallest and lightest dimension of Golden Beads; and the thousand cube being the largest place value which has the largest and heaviest dimension. As the students compose and decompose numbers, they are able to see and feel the weight of the number. When students work with the numeral cards, they develop a sense of order as they sequence the numeral cards from smallest to biggest. The arrangement of the numeral cards uncovers the place value; each numeral card has a specific length and color for a specific place value. Therefore, the student will be able to self-correct by visual disharmony. The students develop procedural fluency as they create the 45 Layout in a variety of ways. When students have mastered procedural fluency with organizing the 45 Layout, it carries over to Addition with the Golden Beads (lesson 3) because they will organize all the numeral cards in the same order.

Students make sense of mathematics by reasoning with mathematical concepts—making conjectures, and testing those conjecture. Students use mathematical reasoning as they recognize patterns, classify the Golden Beads in its place value (lesson 1 and 2), and play the Banking Game (lesson 3). Students recognize patterns: counting by 10s, 100s, and 1000s; identifying zero on the numeral cards as a place value indicator; and that taking ten of something makes something else.

For example, the loose beds represents the units (ones); if you take ten of the unit beads and bound then together on a wire, it makes a ten bar. And if you take ten of the ten-bars, bound them together by wire, it makes a one-hundred-square. And if you ten of the one-hundred-squares and bound them by wire, it will make a one-thousand-cube. Another repeating pattern that is embedded in this unit are the numeral cards. The numeral cards are associated with Golden Beads, which are color-coded to its corresponding place value. The numeral cards also increases in length as the place value gets higher. The numbers printed on the unit numeral cards (1 to 9) are green, the tens (10, 20, 30…90) numeral cards are blue, the hundreds (100, 200…900) are red, and the thousand numeral cards (1000, 2000…9000) are green. The units and the thousands are the same color because they represent a new hierarchy of the decimal system; knowing where to place the comma to separate the hierarchy of numbers. These visual and tactile indicators aids students to demonstrate conceptual mastery, procedural fluency, and mathematical reasoning of place values.

1c. Explaining how lessons build on each other and link to mathematics

Lesson 1 and 2, opens up with a formal preassessment of the Golden Beads. If the student have mastered matching the numeral card with the quantity on the Presentation Tray, then I can proceed to the Nine Layout (lesson 1) or the Forty-Five Layout (lesson 1). The Nine Layout (lesson 1) builds on the Presentation tray (formal presassessment), in which the students compose and decompose numbers from 1 to 1,999. The Forty-Five Layout focuses on the order of place value as well as the composition and decomposition of quantities from 1 to 9000. Layout of the Golden Beads and the numeral cards are consistent with all three lessons and aligns with the algorithm of computing two or more digit numbers: unit are laid out first and are placed on the farthest right of the work rug, with the tens placed to the left of the units place value, the hundreds placed to the left of the tens place value, and the thousands are placed to the left of the hundreds place value. Through practice of laying out the materials and “fetching” the Golden Beads, the students internalizes the procedure of always starting with the units, then tens, then hundreds, and then thousands. In lesson 3, students apply what they have learned from Lesson 1 and 2, to solve addition equations involving four-digit numbers. As students work together to fetch and combine the two addends, count and name the combined quantity in each place value, they are using mathematical reason to deepen their learning of mathematics. In addition, the students uses dialogue to explain to others their understanding of place value concepts, and procedure of computing the four-digit numbers.

1d. Opportunities to express learning targets (Washington State only).

Students will be given the opportunity to express their understanding of the learning targets and its importance throughout the lesson. Opportunities for students to express their understanding of the learning target is done through observation and dialogue. I observe how well the students can perform the learning target. I listen to student’s dialogue about how the apply the concepts of numbers and quantity in real life situations: taking road trips, scores of sporting events, and shopping. The students also reflect on the learning target by telling a peer what they have accomplished and identify what the student still needs to do in order for to accomplish the learning target.

