Performance Expectations and Goals

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For this assignment, I worked on touchstones 2, 3, and 4 form *The 12 Touchstones of Good Teaching* (Goodwin and Hubbell, 2013). I created a pre-assessment which I administered to a tenth grade language arts class. I then created a rubric which would be used to score the summative assessment at the end of the unit. Students then had to set a personal learning goal as they reviewed the evaluated pre-assessment and the rubric.

**Step One: Develop a formative assessment to assess student’s prior knowledge on the skills.**

My lesson’s focus standard is CCSS.ELA.RL.9-10.3 Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2012). For the activity that will summatively assess this standard, I felt that students would need to know literary terminology surrounding characterization and would need to perform the task of inferring specific character traits which would need to be supported with textual evidence; thus, my pre-assessment ended up having two pieces: a terminology piece and a performance piece. The assessment appears retyped here.

Define the following terms

Static or flat character-

Dynamic or round character-

Antagonist-

Protagonist-

Characterization-

What are the two types of characterization?

In what ways does an author reveal characterization to readers?

Read the short passages. Answer the question by identifying an implied character trait. Explain your answer by referencing text.

1. Eric’s car broke down in the woods and his phone wasn’t getting a signal. He used his car antenna as a spear and caught fresh salmon. He started a fire with sparks from his car battery, and he ate the cooked salmon while waiting for help.

What character trait does Eric demonstrate?

Explain your answer by referencing the text.

1. Michael has clothes all over the floor of his bedroom. Underneath the clothes on his floor is a pizza box with crusts in it. Underneath the pizza box is a bunch of pieces of a board game that Michael played and didn’t put away. Michael sat on his unmade bed with his shoes on and played video games all night.

What character trait does Michael demonstrate?

Explain your answer by referencing the text.

1. When vandals burned down the orphanage, Ms. Cleary started a fundraising campaign and donated $5,000 of her own money. After nine months of hard work, the funds were raised and the orphanage was rebuilt.

What character trait does Ms. Cleary demonstrate?

Explain your answer by referencing the text.

1. Katie’s mother came home from a long day of work and noticed that the entire house had been cleaned from top to bottom. She figured that Katie must have cleaned it. The strangest thing was that she didn’t even ask Katie to clean. Then she found a note on the counter from Katie asking for permission to sleep over at her friend Heather’s house. Katie’s mother smiled.

What character trait does Katie demonstrate?

Explain your answer by referencing the text.

1. It was Halloween and Valarie was dressed up as Princess Rosemary from her favorite TV show, *The Princess Club*. As she was collecting candy, she noticed another little girl wearing a Princess Rosemary costume. Valarie began rolling around on the ground and screaming about how she wants to be the only Princess Rosemary. Valarie’s tantrum continued long after the other Princess Rosemary vanished from sight.

What character trait does Valarie demonstrate?

Explain your answer by referencing the text.

**Step Two: Administer the formative assessment.**

I administered the pre-assessment on Monday during class, explaining to the students that it would not be entered into the grade book as a grade, but instead would be used by me to guide the information and the way I presented it when we did the lesson in a couple of weeks.

**Step Three: Graph the results of the pre-assessment data to use to prioritize instruction**

Because my pre-assessment had two pieces, I felt that two graphs were needed as well. I chose bar graphs for both pieces of the pre-assessment because they seemed to be the most straight-forward. I created three groups of students: ones who answered/performed as expected became the Got It group; ones who showed some knowledge of the concept, but still had not mastered the skill became the Working On It group; and ones who could not answer/perform became the Need Help group. Both graphs simply show the number of students who fell into each category. The graphs appear on the following pages.

**Characterization Pretest-Terminology Piece**

Students were given several terms which surround characterization within literature to define. This graph shows the number of students who performed at a level that showed full understanding of the terminology (Got It), limited knowledge of the terminology (Working On It), and no knowledge of the terminology (Need Help).

**Characterization** **Pretest-Performance Piece**

Students were given 5 scenarios for which they had to list a character trait that they thought the person in the scenario exhibited (Character Trait). Then, they had to reference the text that made them decide upon this character reference (Evidence). The following graph shows the number of students who worked at a level which showed they could perform the task (Got It), the ones who had an idea but not a strong grasp of the task (Working On It), and the ones who could not perform the task as expected (Need Help).

**Step Four: Create a rubric around the skills being taught with the different levels of proficiency identified**

Using the information in the standard, the ideas I identified as I unpacked the standard in the Module 2 Critical Thinking assignment, and the actual prompt which students will be given for the summative assessment, I created a rubric using rubistar.org which appears here.

