

TASK 3: ASSESSMENT COMMENTARY

Respond to the prompts below (**no more than 10 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. Attach the assessment you used to evaluate student performance (**no more than 5 additional pages**) to the end of this file. If you submit a student work sample or feedback as a video or audio clip and you or your focus students cannot be clearly heard, attach a transcription of the inaudible comments (**no more than 2 additional pages**) to the end of this file. These pages do not count toward your page total.

1. Analyzing Student Learning

- a. Identify the specific learning objectives measured by the assessment you chose for analysis.

[This assignment was designed specifically to measure student learning and analysis about Justinian, Theodora, Belisarius, or Justinian's reconquest. This goes along with our learning objective which was, "Students can analyze the Byzantine Empire during Justinian's reign." By having our students complete this assignment they have to learn more about the individual people which provides a better background to analyze the Empire itself with.]

- b. 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 submitted in Assessment Task 3, Part D.

Grouping	Score/10
A/#1	7
AS/#2	10
K/#3	10
Class as a whole	8.5

- c. 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
- facts and concepts
 - inquiry, interpretation, or analysis skills
 - building and supporting arguments or conclusions

Consider what students understand and do well, and where they continue to struggle (e.g., common errors, confusions, need for greater challenge).

[The focused class clearly grasped the basic facts and concepts. Their understanding of the basic information is spot on. These students clearly grappled with the text and they came out with the necessary information. This factual knowledge serves them well as they begin to move into inquiry and building arguments. The selected students represented the class well also by showing a growing ability to use inquiry and analysis skills. Although this skill is not perfect, it shows growth. Our student **K** shows that some of our students are very competent at this skill. There is still room for improvement but when you look at his questions that he is asking it is clear that he is asking questions that set him up well to grow in knowledge through inquiry. Additionally, his quotes show that he has moved beyond the basic facts and that he is looking to be able to make connections because of how he is investigating the text. Student **A** who is an

ELL student is also showing signs of growth in this area. In his case, one of his two questions was very well done to set himself up for growth through inquiry, while his other question could still use some growth. However, this opens the door for him to grow through practice and repetition. Additionally, this is where feedback comes in handy and is able to support his growth as a learner. On the argument side of things we see more of the same. Student **AS** is similar to student **A** in a few ways. Student **AS** is a little lower level both with English and with their writing. This student has a challenging home life and misses a reasonably large amount of school, but, they show a substantial amount of potential. This student is heavily self-driven and self-starts very well. This student also shows a lot of potential in their writing. Their use of vocab can be clearly seen. **AS SEEN** in... Our student **A** is showing signs that he understands what is being asked for but he is not yet at a point where he can fulfill that requirement. Feedback and individual attention will be used to assist him. This is a trend among the lower achieving students that they understand that we want analysis and support for what they are arguing, but that they do not grasp fully how to do that. However, the top students such as student **K** are grasping that we want them to have an opinion on this topic and that it does not always have to be written. Rather, they could show this opinion and argument about Justinian being a tyrant through both words and images. Student **K** uses size and perspective to show how Justinian views himself and then uses words to explain how Justinian's death was celebrated, not mourned. This is a great example of a student grasping how to make arguments and how to use his analysis and facts to back them up. Students are progressing well in their ability to not only form arguments but also in how to support arguments. This is a crucial skill and it is good to see the progress that these students are making.]

- d. If a video or audio work sample occurs in a group context (e.g., discussion), provide the name of the clip and clearly describe how the scorer can identify the focus student(s) (e.g., position, physical description) whose work is portrayed.

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2. Feedback to Guide Further Learning

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

- a. Identify the format in which you submitted your evidence of feedback for the 3 focus students. **(Delete choices that do not apply.)**
 - Written directly on work samples or in separate documents that were provided to the focus students

[The feedback is provided directly on the written work. This allowed for students to quickly understand what they needed to improve and where some of their strengths were.]

- b. Explain how feedback provided to the 3 focus students addresses their individual strengths and needs relative to the learning objectives measured.

[First, with the makeup and background of my students it is important that all feedback remains positive. For some of these students they only hear negativity at home and from most of their other teachers, so for them to hear positive feedback is crucial. As such, I try to avoid the word "but" as it tells them that something negative is coming. That does not prevent me from providing useful commentary that can inform future instruction and future work however. Student **K** struggles with confidence despite their success in the class, so his feedback will include lots of encouragement to keep working at this high level, an example of this is him calling me over every class (Although not in a video) to ask, "Mr. Good, is this okay?". As such, I will be making sure that his feedback is positive on his papers such as, "Great quote!" or "Great creativity and great job capturing the key parts!" Student **A** needs more guidance so his