By the end of lesson 1 and 2, the students will be able to articulate how much does s/he have in each place value and the maximum about of Golden Beads that s/he can have in each place value: nine or less. Throughout lesson 3, the students will express their understanding of the learning target through doing. They students gets the quantity from the “bank”, count to verify they got the correct amount from the bank, and then place them in the proper place value on the place value chart. They then combine the two quantities from each place value to get the sum. At the end of lesson 3, students express their understanding through a dialogue assessment.

2a. Summary of students’ prior knowledge

All lesson presentation are adapted to suit the academic level and ability of each student. Accessing student’s prior academic learning and prerequisite skills helps me to gage the pace of instruction. Prior academic learning experiences includes learning numerals and quantities from 0 to 10. Prerequisite skills related to the central focus includes: coordination, independence, organization, and concentration. Manipulatives like the Golden Beads are linguistically neutral, which is great for students who are English Language Learners and struggling readers, because it does not lend dependency on the students’ English proficiency. These manipulates also requires a lot of gross motor skills, which is great for students who need movement. The Golden Beads are open-ended materials that I can adapt to highly capable

students or students who are underperforming. These materials are accessible all year round for students at any time during the two-hour work period—this provides students opportunities to practice as much as they need to until they gain mastery. Each of these lessons builds on the previous lesson and is woven together by the central focus: to help the students gain familiarity with the quantities and their names.

Most of my 3 years old, and all four and five years old have shown mastery in the preassessment—identifying the Golden Beads and numeral cards on the Presentation Tray. From this understanding of students' knowledge, I know that I can start presenting the 9 Layout (lesson 1) to most of my three years old and four years old. Students who are three years old are learning how composing and decomposing one and two-digit numbers. The four years old are learning how to compose and decompose two to four-digit numbers. The five years old are learning how to do operations with the four-digit numbers.

When students are working with 9 Layout, they need to have eye-hand coordination and one-to-one correspondence to count the Golden Beads. They must also observe how I organize and set-up the manipulatives so that they can develop procedural fluency, which leads to independence. As the student progresses through the lessons, their ability to concentrate and focus at the task at hand lengthens. The presentation layout and practice of composing and decomposing numbers in the 9 Layout (lesson 1) can take 10minutes to complete. Whereas the 45 Layout (lesson 2) and Addition with the Golden Beads (lesson 3) can take 15 to 25 minutes.

2b. Summary of student assets

The classroom environment has been created as a place for students to take safe risks, foster creativity/individuality, and develop citizenship. As most of my students have parents who are perfectionists, and numerous caregivers, it is important for my students to develop these abilities to help them successfully navigate their environment. This is known from observing students willingness to help each other learn, resolve conflicts, and take care of their classroom environment.

Given that the school is a private school, most of the students in my class are from affluent family background. Almost all my students have solid support system at home. Parents and caregivers find ways to bridge learning experiences from school with home. Out of school experiences such as going on trips, attending sporting events, and shopping relates to the central focus of gaining familiarity with quantities and their names.

Students in my classroom enjoy outdoor activities such as playing soccer, building forts, camping, and hiking. They also enjoy art and construction. For this reason, students able to collaboratively and cooperatively participate in small group lessons. Students are support for each other's learning, often explaining and encouraging each other when necessary.

2c. Dispositions toward learning math

From my experience, the majority of students perceive mathematics as an everyday tool that is sensible, useful, and worthwhile. Students are eager for their individualized math lesson. They are intrinsically motivated to apply mathematics to everyday situation: such as figuring out how many children are present or absent, reading the thermometer, and following cooking recipes. I present math in an active, engaging, and challenging manner. They develop confidence in their ability to learn mathematics because I do not provide non-attributive feedback on their work—I observe and state what I see—which develops a classroom culture for students to be intrinsically motivated and for them to take safe-risks.

Students in my class are very persistent in applying mathematics to solve problems. There are times when students insist on extending their math lesson because they love what they are doing and want more practice. Students know where they can get resources to assist their learning, and they know that they can be challenged. These are also examples of student's strong display of believe in their ability to learn mathematics. The inner drive to learn more and do more encourages other students who are struggling, or needs help, to complete the same task.

