

Teacher Work Sample Information

A Teacher Work Sample (TWS) is a performance-based narrative prepared by a teacher candidate with a focus on increased student learning. The Teacher Work Sample provides written evidence that documents the teacher candidate's ability to increase student learning. The primary advantage of the TWS is that it requires teacher candidates to consider what they want to teach, how they want to teach & assess it, what contextual factors may affect their teaching, and what insights they will gain in the process of planning, adapting, implementing and assessing instruction.

Benefits of the Teacher Work Sample

- **Provides performance-based assessment:** The Teacher Work Sample requires teacher candidates to document their understanding of the teaching and learning process and their ability to increase student learning.
- **Contributes to reflective practice:** Teacher candidates practice and internalize the reflective process at the novice stage and begin ongoing professional development.
- **Enriches the pre-service teacher's portfolio:** Principals and human resource personnel obtain additional insight into candidate's teaching ability and professional potential.
- **Serves as an alternative to standardized testing:** Evaluators gain a better perspective of student learning through documentation provided in the candidate's Teacher Work Sample.
- **Informs teacher preparation programs:** School of Education faculty review teacher work samples to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses in programs.
- **Furnishes teacher candidates with a microcosmic process to National Board Certification:** Teacher candidates receive experience in the documentation and reflection of their teaching that is useful for state certification and National Board Certification.
- **Affords accountability:** Stakeholders have access to reliable information about teacher candidate's performance supported by actual documentation.

Successful teacher candidates support learning by designing a Teacher Work Sample that employs a range of strategies and builds on each student's strengths, needs, and prior experiences. Through this performance assessment, teacher candidates provide credible evidence of their ability to facilitate learning by meeting the following standards related to the professional education course outcomes for program completers and the Professional Standards for Michigan Teachers.

Standard I: Contextual Factors

Standard: The teacher candidate uses information about the teaching/learning context, developmental characteristics of diverse learners and knowledge about individual differences to plan, conduct and assess and analyze instruction.

Task: Discuss relevant factors and how they may affect the teaching/learning process. Include any supports and challenges present that affect instruction and student learning. After listing relevant information for each of the following 3 factors, explain specifically how this might change the teaching/learning process. (See * below)

Prompt: In your discussion, include

- **Community, district and school factors.** Address geographic location, community and school population, socioeconomic profile, and race/ethnicity.

- **Classroom factors.** Address physical features, availability of equipment and resources, and the extent of parental involvement. You might also discuss other relevant factors such as classroom rules and routines, grouping patterns, scheduling, and classroom arrangement. (*If the grouping patterns are traditional rows of desks, state how this would affect doing group activities or what might have to be done or altered.)
- **Student characteristics.** Address age, gender, race/ethnicity, special needs, achievement/developmental levels, and students' skills and prior knowledge relevant to your learning goals. You might also include relevant factors such as culture, language, interests, and learning styles/modalities. (*After learning that 2/3 of a class are below grade level in reading, how might this affect classroom instruction? If there are several children on free and reduced lunches, is there something a teacher might do to strengthen their changes for success?)

STANDARD II: Learning Goals (Learning Objectives)

Standard: The teacher candidate selects and/or develops appropriate instructional goals (objectives) which are appropriate and valuable and which take into account the varying learning needs of individual students and groups.

Task:

Provide 1-3 goals learning objectives for the unit. GLCEs and HSCEs are sub categories of these learning objectives.

Prompt: In this section of your Teacher Work Sample, include

A list of learning objectives or outcomes (not activities) that will guide the planning, delivery and assessment of the 2-3 week unit. These goals should define what you expect students to know and be able to do at the end of the unit. The goals must address at least two of the following areas: (1) knowledge, (2) reasoning and problem solving, (3) skills, (4) products, and (5) dispositions. Number or code each learning goal so you can reference it later.

Justification for the choice of learning objectives. Elements of your brief justification should identify how your learning goals or objectives (1) relate to the students' current progress and development; (2) align with the classroom teacher's long-range instructional goals; and (3) align with local, state and national standards. This can be done in a few brief statements.

STANDARD III: Assessment Plan

Standard: The teacher candidate designs multiple assessment strategies which are congruent with instructional goals. Assessment criteria are clear and appropriate for all students and leads them to an awareness of progress toward meeting established goals, outcomes and standards.

Task:

Design an assessment plan to monitor student progress toward learning goals. (Put in table format.) Use multiple assessment modes and approaches aligned with learning goals and student developmental levels to assess student learning before, during and after instruction. These assessments should authentically measure student learning and may include performance based tasks, paper and pencil tasks, or personal communication. Describe why your assessments are appropriate for measuring what your students have learned.

