Exemplary Assessment Commentary: Performing Arts Theater

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1. Analyzing Student Learning

a. Identify the specific standards/learning targets measured by the assessment you chose for analysis.

[This lesson sequence was designed to students help students to organize and develop artistic ideas and work (NCCAS TH: Cr2-III: Organize and Develop Artistic Ideas and Work.) Specifically, students examined how Meisner Repetition develops acting skills by cultivating improvisatory talking and listening in rehearsal and performance. The assessment I chose for analysis included a written pre- and post-assessment and a performance pre-and post-assessment. Pre-assessment included the creation of individual Acting technique goals. These goals were reviewed and recorded in Lesson 4 on a Venn diagram that examined the overlap of skills and knowledge acquired by students during the practice of Meisner Repetition and students’ articulated technique goals.

Learning Targets measured by the written and performance assessments:
1. Lesson 1: Students will create a personal and group definition for “Repetition.” (Student work samples: performance post-assessment Parts 1 and 2)
2. Lesson 1: Students will infer how Repetition can help them toward achieving individual technique goals and predict how Repetition can be useful to actors (Question 5 on pre-assessment; performance post-assessment reflection)
3. Students will describe and practice the mechanics of Repetition Level 1 (Performance Post-Assessment, Part 1)
4. Students will describe and practice Meisner Repetition Level 2 (Performance Post-Assessment, part 2)
5. Students will reinforce and refine understanding of Level 1 and Level 2 Repetition by exploring objectivity and/or behavior changes (rubric evaluation criteria)
6. Students will analyze how Meisner Repetition can be used to help them meet their Acting goals (written pre-assessment Question 5, post-assessment reflection)
7. Students will apply their understanding of Meisner Repetition to a rehearsal process (written pre-assessment, questions 1, 3, 4, 7; performance Post-Assessment Part 3)
8. Students will maintain objectivity, focus, and concentration in a performance setting (Rubric evaluative criteria; Performance Post-assessment, Part 3)

b. Provide the evaluation criteria you used to analyze student learning.

[I designed this coordinated assessment to (1) reinforce and evaluate students’ proficiency in the language function and central focus of the lesson, (2) to answer to the standard being assessed (“Students will organize and develop artistic ideas and work.”)]

(3) to ensure students actively participated throughout the lesson sequence in the construction of knowledge and the alignment of instruction and assessment, and (4) to ensure that, throughout the
lesson sequence, students were organizing artistic ideas by examining the tasks being performed, evaluating the process being used to understand the tasks, analyzing how tasks related to skill building, and connecting how the skills being built related to students’ individual learning goals. Each student’s submission for evaluation includes a written pre-and post-assessment, rehearsal/performance of a neutral scene videotaped for evaluation, and reflection (embedded in student work samples.)

The key component for evaluation and for learning throughout the lesson sequence was a student-authored rubric. I created this evaluative component to ensure understanding of learning targets, to formatively assess that students were identifying effective strategies for achieving learning targets, and to provide opportunities for students to actively and regularly practice the language function throughout the lesson sequence.

Students created the evaluation criteria for their submissions by analyzing and recording evaluative criteria on a rubric in Lessons 1, 2, 3, and 4. Working together, the students and I used the rubric and written pre- and post-assessment evidence to evaluate students’ proficiency and growth.

The evaluative criteria on the rubric included talking and listening, focus and concentration (Lesson 1), Objectivity (Lesson 3), practicing a physical technique (self-proscribed) (Lesson 4). Students had an opportunity, working with their scene partners, to add one or more self-identified evaluative criterion to the rubric (Lesson 2). I used students’ evaluation of qualitative differences for evaluative criteria for the purpose of formative assessment throughout the sequence.

A copy of the rubric is included below along with the teacher sample provided for students:

**Student template:**

**Teacher Sample:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric for Repetition</th>
<th>Beginning</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Insightful</th>
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<td>Talking</td>
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(Choice)

Objectivity

Physical Technique
This coordinated assessment included a written pre- and post-assessment. The students and I used pre- and post-assessment data in feedback sessions as part of our evaluation.