3a. Selecting learning activities based on prior knowledge and other assets

Given the diverse age range and abilities of a mixed-age class, much of the instruction was intentionally planned to include modeling, opportunities to work in different settings, and differentiation of tasks. I use modeling to clarify expectation and reduce misconceptions of what students are asked to do. In every lesson I model for students how they are to complete a task, giving verbal instructions as I show them what they are to do. I then request for them to practice with a peer to perform the task before requesting that student to do it independently. Once the student is able to perform the task independently, I am able to provide them with feedback to ensure students have mastered the skill (Knight, 2013).

Rose (2006) defines student asset as "focus[ing] on what children and youth cannot do or accomplish, the emphasis is what they can do" (p. 236). The four external assets; support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, and constructive use of time (Search Institute, 2004) are qualities that I can control within my classroom. The three lessons in this unit are administered to the students in a one-on-one or small group setting. This kind of individualized and differentiated instruction allows me to support the students' holistic developmental needs. Sometimes a general lesson, such as the Presentation Tray (preassessment of lesson 1 and 2) can be given as a whole class instruction at circle time, in which it allows me to reach to all students. Whole group instruction is also a good strategy for students to review previously presented lesson.

The Montessori materials empowers the students as learners by having them take ownership of their learning. The students are able to access and manipulate the learning materials at any time during the two-hour work period. The more the students have with manipulating the Golden Beads and numeral cards, the better they are at conceptually understanding place value. Continuous observation and frequent feedback of students allows me to personalize instruction, as well as individualize assessment, and track how each student progresses through the lesson sequence. The strategic intent of a purposeful shelf layout of learning materials helps students to independently progress direct their learning at their own pace; the shelf layout is designed to start with simple and materials, and then gradually progresses to complex and abstract. Students also have the choice of working independently or collaboratively. Most children will choose to work in a small group setting so that they can support each other's learning, often explaining tasks and procedures.

3b. Selecting learning activities for the whole-class and individuals

The Montessori environment is a learner centered environment that provides students with real tools that work; accessibility to content materials; and an environment that is aesthetically pleasing and organized (Mooney, 2000). The Montessori philosophy fosters students to be competent, independent, self-directed, and intrinsic learners. I use scaffolding to foster these traits by providing contingent support to all students in my class. Pol, Volman, and Beishuizen, (2010) describes scaffolding as a responsive and differentiated approach to supporting the child—meeting the child where s/he is developmentally. Scaffolding is given on an as-needed basis. Scaffolding strategies I use include: modeling, guided practice, and gradual fading of teaching cueing. Tasks in Vygotsky's zone of proximal distance are tasks that the students cannot accomplish independently but can with assistance of a more competent person—either another student or from a teacher (Pressley and McCormick, 2007). For example, when students are doing the 45 Layout (lesson #2), I model how to do the layout by laying down the first couple of quantities of each place value and then matching the quantity to the numeral card. Once I see that the students notice the number patterns, I let them practice with a peer and by themselves. I may have them count out loud so I can hear then counting. I then gradually fade away and let them finish the layout. For practice activities of lesson 2, I will have the children do it almost entirely independent of a teacher.

Instruction alignment demands congruence between the learning outcome, instructional processes and instructional assessment (Cohen, 1987). The Montessori Method uses the three period lesson for whole class, small group, and individual instruction (Montessori, 1967). Lessons 1, 2, and 3 are to be presented as small group or individual instruction. Whole group instruction are used general information presentation, such as doing calendar, taking attendance, and recording the temperature. When presenting a lesson, the learning outcome is always stated—this is the first period. For lesson #3,"Today, we will use the Golden Beads to add. We will create two addend to fund the sum." I then give direct instruction on how to build and add four-digit numbers my telling, showing, and doing. The

instructional processes is the second period. In the second period of the lesson, I haven them choose their own equations by using equation cards or by rolling dice. Then the third component of instructional alignment is the instructional assessment, this is the third period. In the third period of a lesson, I am assessing if they have mastered the content. I would point to the first addend and ask, "What does this say? How much do you have? What is your sum?" The third period of the three period lesson is an assessment that is clearly the intended outcome (Cohen, 1987). If they provide the correct answer, then I know they have mastered the lesson. If not, then this means I have to go back to the second or first period; this means that I either gave too early of an assessment or I did not adapt the lesson so that the child can "get it". The second period of the lesson is differentiated instruction. Parsons, Dodman and Burrowbridge (2013) describes the three traits of differentiated instruction: multiple ongoing informal assessment, in depth understanding of how the child learns, and reflection. In most cases, the second period of a lesson can last anywhere from a day to a school year. The structure of the Montessori environment allows students to learn at their own pace, in their learning style, and in a meaningful way.

