

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.

[Lesson 3 is shown.]

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 video clip one, from 1:12 to 5:48 consists of review, better described as activating student memories.. During this clip you will see me starting class and also interacting with students and making small talk while hearing about their lives. I did not feel that a transcription of this was necessary or right. These brief interactions regarded these students personal lives and so I did not feel that they needed to be included in this. Additionally, one of the main focuses of those was some students asking about the camera. That being said, I think this shows that I am engaged in the students' lives and that I am still working to get to know my students despite already knowing them fairly well. I want to remain engaged and continue to hear what is going on in their lives, whether it is about a school activity such as the musical or a sporting event or if it about something at work or home. Additionally, this allows me to check in with each student every day so I can keep my finger on the pulse of how each one is doing. If something is going on, I want to know so that I can assist my students to the best of my ability.

Another way that I show a mutual respect and rapport with the students is by not calling out a student who walks into class late, as seen at the very beginning of the movie, literally at 0:00. The video began rolling about a minute after the bell and so that is why he is not shown walking all the way in, however, calling him out in front of everyone would be highly disrespectful, instead I address him at 6:25 by making sure he has what he needs to be successful. One of my students is off task at 4:43 and I do address him, but at this point I have given him some time to decide whether he wants to get himself back on track or not. Another example of this comes in the form of dress code (5:16 in the second clip). One of the students has his hood on which technically is close to being a dress code violation. However, if you watch I wait for a quiet moment where students are working for me to address this. There is no reason to call him out in class and that just makes it a negative learning environment. At the 4:10 mark, in the first video, I am able to get our class to loosen up a little bit and to laugh a little. Our ensuing discussion is able to be lively and then we are able to keep having fun while learning. Following the discussion I move into a time where students are able to work. This shows respect for how busy our students are and shows that I want these students to pass our class.

This second clip begins as students finish that work time. An example of respect in the second video is that when some students are not listening to directions I ask them to repeat what I said rather than getting frustrated or scolding them like they are a child (3:47). Also, as I am checking in with the groups the first time I go through and do not interject if they are already working (6:27). I only stop and jump in to provide assistance if the students need it (4:43). If

they are already doing well the I just move on and come back later. Finally, at 00:57 of the second video I explain to the students when grades will go in, showing them respect so as not to catch them off guard when their grade changes.]

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 inquiry, interpretation, or analysis in relation to sources or accounts of historical events or a social studies phenomenon
 - building and supporting arguments or conclusions

[During the review, which is activation of prior student learning, from 1:12 seconds until 3:38 seconds into the first video I am attempting to ask questions that will encourage my students to move into a deeper level of understanding. Although this is not done perfectly, it is definitely attempted. Additionally, this instruction showed how I can influence student learning by getting students to make real world connections. These connections make the learning real and are able to help students build arguments. As a class the students have constructed what I would consider a pretty reasonable argument for why the population of the Byzantine Empire is angry and ready to revolt and riot. At 1:44, I ask the students if they have any predictions on what the readings and what the class today will teach us.]

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

[The first section of the first video is review. Starting at the 3:02 mark we begin to talk about the prior learning of this unit. This discussion focuses around the Code of Laws and we get into a lively real-world conversation about how our students would feel and how they would react to having these new laws. The majority of these students are not in favor of these hypothetical new laws and the students do not desire to have this change made in their lives. At 3:39 in this first video I have students write a definition and draw a visual to define Justinian's code which helps students link this prior knowledge of laws that we have today with the new learning from last class.]

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 students' ability to form inquiries, interpretations, or analyses of history/social studies sources or accounts **AND** build and support arguments or conclusions.

[At 3:03 in the first clip, I repeated an answer of a student and then I asked a follow-up question to the class as a whole. Additionally, at 2:44 seconds of the first video I repeated an answer but before asking a question, I added some additional information on, which allowed for me to refresh student memories on what they already know. Additionally, this is going to be used to assist with our essential question at 0:06.]

- b. Describe and cite examples from the video clips of how you supported students in using evidence from one or more sources to support interpretations or analyses and arguments or conclusions about historical events or a social studies phenomenon.

[At 1:10 in the second clip I explain the activities directions to the students. This entire activity is designed to help students use multiple sources of information so that they can come up with a strong argument. Therefore, by explaining how these different documents will be used students

are being supported in using multiple documents to make a historical connection. At 1:30, I then walk the students briefly through how these four people tie into our learning objective and I utilize this time to begin helping these students make these connections. At 1:21 I walk the students through what the readings are on and I deliberately make sure that the students understand that these four are related by referring to them as one unit of four.]

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 would make a lot of changes. I thought that the groups (created at 2:01 in the second video) were well positioned to help out struggling students and although I think some groups were, but I think that I needed to change how I paired off these students. Although the students gained the required learning I think that students could have done so in a more supported manor. I also struggled with the fact that to split up talkative students during the regular seating chart, I put myself in a spot where in almost any form of grouping I wound up having friends working together which can be okay, but this class's biggest issue is that they are to talkative with their friends.

Additionally, I had two gifted students working in one of the groups with a few middle of the road students but not any students who really struggle (Group is visible at 3:13 of the second video). However, that is the most challenging reading. Although this can be okay at times, with the activity today, it would have been helpful to have the best readers and the gifted students split around the room. This would have allowed more students to benefit from these students knowledge. Additionally, two of the gifted students can argue a little bit and pull other students off task and into these side arguments. This was the first time I really noticed this happening, but moving forward I avoided putting these students together.]

- 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.

[I think that by being more specific with students and their placement around my classroom I would open the door for better collaboration. This collaboration improve by having better discussion at these various groups. However, with that in mind, I also believe that I would be more deliberate in placing students in groups away from their friends. Although this could be seen as limiting the collaboration that is possible, I believe that it would increase the focus on the work itself as the students would not know each other quite as well. This would prevent some fighting from happening and also it would increase student's social skills development which is a good skill to be developing, especially when it comes this easily. Monte-Sano, as mentioned in a previous part of this, would have preferred to have those students split up so that all of these students would have had a chance to work with higher achieving students who

perform better in the tasks of inquiry.¹ At 0:06 though I engage students with the essential question, something certain to fit in the research of Rubin showed would appreciate.² This split would have allowed me to have better inquiry but that being said, by having the essential question I was able to recover some of the loss through poor grouping.]

¹ Chauncey Monte-Sano, *Beyond Reading Comprehension and Summary: Learning to Read and Write in History by focusing on Evidence*. P. 216.

² B. Rubin, *Essentially Different: Using Essential Questions and Themes for Civic Learning*, p. 25.

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.

Rubin, B., *Essentially Different: Using Essential Questions and Themes for Civic Learning*, p. 24-40.