

## 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.

[The first video segment shows a 13-minute clip from Lesson #1 which is titled *Mem Fox Author Study EdTPA #1* and the second video segment is a 6-minute clip from Lesson #2 which is titled *Mem Fox Author Study EdTPA #2*.]

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?

[I believe that creating a positive learning environment is absolutely essential. If the students do not feel as though the environment is positive, then they will not want to participate in any learning, which is very saddening. Therefore, I always make it a point to show respect to each and every student, as well as develop rapport and responsiveness. There is one student in my class who struggles greatly with behavior problems and does not work well with others. During the first video segment, the students were expected to work with their reading partners while playing the game Heads Up! with different emotion post it notes. This particular student does not have a reading partner, due to his inability to work with a partner. However, it would have been unfair to leave him out of the fun activity. Therefore, I invited him to the front of the room and asked him to be my partner, which is something I do quite often, since he tends to work well with me. This can be seen at 12 minutes and 56 seconds. He became so excited when he guessed the emotion correctly. He loves to give high fives, so I did exactly that when he guessed the emotion in order to portray positivity. In addition to that, there are six English Language Learners in my classroom, and some of these students have difficulty paying attention during lessons due to confusion and a lack of understanding. The anchor chart I created contained pictures of each of the emotions that were talking about, in order to help them make the connection between the emotion words and the pictures. I also had everyone in the class act out the emotions in order to engage the English Language Learners, and help them further comprehend what I was talking about.]

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 an essential literacy strategy and related skills.

[During Lesson #1, the students were expected to identify and comprehend the writing strategy, or craft move, in the story *Koala Lou* by Mem Fox. I briefly explained the craft move at the beginning of the minilesson, and then asked questions pertaining to it. At 1

minute and 20 seconds in the first video clip I asked the class, “How did we know they [the animals] were excited? A student answered by saying, “They were like stomping their feet and screaming, so you could tell they were excited.” This demonstrated that the student was developing the essential literacy strategy early on in the lesson by connecting the idea that these action words express emotion. My instruction further engaged students in developing the essential strategy by having them act out the different emotions based upon the words listed on the anchor chart. This can be viewed in the first video clip at 4 minutes and 9 seconds. This appealed to the kinesthetic, visual, and auditory learners. The second video clip shows how I supported the students as they integrated the writing strategy into their own writing, which is the section of the lesson where the students had to implement related skills, such as spelling word wall words correctly, tapping and blending sounds to form unknown words, using capital letters and punctuation and brainstorming ideas before writing. At 4 seconds in the second video clip, I am assisting a student by helping them brainstorm different sensory imagery words that appeal to the sense of smell in order to describe flowers. The student was unable to think of more than one action word, so I redirected her to another sense. At 2 minutes and 47 seconds, another student asked how to spell a word. I reminded her to sound it the best she can, which will allow her to practice the related skill of tapping and blending sounds to form unknown words.]

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

[Earlier in the academic year, the students had briefly been taught about adding emotional action words into their writing to make it more appealing. My cooperating teacher taught that brief lesson by introducing the concept of Show, Don’t Tell! This essentially means that while writing, the students should show emotion through action words, rather than blatantly telling the reader how their character is feeling. Due to their prior knowledge with Show, Don’t Tell!, I decided to reintroduce it for this lesson in order to help them make connections to what they already knew. In the first video clip at 2 minutes and 55 seconds, I ask the students if they remember Show, Don’t Tell! A majority of the students stated that they did remember the strategy, thus drawing upon prior knowledge. In terms of personal, cultural, and community, emotion is typically a common theme among all three of those assets. All of the students, whether ELL or not, have experienced different emotions in one way or another, and they can connect to their feelings and other’s feelings. Therefore, this lesson was drawing upon general knowledge that each student already had but added the element of the emotional action words that were to be integrated into their writing. They were expected to remove the actual emotion, and replace it with the action words that they use to describe each feeling, such as smile, cry, hide, and scream. ]

#### 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** to promote thinking and apply the essential literacy strategy using related skills to comprehend **OR** compose text.

[During the second video clip I spent the majority of the time supporting students with the students and conferring with them in order to help them brainstorm, which is a related skill that they already have been introduced to. The brainstorm page serves as a precursor to the essential literacy strategy and central focus of the lesson, which is having the students integrate the writing strategy, in this case sensory imagery, into their own writing. In the second video clip at 3 minutes and 47 seconds, I confer with a

student, and we discuss what sense he is going to appeal to in his writing. He decided upon both hearing and sight since he was going to write about a movie. I allowed him to choose both senses because he is one of the higher-level students in the class, so this was a good challenge for him. At 4 minutes and 8 seconds I asked him what 3 words could be used to describe what the movies sound like and look like. His response was “monsters.” I built upon that response by saying, “So maybe monsters growling? Is that something you would hear in the movie?” I then asked him what else he might hear in the movie, and he responded with “people screaming.” By eliciting and building upon his initial responses, he was able to describe the sights and sounds of the movie, rather than just state the standard elements, such as monsters. This helped promote thinking, and he was able to complete the brainstorm page and successfully integrate sensory imagery into his Quick Write text. This was the example within the video. However, I elicited and built upon responses during the independent writing section for each of the four lessons in order to support students in composing their texts. ]

- b. Explain how you modeled the essential literacy strategy **AND** supported students as they practiced or applied the strategy to comprehend **OR** compose text in a meaningful context.