3c. Resources for getting help on learning targets (Washington state only)

Students have access to resources that supports their progress toward the learning target on a daily basis. The manipulatives and other math related resources are located in the Math Area of the classroom. Materials and resources used for this lesson sequence includes: Golden Beads, large numeral cards, small numeral cards, place value chart, bank trays, felt, colored pencils, and grid paper, Long term use of concrete instructional materials, like the Montessori manipulatives, improves student achievements and attitudes, especially if the teacher is trained and knowledgeable on how to use the materials (Johnson, 2010; Grows & Cebulla, 2002). These manipulatives are critical learning tools for all learners, especially for struggling learners. The Golden Beads and the numeral cards are materials that help students "think about how to combine quantities and eventually how this process connects with the written procedure" (Kilpatrick, Swafford, & Findell, 2001, p. 198). By modeling the use of manipulatives during instruction, students are able to recall what they can also use as they work. Besides the manipulatives, their peers also serve as another resource that students have to support their progress toward the learning target. The mixed-age classroom environment provides more opportunities for students to organically peer-teach.

3d. Managing misconceptions

Shermin, Richardson, and Yard (2013) firmly states the importance of mastering place value concepts as it is the foundation for "efficient counting of quantities in groups, singles, and bases and computation of multi-digit whole and rational number" (p.19). Shermin et al (2013) defines place value as position systems in which each digit represents a group or base 10. Some common errors when working with place values include remembering to regroup, as well as forgetting which direction and order of multi-digit numbers. I address these errors by providing hands-on, concrete, repetition of the manipulation of the Golden Beads. Each time I present these lessons, I always emphasize starting from the units, and always making sure there is no more than nine Golden Beads in each place value. To reinforce regrouping, if the child finds that a certain place value has 10 Golden Beads, then the child will go to the bank and "exchange" for the equivalent place value.

4a. Identifying the language function

The language function essential for students to learn is *compare* and *contrast*.

4b. Learning activities enabling practice with the language function

It is important for me to use academic language in the class because the students do not always acquire it at home; the use of academic language is an indicator of academic success (O'Neal & Ringler, 2010). Academic language is embedded in all three lesson plans. For example, the academic language I use throughout all three lessons are: units, tens, hundreds, thousands. I use the academic language throughout the lesson and the student uses these terms as they compose and decompose numbers. By having direct, systematic vocabulary instruction, it helps students to build comprehension (Flynt & Brozo, 2008). In the Forty-Five Layout (lesson 2), the children are able to organize the layout by comparing and contrasting one equivalent set with the next. Ask the students layout the numbers in the ones place,

they will compare and contrast the number from the previous set. For example, if the students places seven unit beads on the felt, the number that follow seven will require one more unit bead, which is eight unit beads. The number that precedes seven will have one less unit bead, which is six. The same goes for the tens, hundreds, and thousands place value.

