Exemplary Assessment Commentary: Library Specialist

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1. Analyzing Student Learning:

a. Identify the learning targets measured by the chosen assessment

I can summarize a book I enjoy and retell one piece of important information such as theme, plot, setting, or character.

b. Provide a table or chart or narrative that summarizes student learning for the class.

![Lesson 2 Assessment Chart]

The chart shows that students mostly met or exceeded standard for demonstrating knowledge of the learning target in question 1 (Q1). Meeting standard means that in the question they earned the maximum number of points. Exceeding standard means that they did more than required to earn the maximum number of points. Not meeting standard means that they did not earn the maximum number of points. The chart shows other patterns of learning were more scattered when it came to vocabulary and restating the learning target. All students answered Q3, Q4, and Q5, which were reflective and received full marks if the students wrote an answer.

In Q1 (“...what is a piece of important information you could retell to help explain why you enjoyed” the book you brought today?”), Six of seven students (86%) met the learning target by summarizing a book they enjoyed and retelling one important detail. Those six students correctly identified at least one of the relevant vocabulary terms for the detail they retold (plot, theme, setting, or character). The seventh student, who has ADHD, identified the vocabulary but not the detail, which made me wonder whether she meant to be more specific in her answer to the first question. Three students (43%) went beyond what I asked and correctly identified more than one relevant vocabulary term as part of their demonstration of the learning target. In Q2 (“What did you learn today?”), all seven students repeated their understanding of the learning target. Four of the seven students (57%) restated the learning target using both language functions (summarize and retell). Two students (29%) included summarize but omitted retell, and one student used neither. In Q3 (“Why is it important?”), all seven students provided thoughtful answers about why the learning target was important to learn. All students answered Q4 (“What did you do well in the Friday library group today?”) and Q5 (“What could you have done better?”), which were designed to elicit student understanding of what they did well and/or needed to improve (that is, student voice). My scoring chart did not evaluate the quality of the answers for Q3, Q4, and Q5 because I wanted students to share their thoughts with me so that I could see whether they were learning what I planned to teach.
c. Provide a table or chart or narrative summary of student understanding of what they did well and/or needed to improve

The questions I used to elicit student voice on this assessment were not specific enough. Students reflected thoughtfully on their performance and participation in class discussions and the Kahoot quiz, not on their engagement with the learning target. They were proud of having paid attention, answered questions, spoken up, and played Kahoot, and they wrote of needing to raise hands or speak louder in things they could have done better. I was pleased that Student 1, who has ADHD, reflected that she had done well at following directions. However, I realized that I needed to try again to get students to reflect on their performance with respect to the learning target. To elicit student voice, I rephrased the questions in my feedback to focus students, this time with more success. In my feedback to the three focus students, I asked them all how they felt they did at summarizing and retelling during our class. This follow-up question still did not generate deep self-reflection, but students did tell me that they were pleased with their own progress: Student 1 addressed one language function in her reflection but not the other (“I felt good by summarizing”). Student 2 thought he had done well at summarizing and retelling. Student 3 did not use either of the language functions, but she demonstrated awareness of her practice of the first part of the discourse for retell (“think about what you want the other person to know”) when she wrote “the kid’s at my table really understood my book!” None of the three focus students responded to the follow-up question with any ideas about improvements or next steps, which I think points to a problem with the types of questions I asked.

d. Refer to evidence from 3 student work samples and reflections, and the class summary to analyze the patterns of learning for the class and differences for groups or individual students relative to library literacies for becoming thinkers, readers, researchers, information users.

Two of three focus students, Student 2 and Student 3, repeated both language functions of the learning target: summarize and retell. The third student, Student 1, used neither. Student 3 and Student 1 repeated some or all of the vocabulary. Student 2 and Student 3 repeated the measurement (“one piece”). Of the three focus students, only Student 3 captured all elements of the learning target, even though it was posted while the students were completing the assessment.