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| **Characterization Essay** | | | | |
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| Teacher Name: **Prosser** | |  |  |  |
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| Student Name:     \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | | |  |
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| CATEGORY | Excellent | Accomplished | Developing | Beginning |
| CONTENT |  |  |  |  |
| Responds to prompt | An essay that includes analysis of 3 characters or 1 character and 3 events showing duality of human nature from the story. | An essay that includes analysis of 2 characters or 1 character and less than 2 events showing duality of human nature from the story. | An essay that includes analysis of only 1 character with 1 event showing duality of human nature in the story. | Not an essay or does not connect characters to duality of human nature in the story |
| Explains/interprets vs. Summarizing | Analyzes text perceptively, using summarizing information only as needed | Interprets text analytically, understanding the intent of the text and supporting with appropriate detail, may include unnecessary summary. | Summarizes accurately but shows little evidence of analysis. | Mostly summarizes with content errors in summary. |
| Uses relevant literary terminology | Incorporates literary terminology smoothly into style | Uses relevant literary terminology accurately. | Uses some relevant terminology, but not always correctly. | Shows little familiarity with relevant literary terms |
| Includes textual evidence relevant to topic | Includes at least 1 piece of relevant textual support (quotation or paraphrase) for each character or each event as described in prompt. | Missing one piece of relevant textual support for an idea as compared to a 4 on the rubric. | Missing 2 pieces of relevant textual support for idea as compared to a 4 on the rubric or 1/2 the textual support is irrelevant. | Missing relevant textual support for all ideas or includes irrelevant textual support. |
| WRITING |  |  |  |  |
| Grammar and mechanics | Includes less than 5 minor errors in grammar and mechanics | Includes 6 or 7 errors in grammar and mechanics. | Includes 8 or 9 errors in grammar and mechanics. | Includes more than 10 errors in grammar and mechanics. |
| Sentence fluency | Sentences are easily readable and understandable. Sentences include all 4 sentence structures. Sentences use a variety of sentence beginnings. | Sentences are readable and understandable. Sentences include at least 3 different structures. Sentences have some variety of sentence beginnings. | Sentences are readable, but may be hard to follow. Sentences include only 2 structures. Sentences have limited sentence beginnings. | Sentences are not understandable. Sentences have only 1 structure. Sentences have limited sentence beginnings. |
| Organization | Essay has an identifiable introduction, body and conclusion paragraphs. Writer uses advanced transitions between ideas. Logical pattern of organization is evident. | Essay has introduction, body, and conclusion that may not be separated into paragraphs. Writers uses transitions between ideas. Pattern of organization is evident. | Essay is lacking at least 1 piece of required elements (intro., body, concl.) Writer uses elementary transitions. Pattern of organization is evident, but not logical. | Essay is missing more than 2 required parts (intro., body, and concl.). Writer uses transitions inconsistently or not at all. No pattern of organization is evident. |
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**Step Five: Have students use the rubric and pre-assessment to set personal learning goals**

On Wednesday, I returned the evaluated pre-assessment and the rubric to students. We talked about setting personal learning goals, something students said they had never had to do before this point in any class. I shared examples, clarified any confusion students had, and students simply wrote their learning goals on their rubrics. Because I will not be teaching this lesson for a couple of weeks, I took up their pre-assessments and rubrics with learning goals which I will return to them as we begin the lesson. Goals varied quite a bit among my class. One student’s goal was “I want to have good organization, sentence fluency and good terminology so I sound more organized and intelligent.” Another student, a Gifted/Talented student who did very well on the pre-assessment, missing only the question about the 2 types of characterization set the following goal: “I want to learn the 2 types of characterization and use them to describe characters.” One student who was new to my district last year and has not had the same instruction in previous years as students in the district wrote a rather lengthy goal, saying, “I would like to learn all the words that goes with characterization and be fluent with them so that when we talk about them in class i know what everyone is talking about and I don’t have to reference to somebody or something. And I can be the one to answer.”

**Step Six: Describe the process taken in steps 1-5 and analyze the results**

As I began this assignment, I felt a bit of apprehension as this is a new process for me and for my students in my classroom. However, now that I have finished it, I believe that I can see it helping me be more successful at presenting my lesson and my students being more successful at learning the material. I think the entire process will need some work and practice before I and the students feel more comfortable with it.