4c. Additional language demands

Given the language function and learning task identified above, the vocabulary that is represented in Lesson 1 includes; *character*, *setting*, *problem*, and *realistic fiction*. Though each of these vocabulary words are important to other genres of writing and reading, they are identified as key terms for Lesson 1, because students are building an awareness of how they relate to realistic fiction writing, which will help them create their own story. Students are first exposed to the vocabulary when they listen to the Learning Target from Lesson 1 (Instructional Material 1.1), read it independently, and then pair-share what the terms mean. Based on this initial lesson activity, it helps in establishing an understanding of what students already know about the language demand and what is new to them. As students verbally discuss the vocabulary I monitor their discussions and ask questions to assess the range of my students' understanding. Though my students presently have an understanding of the vocabulary *character* and *setting*, which is constructed from interactions with daily reading instruction, they will need to develop a connection to the terms in relation to realistic fiction writing. In Lesson 1, I provide opportunities for my students to interact with the language function, *create*, and vocabulary by asking them to read out loud, verbally share ideas, and write their ideas on an organizational plan sheet (Instructional Material 1.3). The language demand relating to syntax that students need to understand and use during the learning segment involves writing sentences using appropriate structure and punctuation when they complete the organizational plan sheet (Instructional Material 1.3). The language demand relating to discourse during Lesson 1 involves speaking to peers about their ideas for their realistic fiction story and communicating their understanding of vocabulary. As students participate in activities that integrate the language demands, writing and speaking, they progress in their development of the language function, which will support them in meeting goals acknowledged in the Learning Targets and Central Focus.

4d. Supporting student language use

I employ various instructional strategies, learning tasks, and assessments on a regular basis to support my students' learning and language use. The main instructional supports that I employ to help students understand and successfully use the language function and language demands include; partner work, providing verbal feedback, individual verbal or written cues for students with IEP/504 Plans, and student self reflection tools. For example, in the second Informal Assessment of Lesson 1, I give language support by observing students performing the steps to thinking of a character, setting, and problem, by offering different strategies to think of ideas. I offer a strategy to students that involves putting up one finger at a time to represent an idea, which helps students visually self-reflect on their progress, and informs myself about how I can support students in successfully understanding the language function, *create*. Monitoring the creation process of a character, setting, and problem also informs me of how much time is needed for students. Ebeling (2000) states that adapting time allotted can help students to complete a task; therefore, I adopt this method into activities to support student learning. In Lesson 2, I help students with additional literacy needs during the last Practice Activity Support where I give verbal and written reminders to help proctor language use and transferring new content to their writing. During this activity students create three descriptive details that they can write in their story, which directly helps in their understanding of the language function. I also ask text-dependent questions on a regular basis to extend my students' thinking. By practicing written and verbal language demands my students acquire skills to deepen their understanding of new content and encourages an application of knowledge.

5a. Assessing student learning

The lessons in the learning segment include multiple opportunities for assessments that provide direct evidence for myself to monitor learning. Both the formal preassessment and post-assessment given to students serve as a purposeful indicator of student prior knowledge of the Central Focus and Learning Targets, and of the students' of abilities in composing a text. I also use informal assessments to obtain direct evidence about student progression in acquiring the requisite skills and literacy strategy for the learning segment. For example, Lesson 1 shows two opportunities where I

conduct informal assessments, as well as frequent formative assessments integrated throughout lesson activities. The first Informal Assessment of Lesson 1 occurs after the Instruction Inquiry Preview Review, in which students are asked to practice thinking of a pretend character, setting, and problem, which I had modeled during direct instruction, and to put a thumb up when they are ready. This planned Informal Assessment serves as direct evidence, because I can monitor student progress by watching to see when students have put a thumb up (representing they have completed the task), check in with students needing support, and encourage students to assess their own development of the requisite skills and literacy strategy (composing text). At another point in the subsequent lessons, I again use planned assessments in the first Informal Assessment of Lesson 2. In this Informal Assessment I ask students, "think of a place that you visit often, and think of three details about that place. As you think of a detail put up one finger." Once again I can receive immediate evidence by observing how many fingers are held up, which represents 1, 2, or 3 details. As students participate in the activity they visually can monitor their own progress and organize their ideas, which is a requisite skill for the learning segment. I use the information from informal and formal assessments to shape proceeding lesson activities and instruction to fully support student learning.