The class as a whole did well with demonstrating understanding of what I taught, as shown in the patterns of learning for Q1. This tells me that the lesson succeeded. Students were able to summarize their books and as a result of that summary retell at least one important detail. They were also able to use the vocabulary of the lesson to describe that detail (theme, plot, character, or setting). This tells me that they are making progress in the library literacy of information literacy, or the ability to recognize a need for information, find resources, and evaluate them. The ability to summarize and retell details from a book they enjoy will help these students work with librarians and make use of other resources to find books they may be able to read enthusiastically. The other pattern of learning demonstrated in the assessment is students’ lack of awareness of their progress. They were able to do what I asked, but they were not able to describe it by repeating all of the language functions in the learning target. They also did not demonstrate any awareness of ways they could improve. The assessment data shows that I needed to provide more supports in the assessment for the student with ADHD, whose patterns of learning do not align with the class as a whole. Students demonstrated their willingness to participate and engage with the reflective questions (Q3, Q4, and Q5).

e. What was learned from student self-reflections on their own learning progress, considering their assessment performance?

The three focus students were happy with their performance on the assessment. Student 2 wrote “I felt good summarizing and retelling.” Student 1 wrote “I felt good by summarizing”, and Student 3 wrote, “I felt good and felt like the kid’s at my table really understood my book!” Although this is not as deep a reflection as I would have liked, it does match the patterns of learning for the class as a whole. Student 1 revealed more through the way she expressed herself than she did in her answer: her misspelling and unusual syntax (“I felt good by summarizing”) show me that we need to really go back a few steps in our one-on-one work. Student 3 demonstrated a deeper connection with the material by going beyond her peers in her reflective writing. Like the other two focus students, she was satisfied with her performance, but unlike them, she offered evidence of both her practice of the discourse (she writes about the other
kids at her table, which relates to the first step of the retell discourse, “Think about what you want the other person to know”) and its effectiveness (the other students in her table group “really understood” the results of her discourse).

2. Feedback for learning:

a. Identify the format in which you provided evidence of feedback.

Written directly on work samples.

b. Describe what you did to help students understand their performance on the assessment.

For Student 1, I wrote that she had done a good job at identifying the type of important information she would share with a librarian, but I needed her to retell a more specific detail. I also complimented her on mentioning the librarian in her answer, because I stressed in both lesson 1 and lesson 2 that it was important to consider the person they were talking or writing to when discussing and retelling. I also agreed with her response to Q4, where she said that she had done a good job of listening and following directions, because I stressed in both lesson 1 and lesson 2 that it was important to consider the person they were talking or writing to when discussing and retelling. I also agreed with her response to Q4, where she said that she had done a good job of listening and following directions, because I stressed in both lesson 1 and lesson 2 that it was important to consider the person they were talking or writing to when discussing and retelling. I also agreed with her response to Q4, where she said that she had done a good job of listening and following directions, because I stressed in both lesson 1 and lesson 2 that it was important to consider the person they were talking or writing to when discussing and retelling.

For Student 2, I wrote that he had done well retelling details and asked him to consider whether his answer included more types of important information than just plot. He referred to an “old lady” in his detail but did not circle character. For Student 3, I wrote that she had done well retelling important details. I also asked her to think about whether any of the other types of information – character, setting, or theme – applied to her answer, because she described the main character and her mother and brother. Because my initial questions about reflecting on their work did not elicit responses that related to the learning target, I asked all three students how they felt they had done at summarizing and retelling during our class.

c. Explain how feedback to the 3 focus students deals with strengths and needs relative to the learning targets.

Student 1’s teacher shared with me that she has a 504 plan for ADHD. I was proud of her for maintaining focus and being aware that she had done it, so that was part of my feedback to her. However, even with the learning target posted and prompts that repeated the language functions, Student 1’s answer to question 1 was unfocused. She seemed to have an idea of a detail to retell that would have fulfilled the learning target, based on her having circled both character and setting, but her answer focused on the scenario of the question – talking to a librarian – instead of the information I asked for. I loved that she thought of the librarian and imagined herself in that situation, but I wanted more details from her. I structured my feedback so she could build on what she had written, I also provided a sentence stem to help her focus.

Student 2’s teacher told me that he needed support with details and inference, so I wanted to celebrate his success in that area. I complimented the vivid way he retold his details and asked him to consider whether his answer included more types of important information than just plot.

