**Context for Learning Form**

Provide the requested context information for the class selected for this task.

Use as much space as you need.

About the subject area/course

1. How much time is devoted each day to specific instruction in science, social studies, mathematics, and language arts in the class which is the focus of this task?

**Science: Tu. and Th.: 9 – 10**

**Social Studies: Mon. and Fri.: 9 – 10**

**Math: 1.5 hrs everyday**

**ELA: 3 hrs everyday**

About the students in the class

2. How many students are in the class you are documenting? **24**

3. How many students in the class are: English learners **13**

Redesignated English Learners 5 Proficient English speakers **6**

4. Please complete the following table about your English Learners’ latest CELDT scores (if available):

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **# of Students at Each CELDT Level in Different Modalities** | | | | | |
| **Score Level** | **Listening** | **Speaking** | **Reading** | **Writing** | **Overall** |
| Beginning | **0** | **0** | **2** | **0** | **0** |
| Early Intermediate | **1** | **0** | **3** | **3** | **1** |
| Intermediate | **10** | **5** | **8** | **7** | **10** |
| Early Advanced | **2** | **7** | **0** | **3** | **2** |
| Advanced | **0** | **1** | **0** | **0** | **0** |

5. How many students have Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or 504 plans? **1**

6. How many students participate in a Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) program? **5**

About the school curriculum and resources

7. Describe any specialized features of the classroom setting, e.g., bilingual, **Structured English Immersion**, team taught with a special education teacher. - **Structured English Immersion**

8. If there is a particular textbook or instructional program used for science, social studies, mathematics, and language arts instruction, what is it? (If a textbook, please provide the name, publisher, and date of publication.)

**Science: FOSS: “Science Resources,” Delta Education, 2007**

**Social Studies: “Reflections: California: A Changing State,” Harcourt, 2007**

**Math: “enVisionMath: California,” Pearson, 2009**

**ELA: Houghton and Mifflin**

9. What other major resources are typically used for science, social studies, language arts, and mathematics instruction in this class?

**Science: Musical songs that deal with science**

**Social Studies: Social Studies Alive!, Internet and primary sources**

**Math: Marilyn Burns**

**ELA: Planning with the grade level curriculum team, passages, read alouds**

History and Social Studies

Content Area Task (CAT)

**Introduction:**

This paper will demonstrate my understanding of assessment. I will first begin with a brief overview of the assessment prompt and rubric used to score it. I will also analyze how appropriately matched the assessment and rubric are. Next I will evaluate the class’ understanding in three sections and the next steps that should be taken to deepen their knowledge of the content. First I will discuss the whole class understanding in terms of general trends of scoring. Then I will examine patterns that appeared creating groups of students in which to target specific support. Finally I will analyze the work of three individual students in terms of their strengths, weaknesses, and the next steps to be taken. Lastly, I will conclude my paper with a brief explanation about what I learned through this assessment process and how I will apply this knowledge to my future work.

**Overview of Assessment and Rubric:**

In this social studies unit students learned about the early explorers and settlements of the Americas. Groups included Roanoke, Jamestown, Plymouth, and the Spanish missions. Over the course of four weeks students accumulated knowledge about the benefits, challenges, and outcomes of settling in a new place. The class created a graphic organizer neatly labeled with each group which contained information about the benefits, challenges, and outcomes each experienced.

Students were assessed with an essay prompt which asked for them to discuss the factors in settling in a new place such as the benefits, challenges, and outcomes. The class was encouraged to use their tools such as graphic organizers, notes, and knowledge from activities. The rubric has four categories in which to assess the students (benefits, challenges, outcomes, and historical accuracy). The possible scores for students to receive were below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced. The categories of benefits, challenges, and outcomes were similar in that they required a certain number of ideas for each score on rubric, for example in order for a student to receive a proficient on challenges they must list three challenges in their essay. Historical accuracy was graded differently in that the fewer inaccuracies a student makes the higher score they receive, for example to receive a basic students must make three or more historically inaccurate statements.