Written Pre+Assessment Component:  

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<tr>
<td>Written Pre-Assessment Component:</td>
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6. What are your strengths as an actor?  
7. By what standards will you measure your performance?  
8. What are your weaknesses as an actor?  
9. Based on what you know so far, what five things can you learn from Meisner technique?  
10. List 2 or 3 resources or experiences you can employ to increase your understanding of different approaches to acting:  

Written Post+Assessment Component:  

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<tr>
<td>Written Post-Assessment Component:</td>
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</table>

6. How did doing Repetition confirm or modify your strengths as an actor?  
7. Which do you think is essential to authentic communication on stage?  
8. Why did you address your weaknesses as an actor?  
9. Based on what you know so far, list five things you can learn from Meisner technique?  
10. List 2 or 3 resources or experiences you can employ to increase your understanding of different approaches to acting:  

Last, I have included the script for the videotaped post-assessment. Each student’s rubric was used to evaluate performance on this assessment.

Final Assessment

**Partner A:** Define Level 1 Meisner Repetition  

**Partner B:** Define Level 2 Meisner Repetition  

**Both Partners:** Perform 30 seconds of **Level 1 Repetition** to demonstrate your understanding  

**Both Partners:** Perform 30 seconds of **Level 2 Repetition** to demonstrate your understanding  

**Both Partners:** Rehearse/Perform your neutral scene to demonstrate how you use improvisatory talking and listening (Repetition) in rehearsal/performance.  

**Reflection:** How will you apply Meisner Repetition to rehearsal and performance in future?

c. Provide a graphic (table or chart) or narrative that summarizes student learning for your whole class. Be sure to summarize student learning for all evaluation criteria described above.
Performance Post-Assessment Analysis:

This graphic (above) details data from performance evaluations graded in conference with students using student-generated evaluation criteria. Student choice categories (which are labeled “honesty, etc.” on the chart included honesty (Lucy and Nathan W.), “spontaneity” (Joe, Connor, Liam, Corinna) and “being fully in the moment” (Corinna and Liam), “cooperation” (Nathan H. and Cameron), “impulse” (Nathan H.), “impulses” (Bridgette and Sophie).

This graphic details total written pre- and post-assessment gains. Questions 1, 3, and 7 are selected response opinion questions that examine students’ comfort with improvisatory talking and listening in rehearsal. Questions 2, 5, and 8 ask students to rate their self-efficacy, to infer (pre-assessment) or reflect (post-assessment). Question 2 asks students to rate their proficiency as an actor; question 5 on the pre-assessment asks students to use current understanding to predict how Meisner work will help them grow as actors; on the post-assessment, students answer the same question to rate post-instruction gains in knowledge and understanding of how Meisner technique may or may not help them grow as actors. Question 8 asks students to rate their understanding of Meisner technique. Questions 4, 6, 8, and 10 are constructed response questions. I rated questions 9 and 10 by examining the number of responses given. For example, on the pre-assessment, some students were unable to identify what they could learn from practicing Repetition. Similarly, on the pre-assessment, most students were unable to identify “2 or 3 resources or experiences” they could use to explore different approaches to acting.

Overall, this Scale of 1-5 graphic shows gains in rehearsal technique, self-efficacy, connecting Meisner technique to previous learning, and in students’ abilities to identify resources for continued growth.
Students report that improvisatory talking and listening is a key component in rehearsal process questions 1 and 3; students report placing the same high emphasis on the importance of listening and responding. Students report gains in acting proficiency (self – efficacy rating, question 2) and report in question 4 that practicing Meisner helped them grow as actors. The most dramatic gains reported were in students’ abilities to identify resources for growth and information.]

d. Provide a graphic (table or chart) or narrative summary of student understanding of their own learning progress (student voice).