Student 3’s answer to question 1 met the criteria for summarizing and retelling, and she was able to identify vocabulary correctly. Because her answer demonstrated mastery of the learning target, I asked her to go a step further and identify further vocabulary. I have notes that I meant to ask her to tell me why she enjoyed the book, encouraging her to connect back to the central focus of finding books to love. I had complimented the whole class in Lesson 2 about the times during Lesson 1 that they had gone a bit deeper and thought about why they enjoyed or connected with the books they liked. However, in transferring my feedback from my notes to her exit ticket I wrote the same feedback I had written for Student 2. My hope was that this extra step would help reinforce connections between the learning target and the central focus, which has to do with finding books students will connect with on a personal level and read with enthusiasm. Unfortunately I did not do that, but now that I see my mistake, I will follow up with her in person.

d. Describe how you will support each focus student to understand and use this feedback to further their learning.

With Student 1, I will use the feedback to help her articulate the ideas that I think she has formulated but not expressed. By repeating directions, breaking them down into steps, and providing supports like sentence stems, I hope to help her visualize and follow through with multi-step tasks that require focus. With Student 2, I will use the feedback to build on
his strengths or imagination and his demonstration of his understanding of the language function retell to help him show that he can summarize as well. With Student 3, I will use the feedback to keep building connections between the details she can tell me about what she is reading and her ability to find books she can read enthusiastically in the library. She wrote in the pre-assessment that she doesn’t usually check books out of the library, but I see evidence that she enjoys this book.

3. Evidence of Language Use:

a. Explain and provide examples for the extent to which your students selected language function, vocabulary, discourse, or syntax.

Two of the three focus students used the word retell in their assessments: “retell one piece of important information” and “retell at least one piece of important information,” from Student 2 and Student 3, respectively. All three focus students demonstrated knowledge of the lesson vocabulary (plot, theme, setting, character) by circling it as part of the first question on the assessment. Student 1 did not use the word retell or demonstrate her understanding of the learning target. However, she did demonstrate that she understood the discourse. The first step of the discourse is to “think about what you want the person to know,” and Student 1 wrote that “would say to the librarian if they had more of the author.” She also used her own words, which is the second and final step of the discourse for retell. Student 2 and Student 3 provided evidence of their understanding of the first step of the discourse for retell by introducing their answers with a reference to speaking to someone else. Student 2 wrote, “What I said was…” and Student 3 wrote, “I would say that...”. They demonstrated understanding of the second and final step of the discourse by using their own words to retell the detail, rather than quoting. All three students showed that they were imagining speaking to someone else about the book they were reading. I was pleased with this result because it showed me that they were thinking about being able to explain a book they enjoyed to someone else. This skill is directly related to the central focus of being able to use resources to find “their next read.”

4. Using Assessment to Inform Instruction:

a. Based on analysis of learning and self-reflections presented above, describe next steps for planning and instruction to impact student learning for the class and 3 focus students.

My next steps with this class will be to work with them individually to practice the language functions with books they are reading. Students were able to repeat the learning target and use academic language, but I would like for them to take it deeper and make more personal connections between the learning segment and their own independent reading. Because of the many demands on their instruction time, the classroom teachers were able to find only short amounts of time for my class in their schedules, so I want to take a little more time to cement this learning segment and make the time they have spent with me in the library valuable to them and their classroom teachers. As we meet individually, I will incorporate more time for each student to practice academic language from these lessons as we discuss their book choices.

I will give Student 1, the student with ADHD, plenty of time to practice discourse and make the connections between the language function and the central focus explicit. I will break work down into very small chunks, because in much of her written work and even her student voice, she followed one instruction and then stopped (“I would say to the librarian if they had more of the author,” “I liked the characters because the character is kind,” “I felt good by summarizing”). In class, she was supportive of her classmates and responsive to my questions, so I feel we will be able to make progress when I can take time to work with her more on following all the steps and maybe providing her with checklists and other opportunities for closer self-monitoring. I will also create sentence stems for her and keep making written copies of directions, learning targets, and other materials available to her while we work.

