

Criterion C: Focus on Students and Environment

Master Teachers analyze individual and group student development to connect instruction to students’ needs, interests and prior knowledge. They strive to create an environment that engages learners in inquiry, promotes high levels of learning for all students and creates a culture of civility and success.

For a Master Teacher candidate to meet Criterion C, the candidate must demonstrate distinguished teaching focused on students and environment that has a direct impact on student learning for all students.

Written Narrative: Describe how you have demonstrated distinguished teaching through a focus on students and environment, fostering rich learning opportunities and creating a safe, enthusiastic learning environment in which all students can achieve at high levels.

Within your narrative, address the following:

- How you analyze individual and group student development in order to design instruction that meets learner needs at an appropriate level of development (1.1c)
- How you adapt the pace and depth of curriculum and instruction to meet the needs of those students whose performance is advanced or below level (1.5f)
- How you involve learners in self-assessment and goal setting to address gaps between performance and potential (3.5)
- How you create a classroom in which students take active roles in maintaining and enriching the environment that is conducive to learning (5.2f)
- How you effectively combine independent, collaborative, and whole class learning situations to maximize student understanding and learning (5.4e)
- How your focus on students and the environment has had an impact on student learning (1 and 5)

Candidates must provide labeled and referenced evidence to support their responses to this item.

Focus on Students and Environment Scoring Guide

2 points each	1 point each	0 points each
The teacher analyzes individual and group student development in order to design instruction that meets learner needs at an appropriate level of development. (1.1c)	The teacher demonstrates an understanding of student development to design instruction that meets learner needs.	The teacher does not use knowledge of student to develop or design instruction.
The teacher adapts the pace and depth of curriculum and instruction to meet the needs of those students whose performance is advanced or below level. (1.5f)	The teacher identifies approaches for students who have difficulty learning.	The teacher does not seek approaches for students who have difficulty learning or are advanced.
The teacher adapts the pace and depth of curriculum and instruction to meet the needs of those students whose performance is advanced or below level. (1.5f)	The teacher identifies approaches for students who have difficulty learning.	The teacher does not seek approaches for students who have difficulty learning or are advanced.
The teacher creates a classroom in which students take active roles in maintaining an enriching environment that is conducive to learning. (5.2f)	The teacher sets an expectation that students care and respect each other.	The teacher does not establish a respectful environment.

The teacher effectively combines independent, collaborative and whole-class learning situations to maximize student understanding and learning. (5.4e)	The teacher uses independent, collaborative and whole-class learning situations.	The teacher uses one learning strategy the majority of the time.
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Sample Written Narrative C1

As a second grade teacher, teaching reading it is imperative that I know my students. I have leveled reading books to make sure the student is being challenged yet applying the important reading skill that we are working on. For example, when we study non-fiction text and main idea, all the students are taught the skill, but use different leveled readers to apply the skill. I have a wide range of reading abilities in my classroom and have found this to be very successful because everyone is required to demonstrate proficiency with the skill but the reading text is at their instructional level. I am able to spend time with my groups of readers on a daily basis in order to keep me apprised of their individual progress. Then I am able to determine if my second grade class understands main idea and can apply it at their reading level. This approach allows for a wide variance of application to a wide range of learners. As you see in evidence E4, I have provided a student summary from the main idea selections for their respective levels. Three different levels of text were used. As noted the students are successful at identifying the main idea specific to their text. This way I am able to provide appropriate instruction that will meet my student's needs at their appropriate level of development.

Sample Written Narrative C1 Scoring:

This sample would receive a 2 point because the teacher does analyze individual and group student development in order to design instruction that meets learner needs at an appropriate level of development. This sample also addresses the adaptation of the depth of the curriculum and instruction to meet the needs of those students whose performance is advanced or below level.

The teacher provides the specific example of non-fiction text and main idea. Within teaching and designing the instruction the teacher accounts for individualized or differentiated learning opportunities within the lesson.

Sample Written Narrative C2

Being a middle school teacher has taught me the value of teaching my students to care and respect each other. I provide the students with their expectations and consequences the first day of school. They are also posted in my room as a quick reference if necessary. I work real hard to instill the kindness for each other in everything we do. I will not tolerate students talking poorly about another student, instead I encourage them to find the good in everyone and recognize it. If two students are arguing I use this foundation and the two individuals must be able to state something good about the other in addition to explaining their feelings and what led to the problem. I make sure I model appropriate behaviors as well for my students. I can't expect more of them than what I expect of myself.

Sample Written Narrative C2 Scoring:

This sample would receive a 1 point because it clearly speaks to the teacher creating an environment which expects students to care and respect each other.

This teacher describes how the expectations are set for the classroom to create the environment. The rules are posted with consequences. The teacher models appropriate behavior and encourages the students to find the good in everyone and recognize the student.

Possible Evidence of Teacher Work:

- Pre and post testing
- Student work
- Charting and graphing of data
- Teacher journaling of research/unit/project/plan
- Anecdotal documentation of both teacher and/or student work

Teacher Work/Instruction Planning Possibilities:

- A test unit on a specific type of differentiated instruction using measurable outcomes for an individual, small group, or whole class
- An integrated test unit on a specific core standards or strand from two or more content areas using measurable outcomes for an individual, small group, or whole class
- An action research project/unit on a specific core standard or strand using measurable outcomes for an individual, small group, or whole class
- Develop a curriculum/unit for social development to create a culture of civility and success using measurable outcomes for an individual, small group, or whole class
- Develop a behavior plan utilizing specific behavioral and classroom management techniques with measurable outcomes for an individual, small group, or whole class