[Opportunities for students’ to track learning progress (student voice) started with pre-assessment goal setting. After conferencing with students and analyzing that Meisner Repetition answered to the greatest number of goals articulated by the group, I designed a lesson sequence to answer to students’ goals. By pre-assessing, I ensured that the “skill to be assessed was significant” (Popham, 2011). I next “made certain all of the rubrics and evaluative criteria could be addressed instructionally...[and] employed as few evaluative criteria as possible” (Popham, 2011). The rubric I designed allowed students to analyze and organize the building blocks of each skill, then test their analyses and organization through both guided and independent practice. We revisited these inferences and built on them at the beginning of each lesson, so students had frequent opportunities to revise or add to their rubrics. Students asked skills questions and gave me feedback at the end of each lesson through exit tickets, which helped me to strengthen and clarify instruction; most importantly, guiding students in the shaping of evaluative criteria helped me to address students’ weaknesses and misconceptions immediately. The rubric helped me to use students’ own criteria as a means for helping students to respond to their own performances using aesthetic ideas they generated as criteria for understanding, analyzing, and evaluating their performances. As mentioned above, students had an opportunity to add one or more evaluative criterion to the rubric in Lesson 3. Lucy and Nathan W. added “honesty,” Joe, Connor, Liam, and Corinna added “spontaneity,” Liam and Corinna added “being fully in the moment,” Nathan H. and Cameron added “cooperation,” Nathan H., Sophie, and Bridget added “impulse.”

Students were able to break each evaluative criterion into its essential components. For example, all students broke down the skill “talking” in the same way Lucy did “Make eye contact.” “Be in the moment.” Connor broke down the skill of listening to “React.” Most students had a similar response, with the exception of Lucy and Nathan, who added, “Listen for subtext.” Half of the students called out “eye contact” as a component of focus; the other half called out “connection” as a crucial component of focus and concentration. All students were clear about objectivity, calling out “noticing only what’s really there,” “observable facts only,” “true,” and “true impulse.” On exit tickets, students were divided about adding a physical technique: half added breathing, but half did not, calling this “external” or “unnatural.” Instead, these students added “spontaneity” as a physical technique, articulating, “Don’t look for observations,” “Don’t force it,” and “Wait for impulse from partner” as manifestations of spontaneity.

I held conferences with students to view pre-assessment and post-assessment videotapes of students’ rehearsals/performances of a neutral scene. Students used their own rubrics to evaluate only their own performances. We referenced pre- and post-assessment responses during conferences. The data chart below shows how students prioritized the learning targets as summarized by the criteria on the rubric:
Student Voice questions in the written pre- and post-assessment included #4 on the pre-assessment (“Describe your acting process” and its corresponding question on the post-assessment (“How will you use Meisner work in your acting process?”), #6 on the pre-assessment (What are your strengths as an actor?” and its corresponding question on the post-assessment (“How did doing Repetition confirm or magnify your strengths as an actor?”), #8 on the pre-assessment (“What are your weaknesses as an actor?” and its corresponding question on the post-assessment (“How did Repetition help you to address your weakness as an actor?”) as well as three questions (#2, #5, and #8 on the pre- and post-assessments) that ask students to rate their proficiency in acting, their assessment of how Meisner technique will help them grow as actors, and their assessment of how well they understand Meisner technique.

e. Use evidence found in the 3 student work samples and the whole class summary to analyze the patterns of learning for the whole class and differences for groups or individual learners relative to creating, performing, or responding to music/dance/theater by applying artistic skills (e.g., self expression, creativity, exploration/improvisation), knowledge (e.g., tools/instruments, technical proficiencies, processes, elements, organizational principles), contextual understandings (e.g., social, cultural, historical, global, personal reflection).

[Students’ responses to performance pre- and post-assessment videos (work samples), their evaluations of proficiency in performance using a rubric, and their reflections on how they can apply this learning in the future indicated that all students who participated in the learning sequence had (1) made significant gains in artistic skills (i.e. focus, concentration, etc.) and (2) made gains in advancing toward personal artistic goals, and (3) examined, re-prioritized, and re-evaluated their approach to rehearsal and performance. Students were able to analyze the patterns of learning for the whole class and differences for groups or individual learners relative to creating, performing, or responding to music/dance/theater by applying artistic skills (e.g., self expression, creativity, exploration/improvisation), knowledge (e.g., tools/instruments, technical proficiencies, processes, elements, organizational principles), contextual understandings (e.g., social, cultural, historical, global, personal reflection).