5b. Adapting lessons

The design and adaptation of my planned assessments allows students with specific needs to demonstrate their learning, because I use knowledge of student assets to provide necessary support for each of my learners. In Lesson 2 I exemplify adaptation of planned assessments to meet the specific needs of learning in the last Practice Activity Support where I walk around to monitor student progress as they work on writing down details for their realistic fiction story. During this time, I scaffold students with IEP/504 plans by providing verbal or written reminders, an identified strategy to help deepen their understanding and transfer content from the lesson to their writing. Monitoring student progress serves as an effective informal assessment, because I can briefly check in with students that have specific support needs, give input to students, and assess their progress in reaching Learning Targets. In addition to helping students with literacy support needs, I am also attentive to all my students by visually scanning the classroom and giving verbal feedback when necessary. In Lesson 3, I conduct another planned informal assessment after the Instruction Inquiry Preview Review where I ask students to think of how they can use action, dialogue, or feelings to make an ending to their realistic fiction story. Students choose a method to their story that is relatable to their interests and allows them to assess whether action, dialogue, or feelings (the academic language for Lesson 3) would best suit their personal stories to demonstrate their learning. Once again, I monitor student progress during the Informal Assessment by verbally responding to students, visually scanning the room, and giving assistance or feedback to any student that needs additional support. All of these instructional methods are aimed to provide optimal learning activities for students to interact with skills aligned for the lessons and independently display their acquisition of literacy skills.

5c. Student reflection (Washington state only)

In multiple learning activities from Lessons 1, 2, and 3, I elicit student voice (metacognitive thinking) to raise awareness, in both myself and my students, of where they are relative to the learning targets. For example, a main instructional strategy and student voice activity I use is pair-share, which allows students to thoughtfully elicit and build on their responses. Pair-share is an effective tool that I practice with my students to assist in deepening their understanding of not only writing, but across all disciplines as well. My students have become comfortable and accustomed to pair-share, because it is used on a regular basis; therefore I incorporated it in the learning segment to prompt rich learning experiences for students. During the Closure Assessment of Student Voice from Lesson 1, I have table partners (two students) work together to peer-assess their development of a character, setting, and problem (academic language for Lesson 1) for a realistic fiction story. As students are working together I ask extended questions, using academic language introduced at the beginning of Lesson 1, to ensure they can vocalize how they are applying new content and applying the skills addressed in the Learning Target. When students participate in pair-share, it provokes meaningful conversations where they can use academic language from the lesson to progress their understanding of the lesson goals. I elicit student voice later on in the learning segment during the introduction of the Learning Target for Lesson 3. During the discussion of the Learning Target (Instructional Material 3.1) for Lesson 3, I display it on the document camera and ask students to identify the goal for the lesson, and if they recognize the underlined words, which are identified as the academic language for Lesson 3. This discussion demonstrates student voice, because students displays

their prior knowledge relating to the Learning Target, and gives students the opportunity to recall prior learning to articulate what they currently know.

5e. Strategies to promote student self-assessment (Washington state only)

Tools and strategies students will use to monitor their own learning process during the learning segment are interwoven throughout several lesson activities. The main tools and strategies that my students are familiar with, based on experience from prior units and other subject areas, involve pair-share, independent development of ideas, holding a thump or down, self-evaluation rubrics, exit slips, and goal setting. In Lesson 1 the tools and strategies students use are immediately visible when students are introduced to the Learning Target (Instructional Material 1.1). As students quietly recite the Learning Target, they listen to the academic language and assess their knowledge of the terms when they turn and discuss with a partner. This example shows students monitoring their own learning, because they interpret the Learning Target in their own way by discussing with a peer and listening to whole class ideas. In a subsequent activity of Lesson 1, students use pair-share again during the last Informal Assessment to share their ideas with a peer to help them express their ideas for a character, setting, and a problem for a realistic fiction story. Students verbally monitor their own learning process by explaining their ideas and use a visual cue of holding up a thumb for each idea they compose to distinguish when they have met the goal for the activity. At the completion of the learning segment, after Lesson 3, students use a self-evaluation rubric (Instructional Material 3.5) to monitor the progression of their learning relative to the Central Focus and Learning Targets from Lessons 1, 2, and 3. Students use the self-evaluation rubric to assess the current status of realistic fiction writing skills they have integrated into their writing. Based on the results of the self-evaluation rubric, students will have the opportunity to create a writing goal for themselves that provides direction and information about what they need to do to meet the Learning Targets.