I will give Student 2 opportunities to practice discourse with the books that he loves to read, to help make the ideas concrete and personal to him and to help him step up from details to bigger pictures.
With Student 3, I will focus on making connections between the learning targets and academic language she knows and the central focus of the learning segment. I want her to see that she does enjoy reading and that she is capable of choosing books she will love in the library, with the resources we discussed in the learning segment, I want to hear more about why she enjoys the book she brought to Lesson 2.

b. Provide a rationale for how these next steps follow from your analysis and from principles from research or theory.

For the whole class, the academic language in this learning segment relates to the library literacy of information literacy, as reflected in the verb find. My goal for this learning segment is to build a foundation on which students can find books in or through the library that will support their academic and personal development by contributing to a habit of enthusiastic independent reading (Stephen Krashen, The Power of Reading: Insights from the Research, 2004). I hope that helping these struggling readers acquire the academic language used in this learning segment will contribute to their academic achievement (E. Sutton Flynt and William G. Brozo, “Developing Academic Language: Got Words?” in The Reading Teacher, 2008) and deepen their connections to the library and the resources that are available to them here.

For my focus students, my plans address their assets as well as what this assessment reveals about their learning. Student 1, the student who has ADHD, struggled to demonstrate knowledge of the learning target, but she did demonstrate an understanding of the vocabulary and, in previous conversations and classes, a love of reading. Her teacher told me that Student 1 responds well to repeated and written directions, and Student 1’s responses to the reflection questions in this assessment (“I focused and did what she told me to do”) lead me to believe that she is actively working on a goal of focusing and following directions. My plans for Student 1 build on my personal knowledge of her, knowledge of what supports work for her, and research that tells us that a self-directed program of independent reading will help Student 1 develop a strong sense of self-efficacy, which contributes to academic achievement in students with ADHD (Joseph Johnson and Robert Reid, “Overcoming Executive Function Deficits With Students With ADHD” in Theory Into Practice, 2011). Student 2’s teacher told me that he needs practice with identifying important details and making inferences in order to progress from level S to level T or even U. He was able to identify details and retell them vividly (“some kids get some magic candy from this old lady to help her get some strange objects”), but I want to work with him on determining what is important and making inferences, which contribute to summarizing, in the books that he is reading. He demonstrated a connection to reading funny books like Geronimo Stilton and Calvin and Hobbes in previous conversations and classes. I will use those books to give him opportunities to practice the skills his teacher identified and to deepen his connection to enthusiastic reading. A habit of independent reading has been shown to boost academic achievement (Stephen Krashen, The Power of Reading: Insights from the Research, 2004). Student 3 demonstrated understanding of the learning target and vocabulary, but her answer to why the learning target is important (“if you want to share something about your book with a friend”) showed me that I hadn’t made the connection to finding books to enjoy in the library strongly enough. More time to practice the language functions with the book she talked about, The War That Saved My Life, will help her connect the learning target and vocabulary to the central focus of being able to find books she will love in the library. Connection to the academic language has been shown to positively impact learning (E. Sutton Flynt and William G. Brozo, “Developing Academic Language: Got Words?” in The Reading Teacher, 2008), so I will build on her understanding of the academic language. Her facility with the academic language can help connect back to the central focus of the learning segment, so that she too develops that habit of enthusiastic reading that will help her succeed as she moves on to middle school (Krashen, The Power of Reading: Insights from the Research, 2004).

c. Identify any proposed revisions in techniques or strategies for collecting what students thought they did well and/or needed to improve, providing a rationale for revisions.

I had to revisit my strategy for collecting student voice. The questions I created were too broad, and students responded with reflections about their participation in the class rather than their engagement with the learning target. Now that I have had a chance to look at the assessment process for this learning segment as a whole, I think that this problem is evident also in the way I asked them to repeat the learning target without helping them connect it back to our class discussions. I asked more specific questions as part of my feedback to my focus students, but even then, I don’t think I really accessed metacognition for them. I have a lot of work to do in this area. In the future, my questions will include specific phrases that will support my students by directing them back toward the learning target and their interactions...
with it during the lesson or learning segment. I will also spend more time designing time for metacognition into every lesson, so that it’s not a surprise when I ask for it on an assessment.