I started creating the pre-assessment, first looking at the standard and the ideas I had pulled from the standard when I unpacked it in my second assignment for this class last week. From the standard, I had pulled four ideas: knowing static/flat characters as opposed to complex characters, identifying how authors develop characters, seeing how characters impact theme, and citing textual evidence to support ideas. With these four ideas as my focus, I felt the need to divide the pre-assessment into two parts: a terminology piece and a performance piece. In the terminology piece, I simple asked students to define words surrounding characterization. In the performance piece, students had to analyze scenarios and apply a character trait to the characters in each scenario. I felt that as secondary students, my class had to be able to do more than just define terms or identify a concept.

As I administered the pre-assessment, I had to explain to students that we were shifting from our current content (writing persuasive essays) for a few minutes so that we could pre-test for a lesson that I would be teaching them in a few weeks. This actually felt as weird for me as it did for the students. I think I would feel more comfortable giving a pre-assessment at the end of one week and beginning the next week with the lesson. I can, however, see that some space in between gives time to prepare a more in-depth lesson using the results of the pre-assessment to better instruct the students. I also believe that once the students and I get used to the process, we would easily adjust.

I teach English Language Arts, so numbers and data are not my strongest area. With that in mind, I wanted to graph my results in the easiest, most understandable way for me. My class has 18 students, so I felt that breaking the results in thirds would be a good to place break. I chose the levels of Got It for those students who answered the questions at the expected level, Working On It for those students who partially understood the concept, and Need Help for those students who had little to grasp of the concept. I was somewhat happy and a bit surprised that my students for the most part did better on the performance piece than on the terminology piece. My surprise was because the terminology involved words that I know the students have been hearing for at least a few years; my happiness was because I know that with review the terminology would come back quickly and for most students the application of concepts is usually the most challenging. If you notice on the graphs, I had much higher numbers of students performing in the Got It level on choosing the character trait than I did on defining terms like “static character” The performance graph also shows, however, on all but one question at the Got It level that students could choose the character trait, but not all of those students could support that answer with textual reference. Interestingly enough, on the Working On It and the Need Help level, students picked out what would be the textual evidence, but did not put a logical word for the character trait. As I scored and graphed the pre-assessment information, I suspected that maybe a lack of vocabulary might be part of the problem.

After scoring the pre-assessment, I set myself to the task of creating a rubric. Though I have taken workshops over rubric writing and have written some for projects in my class. The readings in this lesson had given me better background than I had ever received. I felt ready to get started on the rubric because after unpacking the standard, creating an essential question, and creating the pre-assessment, I had direction. I also looked at the question that will be the students’ writing prompt. Like my pre-assessment, I felt that my rubric needed multiple parts. My focus for this lesson is the standard named in Step One about characters, but with secondary students writing an essay, I felt that I also had to include some basic writing points on the rubric as well. My “Content” section on the rubric deals with the focus standard and includes four areas: responding to the prompt, interpreting vs. summarizing, using literary terminology, and citing points with textual evidence. In the “Writing” section, I focused on elements of writing that I know tenth grade students should be able to do and that we have already covered in class. These include grammar and mechanics, sentence fluency, and organization.

I began the personal learning goal setting at the beginning of class two days after giving the pre-assessment, so the information was still fresh in the students’ minds. This class is very motivated, competitive with each other, and grade oriented. I had to remind them that this was a pre-test and that was why no one had grades on their papers. Some were happy with that; others asked if we could count it as a grade. They did want to discuss the information, and I answered a few questions but told them we would cover all of the information in a couple of weeks. Our discussions, however, shone a light on the fact that vocabulary was indeed an issue for some of them on choosing a character trait. I have a list of possible character traits that I will definitely give them when we get into our lesson. A anticipated a barrage of questions as I discussed the personal learning goals and shared some possible examples, but surprisingly, the students spent about ten minutes reading over the rubric and then wrote their goals on the bottom of the page. One student seemed to make it through the reading of the rubric rather quickly, and I questioned her about doing so. She said, “Mrs. Prosser, I only had to read the ‘Excellent’ column because that is where I want to be and that is where you want us to be, right?” I could not argue with her logic. For this first time, setting goals as a class, I did not do a lengthy graphic organizer or worksheet. I just had students write a goal on the bottom of their copy of the rubric. I plan to have them write down steps as we begin the lesson and I remind them of their learning goals.

In all, I think with the advance planning on my part-including all of the Module 2 assignment and the early steps of this Module 3 assignment-my students are going to get more out this lesson than the way I would have originally taught it. I cannot wait to actually teach it and let them assess where they stand with their goals after the lesson.

References

Common Core State Standards Initiative. (2012). English language arts standards. Retrieved from http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy.

Goodwin, B. & Hubbell, E. (2013). *The twelve touchstones of good teaching.* Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Rubistar. http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php