Students exhibited an extraordinary level of support and cooperation in helping each other to acquire new skills and knowledge by implicitly acting as peer mentors to one another.
One weakness I need to tackle in pre-assessment and planning is making sure that I explicitly and consistently connect each of my learning targets and criteria for evaluation with prior learning. For example, one weakness that exit tickets and reflections indicated to me—although focus students did not indicate this—was that students could not connect adding a “physical technique” to prior academic or artistic experience. Although observable evidence from performance post-assessments indicate that students are physically engaged in their work, three factors inhibited students from connecting adding a physical technique to their artistic exploration: (1) students in our program are not accustomed to warming up physically or vocally, so this is not a skill they are unaccustomed to naming (2) I needed to do further scaffolding or across the curriculum connecting to make this a discrete skill accessible to students and (3) perhaps this criterion could have been introduced during Lesson 1 or Lesson 2 as part of the execution of focus and concentration. As noted in the instruction commentary, I am eager to build cooperative learning constructs that have a built-in safety net for students who are absent and their partners or group members.

The performance assessment required students to define Level 1 Meisner Repetition, Level 2 Meisner Repetition, and demonstrate how students will apply Meisner Repetition to a rehearsal and performance process.

Focus Student 1 (Connor) successfully defines and demonstrates Level 1 Meisner Repetition, and he exceeds proficiency on all points of the Rubric. Connor began this lesson sequence with very specific goals. He wanted to become aware of the audience and inclined to manipulate events onstage to maximize their entertainment value. Connor is very clever, very funny, and extremely articulate. He responded well to hints and suggestions made by me and by his peers during learning support activities. By Lesson 3, Connor had made significant breakthroughs along with his partner, Joe. I paired the very experienced and stage savvy Connor with Joe because Joe’s relative lack of experience coupled with his ease in a performance setting make him a good peer mentor for Connor. Connor acknowledges gains and goal achievement in Clip 2 and in the Reflection portion of his performance post-assessment. Connor reports in his written post-assessment that he will us Meisner Repetition to “find new choices and really listen and live in the moment.” He says that Repetition confirmed his strengths as an actor because “once I got into it, I found it easy to establish a connection.’ In examining his weaknesses, Connor says that Repetition addressed his weaknesses by “[making him] play off another actor’s impulses and react off of them.” This is an extremely insightful comment. I analyzed that Connor’s self-consciousness arose from a misconception that actor impulses need to be self-generated instead of being reactions to external stimuli. After he corrected this misconception, Connor soared. In his written post-assessment, Connor reported an increase in proficiency as an actor, but he ranked his understanding of Meisner at a 3 out of 5, saying, “There’s so much more to learn!” Across the class, other students, particularly Liam, Sophie, Nathan W., and Bridgette made gains similar to Connor’s and demonstrated the same metacognitive awareness of their accomplishments. Nathan H., on the other hand, shared Connor’s misconception about self-generating impulses. He recognized this, and added it as an evaluation criterion on his rubric.

Focus Student 2, Nathan W., considers his inexperience and lack of training a deficit. He cites inexperience as a weakness in his acting. I partnered Nathan with Lucy so her expertise and peer mentoring could ameliorate any gaps in his learning. These gaps were chiefly in content area vocabulary. Despite gaps in instruction and experience, however, Nathan flourished in this sequence. Similarly, Joe,
who has no prior instruction in acting, responded very well to Repetition and incorporated it easily. I feel, however, that both Nathan and Joe will need reinforcement after the lesson sequence to ensure that they retain and practice the technique gains they demonstrated during the lesson sequence.

I chose Lucy has my third focus student because she has had previous Meisner training. Her prior knowledge signaled to me that we needed to ensure that our academic vocabulary was aligned, that our understandings and practices were consistent with one another, and—if they weren’t—I needed to ensure that Lucy felt her expertise was honored as a resource in the classroom. By Lesson 2, she freely shared her ideas, feedback, prior experience, and new discoveries. Like Nathan and Connor, Lucy is deeply interested in excelling at her craft; however, she is hard on herself. Pressley & McCormick (2007) identify the challenge of coaching high achievers who are excessively critical of their own work. I used some of their guidelines in coaching Lucy. Corinna and Cameron, similarly, explore deeply and work very hard. Corinna, I discovered, processes thoroughly and slowly; she questions and turns ideas over before embracing them. Cameron processes verbally, so I encouraged him to journal to record ideas; however, I learned that Cameron processes best by bouncing ideas off of another person to question and analyze. In that respect, the structure of the sequence was well suited to his style. Lucy, on the other hand, works hard and absorbs quickly. I am glad to have had an opportunity to help Lucy during feedback sessions with some encouragement and redirection of effort. On her pre-assessment, Lucy rated her proficiency at 4 out of 5; in addition, she commented, “I don’t know about talent...hahaha.” I was eager to supplant her ideas about talent with ideas about skill and determination. Lucy noted in post-assessment that she “manipulates,” and she rated her proficiency as an actor slightly lower in post-assessment than in her pre-assessment. I addressed these concerns in her post-assessment conference.