During the process of scoring the class assessment, many questions arose about the synchrony between the assessment and rubric. One concern I had was that the assessment did not ask for any particular number of ideas to be stated in the student work yet the rubric was based off of the number of ideas mentioned. Students should have been prompted to provide a certain number of ideas based upon what will be graded on the rubric. If providing three details merits a proficient, students on the prompt should be encouraged to state three ideas or more for each category (benefits, challenges, and outcomes). A question I had was regarding the quality of statements students provided. Some students provided detail explanations such as discussing a benefit with a specific settlement where as others simply provided a general benefit. Should both students receive the same score because the rubric requires students to only list x number of outcomes? Another question is whether the ideas listed must differ in order to count for a distinct number of ideas. For example, if a student states that as a outcome people were dying from disease and colonies were dying out, should it be considered one or two outcomes centered on this idea of death? In essence there is a difference between individual people dying and a whole colony dying out but if a student wrote that people were dying from disease, malaria, and diarrhea it would only be considered one outcome versus three. Thus, my last concern is over the inexplicit nature of the rubric not providing enough information on which to accurately score and evaluate student assessments. Luckily, I worked in a team while scoring these assessment and we discussed concerns and questions with the rubric, coming to decisions about interpretations and scoring. Overall I stuck to what was only stated on the rubric, thus students could be as general or specific as they wanted when listing benefits, challenges, and outcomes but the ideas for each category must be distinctly different.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Below Basic | Basic | Proficient | Advanced |
| Benefits | Does not list any benefits for settling | Lists one or two benefits for settling | Lists three benefits for settling | Lists four benefits for settling |
| Challenges | Does not list any challenges to settling | Lists one or two challenges to settling | Lists three challenges to settling | Lists four challenges to settling |
| Outcomes | Does not list any outcomes of settling | Lists one or two outcomes of settling | Lists three outcomes of settling | Lists four outcomes of settling |
| Historically Accurate | Historically inaccurate | Makes three or more historically inaccurate statements | Makes two historically inaccurate statements | Does not make or makes only one historically inaccurate statement(s) |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Below Basic | Basic | Proficient | Advanced |
| Benefits | Does not list any benefits for settling  5, 14 | Lists one or two benefits for settling  1, 7, 16, 21, 28 | Lists three benefits for settling  2, 3, 4, 10, 11, 5, 17, 18, 22, 23, 25, 27, 29, 30, 31, 33 | Lists four benefits for settling  12 |
| Challenges | Does not list any challenges to settling  5 | Lists one or two challenges to settling  12, 30, 33 | Lists three challenges to settling  2, 3, 4, 7, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 27, 28, 31 | Lists four challenges to settling  1, 10, 22, 23, 25, 29 |
| Outcomes | Does not list any outcomes of settling  33 | Lists one or two outcomes of settling  1, 5, 7, 11, 14, 16, 21, 23, 27 | Lists three outcomes of settling  2, 3, 4, 17, 22, 29, 30, 31 | Lists four outcomes of settling  10, 12, 15, 18, 25, 28 |
| Historically Accurate | Historically inaccurate | Makes three or more historically inaccurate statements | Makes two historically inaccurate statements  4, 21, 23 | Does not make or makes only one historically inaccurate statement(s)  1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 22, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33 |

**Next Steps:**

*Whole Class*

Upon examining the rubric above with the student scores a couple general trends for the class appeared. I will discuss the pattern in each category of the rubric.

First, I noticed that the two thirds of the students scored proficient in mentioning three benefits in their essays. Most students used general and specific information such as stating generally people wanted freedom of religion and other being specific stating that the pilgrims wanted freedom of religion. Only one student (#12) was able to list four benefits (claim land, make money, freedom of religion, and spread religion). Seven students score below basic and basic because they were not able to recall enough information about the benefits of settlement. Among this group there was a lack of information about benefits such as only mentioning one or two ideas. In addition, there was also misunderstanding about what a benefit is (#5,7,1, and 14). I will discuss this particular group in more detail under targeted support for groups. In general, because one third of the class did not perform well in this area and only one student scored advanced we will review the benefits of settling as a whole class. Such review would be working in partners to sort strip of papers into the category of benefits. Some strips may be general statements or challenges where as other strips will be benefits. During this partner work students must talk and discuss why each strip is or is not a benefit with their partner before gluing it down on the paper. In this activity, students who lacked knowledge about the other benefits of settlement will now have more information, whether the student was basic or proficient this extra assistance will push each student to the next level. Lastly, this activity will also provide a conceptual component in understanding what a benefit is because students will have to discuss and explain why some strips are or are not benefits.