feedback will have more guidance involved. An example of this from Student **A** is his confusion on what a summary is. His summary was my learning objective, "To better understand Theodora's role in the growth of the Byz empire and Justinian's life." Upon noticing this, I wrote a note to him explaining that this is what the students would call a "Purpose for this assignment" and how it is not really a summary, yet that I like his start! This allows it to remain positive while explaining why he lost points. Additionally, I met with the student to discuss what a summary was and found that there was some confusion from the student on what a true summary was. This was worrying as he has been asked in many subjects to write summary's, but it also allowed me to give him some feedback and to help him bridge what he thought a summary was to what a summary actually is. Similarly, student **AS** needs lots of encouragement and some guidance. As such, their feedback will be both encouraging but also guiding so that this student can improve and be more successful in the future. Student **AS** turned in her work late because she was worried that it was not good enough. However, it was far above and beyond what I asked for, so I made sure to point out throughout the assignment that it was very well done and that she did a "Great job!" which takes almost no time to write but means a lot.]

- c. Describe how you will support each focus student to understand and use this feedback to further their learning related to learning objectives, either within the learning segment or at a later time.

[I will be checking in with all students to make sure that they understand how they can improve their quality of work and that they understand why points were taken off. It is important to me that all of these students feel that they receive the help and the support that they need. By checking in with students to make sure that they understand what they missed points for I am able to assist students and make sure that they can understand this feedback. A few students miss a larger amount of class than ideal, but as a teacher I am able to plan ahead and I will be scheduling additional time to assist this student in utilizing the feedback that I am provided. So, additionally, this feedback will be restated when giving out makeup work so that this student can grow even if missing class. Beyond that, I will also be discussing the work and what is needed with each student. When the student and I are talking this allows me to also go over any work that was returned while the student was absent. This allows for additional one-to-one contact. Also, commonly missed areas will be addressed by myself so that I can both hear the students thoughts and also I can provide feedback. It is important to me that I understand where our students are at as it allows for me to provide additional areas of feedback and it helps me to improve both in my teaching and also in my instruction giving.]

3. Evidence of Language Understanding and Use

When responding to the prompt below, use concrete examples from the video clips and/or student work samples as evidence. Evidence from the clips may focus on one or more students.

You may provide evidence of students' language use **from ONE, TWO, OR ALL THREE of the following sources:**

1. Use video clips from Instruction Task 2 and provide time-stamp references for evidence of language use.
 2. Submit an additional video file named "Language Use" of no more than 5 minutes in length and cite language use (this can be footage of one or more students' language use). Submit the clip in Assessment Task 3, Part B.
 3. Use the student work samples analyzed in Assessment Task 3 and cite language use.
- a. Explain and provide concrete examples for the extent to which your students were able to use or struggled to use the
- selected language function,
 - vocabulary/symbols, **AND**
 - discourse or syntax
- to develop content understandings.

[Student **K** was able to use the proper vocabulary throughout his assignment in addition to using correct discourse. This student was able to correctly use names, which may not seem like much but is indeed very important to building a correct argument and he was also able to use correct phrasing to make his point clear. An example of this phrasing comes from his summary where he says, "During his early years many internal conflicts arose and he was looked at as a 'fool.'" This is a great example of his word choice and of his vocabulary use. He is able to use and understand the phrase "Internal conflicts" which allows him to clearly communicate this information to the reader. It is clear from this statement what type of conflict he is talking about and additionally what type of a result we are going to get. Additionally, this student is showcasing his use of deep analysis through the quotes that he is using. Rather than picking the shortest quotes he is actually picking the best quotes for the assignment. Student **A** is also showing great progress. Despite some of his issues in forming an argument, he is able to use vocab to show his learning. This student shows how he is understanding the major pieces however. He understands that Justinian, Theodora and the Byz Empire (He shortened Byzantine) and the population are all important pieces here. This student struggles to move beyond this though in vocab, but that is okay because this lesson does not really require any additional vocabulary. However, it is important that he understands how he can improve his writing and an easy way to do that is to continue to practice and try to use these larger words. That is why positive feedback is so important. Positive feedback can encourage student **A** to continue writing and to continue trying to expand his vocabulary use. An example of this comes from his summary. First, he struggles with what a summary actually is, but even beyond that, the only vocabulary use he puts into that section is Theodora, Justinian, and the Byzantine Empire, which shows that he knows those three words, but he is not understanding how to connect words beyond that. However, that will come with time and effort. Student **AS** also shows a good grasp on vocabulary. Student **AS** works hard and uses outside sources to enhance her learning. An example of this comes from her understanding of *Monophysites* which is a sect of Christianity that Theodora followed. Additionally, this student picked up on the way that Theodora calms down leaves behind her time as a prostitute. We did not talk about

this transformation but this student made this connection. Although her vocabulary use and her use of quotes are good, this student does struggle to backup the argument that she is making. An example of a place for growth comes from her questions. The questions that this student asks are good, but there are some misplaced words such as Justinian falling in love with “ someone who has a result of being immoral” rather than it being a history of being immoral, or something like that. However, this is easily corrected and the question itself is deep and is well written.