2. Feedback to Guide Further Learning

Refer to specific evidence of submitted feedback to support your explanations.

a. In what form did you submit your evidence of feedback for the 3 focus students?

    In video clips from the instruction task (provide a time-stamp reference)?

b. Describe what you did to help each student understand his/her performance on the assessment.

[My coordinated assessment was designed to help students connect learning targets with assessment by creating their own rubrics in Lessons 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the lesson sequence, then using these rubrics to assess growth and evidence of proficiency in practicing component skills of Meisner Repetition (focus, concentration, talking, listening, objectivity, practice of a physical technique.) In conferences, students evaluated performance assessment evidence to identify and evaluate artistic growth, achievement of artistic goals, and proficiency in the practice of Repetition. To provide students with evidence of growth, and to help them track and evaluate growth, I asked them to compare a pre-instruction video of a rehearsal of the same neutral scene they used to apply Repetition to a rehearsal technique in Lesson 5. I conducted individual conferences with students to view the pre- and post-assessment tapes. In conferences, students and I used written pre-assessment evidence and Venn diagrams of skills overlaps between Meisner goals and personal goals to reinforce and supplement our evaluation of student growth, vocabulary acquisition, skills acquisition, and skills application. Doing so allowed us to re-visit the Central Focus of the Lesson Sequence. Videotapes (Feedback 1, 2, and 3) provide evidence of how I guided students through conference using this framework to help guide me in giving feedback: Where was I (before lesson sequence)? Where am I now?
c. Explain how feedback provided to the focus students addresses their individual strengths and needs relative to the learning targets standards/learning targets measured.

**[Focus Student #1 Feedback Video (Connor): 0:15]** Connor acknowledges achieving one of his artistic goals: he describes himself in the post-assessment video as being funny, but “natural” and “unforced.” I ask him how many layers he saw in his post-assessment performance; he recognizes that “there was a lot more going on than was just on the page.” This is an artistic outcome of proficiency in Repetition, and Connor’s recognition of the outcome is evidence of developing artistic skills facilitates self-expression. At 1:17, Connor connects new learning to prior experience. At 1:21, I prompt Connor to abandon a potential misconception, and he responds by connecting Meisner work with my mentor teacher’s philosophy about rehearsal preparation. At 2:03, we evaluate Connor’s work using his rubric. We determine that Connor has exceeded proficiency in Listening. At 3:43, I ask Connor to consider his growth from pre-instruction to post-instruction. Connor rates himself in Focus and Concentration at a 1 (Beginning) prior to instruction and at a 4 (Insightful) after instruction. At 4:55, I summarize and confirm Connor’s achievements on these points of the rubric, suggest next steps for application, and connect these next steps to the central focus. We review “physical technique,” and Connor, who is a very physical actor, recognizes that his pre-instruction physical choices were “calculated” (6:26); now, he rates himself as “Insightful.” I confirm Connor’s self-evaluation. Connor acknowledges that at a 4 (Insightful), strong physical choices happen “in the moment [and add] even more layers to the character.” At 6:44, Connor describes how he will use Meisner in the future, and he describes how he will apply it to his current rehearsal process in the spring musical by playing the situation, not the character. Connor points out that “being real in imaginary circumstances” is no longer “actor-schmactor” talk for him, saying, “It’s really true!”

Liam, Bridgette, and Sophie made gains in skills and goal achievement similar to Connor’s. Liam made insightful connections about how he could connect this work to his rehearsal process for the spring musical. Bridgette said, “I learned how to live in the moment better, which has always been a problem for me.” Sophie said, “[Repetition] really improved...my focus.” Liam said, “[Repetition] helped me make impulse-based choices.”

