

## TASK 2: INSTRUCTION COMMENTARY

Respond to the prompts below (**no more than 6 single-spaced pages, including prompts**) by typing your responses within the brackets following each prompt. Do not delete or alter the prompts. Commentary pages exceeding the maximum will not be scored. You may insert **no more than 2 additional pages of supporting documentation** at the end of this file. These pages may include graphics, texts, or images that are not clearly visible in the video or a transcript for occasionally inaudible portions. These pages do not count toward your page total.

1. Which lesson or lessons are shown in the video clips? Identify the lesson(s) by lesson plan number.

[In the two video clips I selected I chose to include clips from Lesson 1 and Lesson 3.]

### 2. Promoting a Positive Learning Environment

Refer to scenes in the video clips where you provided a positive learning environment.

- a. How did you demonstrate mutual respect for, rapport with, and responsiveness to students with varied needs and backgrounds, and challenge students to engage in learning?

[In clip 1, I instructed students that they could do this activity either individually or with a partner. I believe these students benefit when working with each other. They respect the fact I also incorporate student-centered learning approaches into the classroom. I show respect for students by giving them options. By allowing students to make their own choices on how the work is completed shows students I trust them to make the right decision on what is best for their individual learning.]

### 3. Engaging Students in Learning

Refer to examples from the video clips in your responses to the prompts.

- a. Explain how your instruction engaged students in
  - developing the skills of interpretation or analysis in relation to accounts of historical events or social studies phenomena
  - building and supporting arguments

[In clip 1, I begin by having students review and recall previous knowledge. I want students to be able to develop an understanding that every lesson connects to one another. At the start of every class, I incorporate questions that reinforce what we learned the previous day. I begin the class with a little brain-storming activity as well. This gets students to warm up and start thinking about what they will be learning for the day. Specifically, in clip 1 I have students make a chart and identify one word that is connected to either weather or climate. I then go on to explain to students what they will be learning for the day. I show students the word web they will be filling out and then I describe the backside of the worksheet. The back of the worksheet is where students will demonstrate development of analyzing how the factors of climate relate to other issues. Next, I have students expand on what they wrote down on their word web. Students are then asked to write complete declarative sentences to further explain how climate and weather are related and how different factors impact climate. This is an important key to help students successfully climb the Bloom's Taxonomy ladder. ]

- b. Describe how your instruction linked students' prior academic learning and personal, cultural, and community assets with new learning.

[In clip 1, I link student's prior academic learning into the lesson. I do this by again recalling what was learned the previous day. Repetition of learned material is the key to success for students to master the recall and knowledge aspect of Bloom's Taxonomy. I then get the students up and moving to the board, which I felt would get students to feel a little more involved in the activity. By having the students moving around, it can help get students more engaged and help them to wake up their brains, as this is the first class of the day for them. I created the word chart to help students differentiate between two words that are commonly used interchangeably. Students within this class have demonstrated that vocabulary can be a weak point for them so I found this to be an important activity to help them build their knowledge of the terminology.]

#### 4. Deepening Student Learning during Instruction

Refer to examples from the video clips in your explanations.

- a. Explain how you **elicited and built on student responses** that supported your students' ability to form interpretations or analyses of history/social studies sources and accounts and build and support arguments.

[In clip 2, I demonstrate building on student responses in the form of re asking questions I have already asked in a different manner to help students develop a better understanding of the material. I found that some students were only surface reading the questions on their guided note sheet. I decided to walk about the room and read their responses to see that I need to evoke deeper levels of questions for these students. At the 7:30 marker in clip 2, I demonstrate this with a student that is inaccurately identifying animals with ecosystems. The student was being vague and writing "birds" or "monkeys". I wanted the student, along with the rest of the class, to realize that birds and monkeys can be in any ecosystem so I asked them to think of animals that were specific to the ecosystems that they were studying. I eventually got one student to talk about frogs, which are more common in the rainforest ecosystems we were discussing. By having the students think deeper about the types of animals that lived in each ecosystem I could then build them up to realize that only certain animals could live in certain ecosystems and adapt to them. ]

- b. Describe and cite examples from the clips of how you supported students in using evidence from sources to build and support arguments about historical events, a topic/theme or social studies phenomenon.