Syntax is seen throughout this as these three focused students are deliberate about their word order. Student **K** provides a perfect example of this concept. He writes, “The death of Justinian was a rejoicing as he seeked to much control during his reign.” Although the grammar here isn’t perfect, he does show a growing understanding of word order and of phrasing. Obviously, it is not perfect, but now as his teacher I am able to assist him in this. For me, this means spending some time assisting this student in grammar so that I can help him grow in syntax. This is going to look like me working with him and helping him one-to-one and encouraging him as he gets done early to proof read his work. This also will look like me monitoring his work and assisting him if I notice any issues in his syntax. Student **A** shows developing syntax also. He did not write a summary as he was supposed to, however, his questions, for instance, “Why would Justinian order to kill 30k of his own people?” shows developing syntax also. For him, I will be working one-to-one to assist him. Additionally, this is an ELL student and so I will be providing more time and more attention as we are working in class so that we can encourage student growth. Finally, for this student I will meet with our ELL specialist and make sure that I am teaching in a way that is connecting to him, so that I can address any shortcomings. This way, I am also engaging multiple specialties, all at once.]

4. Using Assessment to Inform Instruction

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

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 needing greater support or challenge).

[As a teacher, I believe that it is important to pursue review and more review and a little more review. As is mentioned down below, history is something that requires connections to be made and I think that falls on me to provide opportunities for the students to review the material and make these connections. As a teacher I think that it is important that I add additional time for specific students. Also, it is important that from class to class I understand what students are struggling. This can be accomplished a number of ways, but one of the easiest is from student work. Applying what I saw above, I have decided that I need to be more focused on vocabulary knowledge in class. This will be done through an increase in our use of the vocabulary section of our notes and also by applying more of our class time to understanding these terms. I think that I have been overlooking the vocabulary and looking for students to make connections too quickly, so by increasing the time I spend in vocabulary, it should assist the ELL students as I am hopefully able to make them feel more comfortable with the verbiage and with making these connections. If my students are able to make these connections, then I am doing a good job and I think that right now I can improve in helping students form these connections.]

- b. Explain how these next steps follow from your analysis of the student learning. Support your explanation with principles from research and/or theory.

[These next steps are going to open the door for these students to show their learning in a more accurate way. It is important that these students show their learning through many different forms of communication, but obviously writing is going to be critical. Additionally, the exam that is prepared by the district as the end of unit assessment requires essays on many of these concepts which means that students have a hard date where they have to be able to say these concepts and form arguments both in a limited amount of time and also while being effective at communicating them. This assessment is also a great opportunity to measure these students successes and their shortcomings, while getting more formal feedback and moving forward. Additionally, these next steps will help the students to continue to improve their basic knowledge of the content.

Some research that goes along well with this comes from Chauncey Monte-Sano in his article, *Beyond Reading Comprehension and Summary: Learning to Read and Write in History by focusing on Evidence, Perspective and Interpretation*. In this article he breaks down patterns and teaching strategies for writing and reading in a High School history classroom. Monte-Sano points out that reading and writing comprehension needs to be done in a deeper way than typical as the current way of teaching, “Inhibits student’s historical reasoning and understanding.”¹ Obviously this is something that I want to avoid and so I continued to provide multiple perspectives and pieces of the puzzle even when it was not the easy option. This also encourages vocabulary growth and as a teacher it helps me to have a clear picture of what to do. By providing multiple perspectives, I also am able to reinforce vocabulary terms and to expand what the students are learning as vocabulary. As was discussed above, the exam includes writing, so by following Monte-Sano’s words of wisdom to make reading enjoyable so that students engage and grow from it, I believe that essay scores will go up. This is important to me as I want my students to do well and to feel that they are well prepared in every aspect for the exam. One important feature of Monte-Sano’s work is his assertion that students do not read like historians do.² His point in saying this is that it is easy for students to get lost in the deeper details of the readings we provide as teachers and so it is important to find the middle ground. As a teacher I am going to apply this going forward by making sure that the tough words in readings have been covered and that the readings do not have underlying themes that may be too complex for students to understand.]

¹ Chauncey Monte-Sano, *Beyond Reading Comprehension and Summary: Learning to Read and Write in History by focusing on Evidence*. P. 211.

² Chauncey Monte-Sano, *Beyond Reading Comprehension and Summary: Learning to Read and Write in History by focusing on Evidence*. P. 216.

Bibliography

Monte-Sano, C. (n.d.). Beyond Reading Comprehension and Summary: Learning to Read and Write in History by Focusing on Evidence, Perspective, and Interpretation. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 212-249.