Secondly, I analyzed the scores for the category of challenges and noticed the majority of the students were proficient and advanced and only 5 students scored basic or below basic. I feel confident as a teacher that most of my students excelled in this area and I would not do whole class activity. Rather, my next steps would be to analyze the work of the students who scored basic and below basic to search for any patterns or commonalities with these students and create next steps for this group.

Next, I evaluated the range of scores for the category of outcomes. I noticed that the scores were almost evenly spread between basic, proficient, and advanced with only one student receiving below basic. I can say with confidence that almost two thirds of my class did well on this section but there is still one third that could improve in this topic. I think a whole class analysis of cause and effect could benefit all students to either aid in their understanding of outcome or deepen their knowledge about how challenges influenced certain outcomes. I would use a similar structure of the strips of paper of benefits, challenges, and outcomes. Students will draw an outcomes and search for a benefit or challenge that *caused* that outcome. Once again students will have to explain their reasoning to their partner. For example, say I drew the strip Roanoke was a lost colony, I could use the challenge of long distance from home to explain that the colony died out because the distance made it difficult for the colonist to get supplies and survive. Students who were proficient and advanced would deepen their understanding of how all the factors are interconnected. The students who scored basic or below basic would benefit because they would receive exposure and more information about the outcomes of the settlements and they would have to use reason or hear other students reason to explain the cause and effect relationship of those outcomes.

Lastly, the students remembered accurate facts and/or utilized their notes and graphic organizers to provide historically accurate information. Most of the class scored advanced in this category with only three students scoring proficient because they made two or more historically inaccurate statements in their essays. This was interesting because students varied from below basic to advanced in the categories of benefits, challenges, and outcomes. I was also intrigued that student #4, #21, and #23 vary in terms of their English language proficiency and academic skills level. Student #4 is a proficient English speaker where as #21 is an English language learner and #23 is a reclassified English language learner and participates in GATE (gifted and talented education). I’m curious as to whether these students were absent on multiple days during the unit thus did not receive all of the information, maybe they did not take notes or complete assignments, or maybe for some there is a language/conceptual misunderstanding. My next steps may be to individually conference with these students to discuss absences, misunderstanding, and quality of work to determine the reason why they were not able to receive advanced like the majority of the students. After this I will use the information gained to patch in gaps of knowledge. Overall, the students performed well in this category receiving proficient and advanced.

*Targeted Support for Groups*

During the assessment process I noticed two general trends that created two groups that needed targeted support. The first pattern is that of student confusion over what freedom means and the idea of freedom of religion. The second trend is student misunderstanding of the idea of a benefit.

Seven students had difficulty understanding either the concept of freedom/freedom religion and who wanted freedom/freedom of religion. Of those seven students, five students are English language learners and one participated in GATE. The table below shows students misconceptions regarding freedom and freedom of religion. Some students such as #21 and 16 misunderstood who wanted religion and stated that it was the Native Americans. Others such as #4, 28, 17, and 25 were confused about the relationship between Plymouth, freedom, and religion thus they jumbled the facts. Lastly, #11 also had some vague ideas about the importance of freedom, freedom of religion, and spreading religion but was unable to articulate a clear idea. This group of students would benefit from small group work focused on the concept of freedom in relation to early American settlements. Instruction should focus on defining and distinguishing the ideas of freedom (in general) and freedom of religion. Afterwards the small group can have a discussion about which settlement was established as a result of freedom of religion and which settlement was established to spread religion. In addition, the role of Native Americans during the settlement should also be discussed such as the different relationships the groups had with each settlement.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| #21 EL | “And the last reason is that the Native American wanted freedom” |
| #16 EL | “Another reason is that N.A. wanted free relegond. and the therd benafet is that some relegonds wanted to be free.” |
| #4 | “A third thing is they had freedom of religon such as they had freedom from Plymith.” |
| #11 | “The second reason is they wanted to spread there realigon and last of all they wanted freedon of realigon so they could hve realigon.” |
| #28 EL | “ second they wanted freedom like plymouth.” |
| #17 EL IEP | “the thrid benefil is that the Plymth coline sperd there reilgon.” |
| #25 EL GATE | “Another is that the plymith want freedom.” |