**Focus Student #2 Feedback Video (Nathan W.): 0:22** I discuss Nathan’s reported self-efficacy with him. He recognizes that prior to Meisner training, his reactions onstage felt “forced;” now, they feel “natural.” At 2:03, I acknowledge that I see evidence Nathan’s artistry in the goals he has set for himself. At 2:31, we acknowledge Nathan’s skill at text interpretation; he connects across the curriculum. At 3:09, we look at Nathan’s artistic goals; he acknowledges that the lesson sequence “put a name to things he already does:” the lesson sequence has ameliorated the gaps in Nathan’s academic vocabulary. At 4:21, we review his rubric. 5:48: Nathan acknowledges the importance of eye contact and connection. I prompt Nathan to use these skills in the future to cold reading. He connects this idea to classwork (6:28). At 10:02, Nathan describes how he exceeded his goals. He acknowledges that the Meisner work feels “genuine.” Nathan insightfully recognizes at 11:02 that in responding to his partner, he is playing objectives. 11:43: I confirm his observation and suggest using responding/interaction in
addition to text analysis to identify objectives to move toward greater artistic freedom. 12:23: We identify next steps: what does insightful look like?

Joe was the only other student in the class, in addition to Nathan, who self-identified academic gaps. Joe achieved or exceeded proficiency on his rubric, but he will need extra reinforcement from me in the future to be able to apply this learning to the rest of his acting. Physical techniques worked for Joe, who said, “When I started focusing on my breathing and relaxation, it helped me stay focused and grounded.”

Focus Student #3 Feedback Video: Lucy: At 0:18, Lucy and I look at pre-assessment strengths and weaknesses. Lucy acknowledges her previous experience with Meisner. At 1:18, we talk about self-efficacy ratings, and Lucy speaks about learning with insight. At 2:18, Lucy acknowledges that her lower self-efficacy rating came from peer feedback about manipulation. I use her journal and her rubric (3:28) to create a platform for viewing the pre- and post-instruction videos. At 10:37, I encourage Lucy to turn feedback into an asset. At 11:31, I encourage Lucy to consider the merits of her scene objectively. At 11:51, we examine the rubric for grading.
Lucy easily rates herself as proficient. At 12:25, I ask how she can look for evidence of honest behavior in performances. We view the tape again. For this viewing, I ask her to identify what manipulation looks like. At 14:37, Lucy distinguishes between actor manipulation and playing objectives, and she seems pleased when I recognize that she is playing “little objectives” consistently and well. Although she rated herself as proficient on each point of her rubric, my rating was higher. At 15:00, we discuss how Lucy can use this work in her rehearsal process of the spring musical. This was a long session, but Lucy needed the extra reinforcement. Like Lucy, Corinna and Cameron need extra support to help them build self-nurturing skills by using their critical intelligence to help, not hinder, their artistic progress.

d. How will you support students to apply the feedback to guide improvement, either within the learning segment or at a later time?

[All of the students in the class have asked to do more Meisner work, which we’ll offer as part of our rehearsal process in response to their requests. I will continue to conference students to revisit and refine goals.

Connor: during our Shakespeare unit, I will reinforce Connor’s gains in impulsivity in both physical choices and responding to a partner. Given his goals for his work in the musical, I will help him by reinforcing his commitment to playing the situation instead of going after choices that entertain. I will work to help him to maintain privacy in public as he applies Repetition to a larger rehearsal process in a styles piece. All of the students except for Nathan W. are in the musical, so I will be able to reinforce as needed during a relatively lengthy rehearsal process. Nathan: During our Shakespeare unit, I will reinforce Nathan’s discovery that textual analysis includes “looking beneath the surface of the text.” This is especially important in Shakespeare, which requires a remarkable intellectual text analysis. I will be directing Nathan in a Shakespeare project, so I will be able to reinforce learning during that rehearsal process.

Lucy: I am eager to reinforce positive self-efficacy in Lucy. I will be directing her in a Shakespeare project, so I will have opportunities to help her. As a director, I can help her to reflect constructively, reinforce well-practiced skills, and give her tips and feedback as well.]