[Within video clip 2, as I am walking around monitoring student work time, I found a couple opportunities to help students expand on their work. At about the 2:30 marker in Clip 2, I found some students were struggling with parts of the globe and the location of the equator. To help the students get a better visual, I directed their attention to the front of the room where I pulled down the large world map. By doing this, I helped those students gain better knowledge of where the equator was to successfully complete their assignment. By understanding where certain areas of the world were located, the students could more accurately place the types of ecosystems they were learning about onto a globe. Another point in clip 2 I would like to address is at the 8 minute mark. Here I am helping a group of students to make their answers more clear. The students had a tendency to have very vague answers, which ultimately shows me that they are either not making the effort to complete the assignment accurate, or they lacked knowledge of where certain areas were located. By working closely with this group, I helped the students to better identify where certain locations were in the world to create more clear answers. Again, the objective of this lesson was to be able to identify the seven ecosystems and be able to place them on a globe. To accurately identify an ecosystem, they

need to understand where on a globe those ecosystems are. This helps the students to better identify what kinds of climate and weather that ecosystem experiences, which was also part of their assignment.]

## 5. Analyzing Teaching

Refer to examples from the video clips in your responses to the prompts.

- a. What changes would you make to your instruction—for the whole class and/or for students who need greater support or challenge—to better support student learning of the central focus (e.g., missed opportunities)?

Consider the variety of learners in your class who may require different strategies/support (e.g., students with IEPs or 504 plans, English language learners, struggling readers, underperforming students or those with gaps in academic knowledge, and/or gifted students).

[I believe that some missed opportunities I had within these lessons is that in Lesson 1, I should have been more explicit in my instruction. I have noticed with this class is that no matter how intelligent I believe my class to be, they still need more clear instructions. I assume on many occasions that they are all of the same comprehensive level, while some of my students really need to be guided on homework assignments. The underperforming students in this class tend to not take the time to read the instructions. To make this easier for everyone, I need to take the time to read every direction I have written on the homework assignment and be explicit for what I want for all the questions. Another thing I would change is differentiating some of my worksheets that are used during class time. While most students within this class are academically performing at the same level, I do still have a few students who are under performing. Perhaps the material I provide for them to work on is too easy. Therefore, I must find a more engaging activity for those students to complete to meet the objectives of the lesson. The other scenario could be that these students are lacking motivation. To address this issue I need to be more enthusiastic about the learning material or present the material in a fun and interactive way. Either one of these changes could potentially help these under performing students.]

- b. Why do you think these changes would improve student learning? Support your explanation with evidence of student learning **AND** principles from theory and/or research.

[Making changes as simple as creating more clear instruction can result in students receiving a better understanding of the assessments. By taking that time to clarify my instructions, I could essentially be helping a student better interpret the questions and produce more clear and accurate answers on assessments. By not providing students with clear instruction, I could possibly be limiting those students from moving up Bloom's Taxonomy. If I am not clear on how to interpret a question, they may only respond in terms of knowledge and recall. If the instructions are more clear, I could direct students to possibly synthesis or analyze a question instead. To address the issue of the underperforming students within the classroom, I need to differentiate my lessons to meet the needs of these students. According to educators at Cochrane Collegiate, an important item to include when trying to engage underperforming students is student mobility. Besides just trying to get students to work in groups and doing student centered activities, providing activities that include students being able to move around the classroom could also be beneficial. While this may be difficult in a larger classroom, it is still possible within this classroom due to the fact it is a smaller class and we have an extra backroom. Some additional learning tools I found that would work with under developing students is have them develop a gallery walk of some sort to get students up and moving out of

their seats. This would also include the class as a whole so I wouldn't have just a few up and moving.

<http://www.edutopia.org/stw-school-turnaround-student-engagement-video> ]