[I modeled the essential literacy strategy and central focus by showing the students my own Emotions Quick Write Booklet that I previously wrote, which begins at 5 minutes and 47 seconds in the first video clip. I showed the students the different elements of the brainstorm page and modeled my thought process. I told the students I choose scared as my emotion, and then proceeded to explain that because I choose scared, I then had to choose 2 action words that went along with that emotion. Before I read the Quick Write to the students I asked them to listen closely and to see if I stated the emotion or if they could pick out the action words I choose. Upon completion of the minilessons for each of the four lessons, the students returned to their seats in order to practice the essential literacy strategy of integrating the newly learned writing strategy into their own writing. I supported the students in composing their texts in a meaningful context during this independent writing time. The Quick Write assessment for each lesson was an authentic task, since it followed the writing process that Mem Fox uses when she writes, which begins with choosing a craft move, brainstorming how to incorporate that craft move into her writing, and then finally integrating the craft move into her own story. The students followed this exact process, thus placing them in a real world situation where they are considered an author. I supported each student during this authentic task by conferring with him/her and building upon responses. In the second video clip, I am seen supporting students as they apply the essential literacy at 4 seconds, 3 minutes and 47 seconds, and 5 minutes and 42 seconds.]

## 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, such as 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 feel as though the learning segment went very smoothly, and the students were engaged throughout each lesson. They really liked the Quick Write booklets, which definitely contributed to making the tasks even more meaningful, since they enjoyed what they were doing. Even though the lessons were successful, and the students enjoyed the material, there are certainly some changes and improvements I would make if I were to teach this learning segment again. Students seemed to struggle the most with connecting the fact that they had to incorporate what they wrote on the brainstorm page into their writing. The brainstorm page was a way to plan out their thoughts for the story they were going to write and determine which aspects of the craft move they were going to integrate. Although the students who struggled were at a minimum, this was the area that caused the most confusion for those struggling students. I noticed that they would complete the brainstorm page, but then they would not integrate the action words that they brainstormed into their actual writing piece. In order to clear up this confusion, it would have been effective to possibly have them complete a class Quick Write where they worked together to integrate emotions into a class composition. Instead of modeling the whole Quick Write process by myself without any student suggestions or interaction, it would have been more practical to have students help me. I would guide the students, but they would be the ones essentially writing the story. Together, we could have decided on the emotion, the action words, and the characters, and then written the story integrating those elements. Another change I would have made to correct this same issue would have been to have the students work in partners to complete their brainstorm pages. The students work really well together and always have good feedback for one another. Therefore, it would have been useful for students to have the help of their peers in order to brainstorm and bounce ideas off of each other. While watching the second video clip over again, I noticed that the students gravitated towards their tablemates and other students around them in order to talk about the ideas they had for their stories and to brainstorm with one another. I should have embraced this peer work and allowed them to truly sit down with a partner and discuss their thoughts. I could have easily given them three minutes during independent writing to brainstorm with a partner.

- c. 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.

[I believe that writing a class Quick Write together would have been more effective in showing the students that the brainstorm page and the actual composition of text are to be related. This is because the students would have been involved in the writing process as I modeled what they were to be doing, rather than just listening to me explain my thought process for the brainstorm page, and then reading them the story I had already written. As I re-watched the first video clip, I realized that my modeling of the task was a lot of talking and very little interaction. From watching the clip, I could tell that I had lost some of the students' attention due to all of the talking. According to theory, it is extremely important and effective to involve students in all aspects of a lesson. Learning is viewed as an active and constructive process. I was essentially lecturing the students as I modeled, and that was certainly not active or constructive. Involving them in the modeling of the task would have helped them make the connection and would have greatly improved student understanding and learning. In addition to the importance of engagement, learning theory also greatly emphasizes social interactions in the classroom. Learning is not only individual, but also social. Research focuses on the significance of peer conversations, discussions, dialogues, and joint work in the classroom. Therefore, if the students would have worked together to discuss their

brainstorm pages and were given the opportunity to talk about what aspects of the craft moves they were going to integrate into their writing, the learning segment would have been even more successful.]