Four students had a misunderstanding of what the word benefits means. All four of these students are English language learners thus this makes me wonder whether conceptual understanding was a result of language proficiency or something else. Although, #7 and 1 were able to produce other correct statements about some benefits of settling. I think this group would benefit from small group work discussing the idea of benefit, benefit as something that is good for you and helps you. Such a discussion could focus on real life examples they can relate to such as the benefit of living next to a park and having a ball to practice soccer versus the challenge of not have a ball or park to practice with. Students can discuss which situation is a benefit and which is not. Other relatable examples can be used to explain the concept. This small group discussion can prepare these students for the whole class activity I mentioned earlier with the sorting of the strips of paper into what are benefits of settlement.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| #5 R EL | “mitions looked like villages” “ people in the baut did not servid” |
| #7 EL | “The native American people thought that the settlers were going to take there land so the native Americans Attack the Settlers. Some settlers Died and some suvied.” |
| #1 EL | “Last one was they had the Native american attac.” |
| #14 EL | “Some benefits are they were dying.” |

*Patterns for Individuals*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Benefits | Challenges | Outcomes | Historical Accuracy |
| #5 R EL | Below Basic | Below Basic | Basic | Advanced |
| #1 EL | Basic | Advanced | Basic | Advanced |
| #33 | Proficient | Basic | Below Basic | Advanced |

The first student I chose to evaluate in detail is #5 who is a reclassified English language learner. #5 was the lowest performing student on this assessment. This student struggled to understand the concepts of benefits and challenges. For example, #5 discussed missions looking like villages and people in the boat not surviving as benefits and mentioned people discovering a new place and making friends with the Native Americans as a challenge. Although this student struggled with the conceptual knowledge he was able to provide historically accurate information but under the wrong categories. This student will need individual instruction in discussing what benefits, challenges and outcomes are. I would have an individual conference with the student to see what he thinks each of these words mean. If the student needs further clarification we will discuss these concepts using real world examples. If the students is then able to understand the concepts we may conference about his assessment, reading over the material and inquiring #5 if he would like to re-categorize any of the information.

The next student I analyzed was #1 because this student varied drastically in her score in each of the categories. This student excelled in providing four detailed example of challenges and her historical accuracy. In addition, overall the student understood the concepts of benefits, challenges, and outcomes but received a basic in benefits and challenges because of a lack of information. The student would benefit from a discussion of how to utilize the class tools such as the graphic organizer or personal notes to fill in her gaps of knowledge in areas. In addition, under benefits #1 listed Native American attacks. I previously mentioned a whole class activity in which students would sort strips of papers with benefits, challenges, and outcomes of settlements into what are benefits. This activity would be helpful for the student to discuss what a benefit is with a partner and discuss what were some benefits of settlement.

Lastly, I focused on student #3 because she too varied in her scores across the different categories. I found this student interesting because she understood the concepts of benefits and challenges but was the only student unable to mention an outcome. I would conference with this student and provide a page with different details about the settlements in terms of benefits, challenges, and outcomes. I would like to see if this student could categorize the information if it is already provided or if there is a conceptual misunderstanding. In addition, this student would benefit from the whole class activity regarding cause and effect with benefits and challenges and the outcome they produce.

**Conclusion:**

The process of assessing using a rubric, collaboration, calibration, and determining next steps was extremely useful in preparing me for my profession. I learned how difficult it can be to create an assessment prompt that accurately matches a rubric and vice versa. We all make assumptions when creating prompts and thinking of possible responses thus it is important to be as explicit as possible when setting expectations. In addition, the assessment process is important because it is an opportunity to evaluate one’s own teaching such as what material was presented well and what material must be revisited and presented in a different manner. Assessments are also great tools for determining not only student weaknesses but also student strengths. Through assessments an educator can learn how certain students must now be challenged and how to aid others in their understanding. I found it very helpful to collaborate on this activity with a group of my peers because it is similar to how we will be grading once we complete our program. It was helpful hearing other perspectives and discussing the different elements of the assessment. Lastly, I learned how to focus my attention on the content area of the assessment versus evaluating other skills. For example, some students had wonderful topic sentences and paragraph structure but lacked the social studies content in their essays. This assessment was about the social studies content rather than writing skills, thus a well-structured essay does not equate to knowledge of social studies. This was a wonderful learning experience in which I was able to develop and explore my assessment skills.