Prompt: In this section of your Teacher Work Sample, include

- **A description of pre- and post- assessments** that are aligned with your learning goals. Clearly explain how you will evaluate or score pre- and post- assessments. State what

criteria you will use to determine if the students' performance meets the learning goals and a brief **rationale** for doing the assessment. Include evidence of pre- and post-assessments (copies of the assessments or prompts and the student directions for the prompts) and the criteria for judging student performance.

- **Your plans for formative assessment** that will help you determine student progress during the unit. Describe indicators you will use to check on student progress and comment on the importance of collecting that particular evidence. Although formative assessment may change as you are teaching the unit, your task here is to predict at what points in your teaching it will be important to assess students' progress toward learning goals.
- **A table** that lists each learning goal, assessments used to judge student performance relative to learning goals, and adaptations of the assessments for the individual needs of students. The primary purpose of this table is to depict the alignment between learning goals and assessments. The table also provides opportunities to show where adaptations are going to be implemented to meet needs of students or contextual factors.

Alignment of Learning Goals and Assessments Chart Example:

Learning Objectives	Assessments	Assessment Format	Rationale	Adaptations
Objective #1	Pre-assessment Formative Assessment Post-assessment	Performance task pencil and paper teacher observations ?	Why I chose or developed each of these assessments for this learning goal.	How I plan to adapt this assessment for students with special needs.
Obj. #2				
Obj. #3				

STANDARD IV: Design for Instruction

Standard: The teacher candidate designs learning activities which are challenging and highly relevant to all students. Learning activities address standards and instructional goals, progress coherently and meet the needs of diverse students by allowing for multiple paths to learning. The teacher candidate uses research to plan and select a wide variety of instructional strategies, resources and tools of inquiry aimed at meeting the needs of all students.

Task:

Using some of the information described in your contextual factors and others factors you've learned about your classroom and students, describe how you will design instruction for your unit related to unit objectives, student characteristics and individual needs, and the specific learning context.

Prompt: In this section of your Teacher Work Sample:

- **The block plan format** to provide an overview of your entire learning unit. Include the topic or activity being planned for each day. Also indicate the objective or objectives that are addressed in each activity. (Clinical) Make sure that every objective is addressed by at least one activity and that every activity relates to at least one objective.
- **Develop Learning Activity Plans** for all the learning activities included in the unit's design for instruction. A learning activity can take many forms including, but not limited to a learning center, direct whole-group instruction, a teacher directed activity, simulation or game, small group experience, project, etc. Note: lessons do NOT have to be large, time consuming and complex...use a collection of short activities, as well as a few complex

lessons. The description of each learning activity must include the following components: (1) content areas addressed, (2) grade level, (3) purpose of the learning activity (a sentence or two telling what or how this lesson relates to the real world), (4) learning objective(s) (5) procedures and timeline for the activity, (6) materials and resources, (7) adaptations for students with special needs, (8) assessments, (9) how technology is to be integrated into the activity, and how the activity will involve outreach to parents or families, and (10) reflection on the lesson process.

Standard V: Instructional Decision Making

Standard: The teacher candidate responds to student feedback, evaluates instruction on the basis of this input and makes necessary adjustments to instruction to meet individual student needs and enhance instruction for all learners.

Task:

Provide a narrative on which lessons you believe will be the most effective and which ones will need special considerations or additional work. Be a reflective practitioner and look at the unit from a student's perspective. You may want to share the learning activity plans with a colleague and have them give you some feedback. After teaching the lesson, reflect upon what went well and what should be changed. Provide a narrative on 3-4 of the lessons and their effectiveness... what went well and what should be changed. Consider individual student's needs, materials, time, etc.

Standard VI: Analysis of Learning Results

Standard: The teacher candidate uses assessment data to provide effective feedback to students and parents in a timely manner, enabling them to assess student progress. Feedback is consistently high in quality and provision is made for students to use feedback in their learning.

Task:

Analyze your data to report the performance of the whole class, sub-groups, and at least five individual students. Use visual representations such as charts and graphs and a narrative to profile student performance.

This analysis of learning results is critical to analyzing if the unit/lessons was/were effective

Standard VII: Reflection and Self-evaluation

Standard: The teacher candidates reflect on and evaluate outcomes of his/her professional practice. He/she uses; experimentation and reflection to improve his/her own professional practice.

Task:

Reflect upon the entire process of constructing a TWS. Discuss some of your challenges and victories associated with the elements that make up your TWS. Share your hopes and challenges for the remaining lessons. Consider all that you learned, what elements were most difficult to conceptualize, etc.

Then` reflect on the entire process of developing, teaching and assessing your lessons.