3. Evidence of Language Understanding and Use When responding to the prompt below, use concrete examples from the clips (using time-stamp references) and/or student work samples as evidence.
Evidence from the clips may focus on one or more students.

**Evidence of meeting Language Demands to engage in Academic Discourse:**
Language Clip: Students demonstrate acquisition of process knowledge by self-evaluating and reflecting. Students use content vocabulary to analyze their own work. (0:09-0:14: “in the moment;” 0:25–0:30 and 0:48–1:13: distinguish between Level 1 and Level 2 and discuss differences and growth; 1:38 – 2:00: students identify need for next step; critique progress; 2:15- 2:35: “focus,” “connected.” In Clip 1, Lesson 2 (4:04), students restate learning target verbs in their own words and connect across the curriculum; at 5:38, students think/pair share to distinguish practicing Repetition in front of an audience.

**Evidence of Language Function:** In Language Clip, at 2:47, Liam asks if we can alter our cooperative learning construct to enrich the experience of practicing Meisner by practicing it with different partners. I agree because I feel that this will give students a greater opportunity to practice the language function. Clip 1, Lesson 2: (7:29): Students evidence language function through exit ticket questions and practice language function by journaling.

**Evidence of Syntax:** Student Work Samples 1, 2, 3 (0:00-1:30): Students organize the practice of Meisner Repetition by level of complexity by describing and performing these levels. Feedback Videos #2 (3:12-4:22): Student uses Venn Diagram (Lesson 5) to list technique goals of Meisner Repetition, list personal technique goals, and then identify overlap. }

3. **Using Assessment to Inform Instruction**

a. Based on your analysis of student learning presented in prompts 1c–d, describe next steps for instruction to impact student learning for the whole class and for the 3 focus students and other individuals/groups with specific needs

b. Explain how these next steps follow from your analysis of students’ learning and their self-reflections. Support your explanation with principles from research and/or theory.

[Next steps for me will be to continue and expand using students’ goals as a basis for curricular decisions, feedback, and scaffolding. *Educational Leadership* (2013) suggests that teachers use their students’ real goals as a basis for the feedback they give students. Students need to be invested in and...*]
I will work to formulate questions that encourage students to evaluate, assess, argue, or critique (Caram & Davis, 2005); if I can engage in more maieutic questioning, I might can ensure that students are “giving birth to their own divergent ideas” (Roberts & Billings, 2009). Lastly, I could have helped Lucy and others if I had laid the groundwork for student feedback by pre-teaching effective questioning. Although my students were wonderfully supportive of one another, teaching students a model for effective questioning will “foster respectful relationships and make mistakes acceptable” (Nassir, 2008).

By working together to create a skills-based rubric, the students and I created clear criteria for assessment and ensured that assessment was aligned with learning. Alignment has a powerful effect on student learning: according to Denton (2014), “alignment is more effective than other interventions;” moreover, alignment produces significant results with relatively “minimal instructional effort” (Cohen, 1987). While alignment significantly benefits all students, Cohen (1987) reports that “lower aptitude students can successfully perform high cognitive tasks when [teachers] align instruction.” According to Guskey (2003), “the challenge for teachers is to use their classroom assessments ...to provide all students with...individualized assistance.”

I will continue to work on cooperative learning constructs. According to Marzano (2007), “decision-making tasks require students to select among equally appealing alternatives” (p. 93.), so acting on Liam’s request to give students a choice for cooperative learning groupings and quickly adjusting groupings to support students’ exploration of the language function was a positive move. On the other hand, I need to accommodate for the impact absences have on an absent student’s learning and on the student’s cooperative learning group. Although changing groups frequently might help answer to the problem (DeAvila & Duncan, 1980), this might necessitate increasing the sequence’s length so actors can establish and explore relationship.

I think that it’s crucial for teachers to help students build confidence in their abilities, and Connor’s, Nathan W.’s, and Lucy’s powerful learning, their discoveries, their growth, and their struggles reinforced this for me. For school to matter, students have to know that they are progressing, learning, and achieving (Knight, 2013). They need to feel that their every effort matters and that their achievements, small and large, make a difference in their own growth and in the growth of those around them. We learn, really, as a community (Benson, Leffert, Scales, and Blyth, 1998). We progress as a community, and our achievements are built from the achievements of the group.]