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. **List the learning experience(s) you have selected for the 2 video clips** you are submitting. Identify the learning experience(s) by plan day/number.

   [Clip 1, my whole group clip, is from learning experience two (day two). My second clip, Clip 2, the small group clip, is from learning experience one (day one).]

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 children with varied needs and backgrounds, and challenge children to engage in learning?

   [To be a teacher means to play a large role in the balance of the classroom. This balance is made up of mutual respect, established relationships, and a positive space to grow and learn in. Establishing a positive learning environment is important for a teacher to be successful and for the development of respect within the classroom setting. I believe teachers need to take steps to foster a strong rapport with the students. In turn, the students will feel valued and confident coming into the classroom. Students will see the classroom as a space where they are heard, respected, and safe. In clip 1, students were able to discuss the different places in their communities where they see the three geometric shapes I put on the whiteboard: octagon, triangle, and circle. Students were able to share their ideas with their friends during the turn and talk. This demonstrated respect for the students because it made learning more meaningful and stimulated a discussion amongst the class. The students were able to think about times where they have seen these shapes outside of school, making the concept of geometry more personal. When it came to sharing about these ideas, the students were excited to share the different places they have seen the shapes. At 2:20 (clip 1) I established a positive learning environment by complementing the class on how well they finished their conversations and got silent for group share. Though not every student was completely silent, I find it creates a better space to learn and grow when you highlight the positive behaviors I see rather than the negative. At 2:50 the students begin to share about where they see the shapes in the environment. I got a response I wasn't quite prepared for. At 3:00, a student stated that a person in their group said the triangle was for ‘death.’ I was caught off guard by this, but I did know that in this community, if there is a natural disaster or a shooting in the area, and a house is targeted, they will spray paint a triangle on the door and inside the triangle they will list the deaths. I remembered seeing this as well. Instead of saying that comment was inappropriate or ignoring it, I acknowledged the comment as valuable and moved on to the next student. I found this was respectful for the student because now the student knows that they are able to process the hard things they see inside the classroom. Students know this is a safe place to share and make those connections. Throughout the students sharing (starting at 2:50 and continuing on) I was able to create a respectful environment and establish rapport by allowing students to share their different perspectives and ideas on the shapes they have seen in their world. The students developed mutual respect for each other by taking turns to talk, not talking over one another, and by having conversations with other students. At 3:26, A girl is trying to describe a ‘cross walk.’ Another student picks up on what she is trying to explain and teaches the student that it is called a cross walk (3:55). This shows that the

students have mutual respect for one another. The students are able to add on to the thinking to promote deeper context for what has been said. I see this again at 4:30. A student is explaining a shape he sees every morning on his way to school. At 4:55, a student teaches the speaker what the shape is called. This clip demonstrates that the environment is positive and that the students have a good rapport with the myself, the teacher, as well as with each other.]

3. Engaging Children in Learning

Refer to examples from the video clips in your responses to the prompts.

a. Explain how your instruction engaged children in

- language and literacy development, **AND**
- active, multimodal learning

[During clip 2, I am working with a small group on making geometry vocabulary booklets. The students are to write the definition of the term at the top in their own words and draw a picture of the term in the box. This activity promotes both language and literacy development as well as active and multimodal learning. Here, the students are looking at the term 'acute.' At 0:11, you see the students looking for the acute angles in the classroom. By searching for examples and allowing students to use the environment, I have promoted active learning. At 0:17 you see me asking thought provoking questions for the students to deepen their use of the triangle vocabulary they had just learned. I promote the active nature of children at 0:55 by having students draw the vocabulary term they just examined: acute. This activity is open-ended and allowed for several different types/perspectives of acute drawings. Here, the students are engaged in the learning as I help them extend and use the mathematical language through the interdisciplinary context of writing and drawing. At 1:08, I begin to help a girl on my left side. This student drew a right angle instead of an acute angle. I was able to link the language we just learned about the different types of triangles (the students prior knowledge) to the interdisciplinary context of drawing to get the student to think about what changes she needed to make to her triangle to get it to be an acute triangle. The student was still not quite understanding the concept with words, neither was the student next to her. Therefore, I changed my mode of teaching and made it more visual (this is often a good comprehension strategy for english language learners). At 2:04, I asked the student to move my fingers to make an acute angle. This provided the students with a manipulative, both kinesthetic and visual, to help them grasp the idea that an acute angle was less than a right angle of 90 degrees. At 2:18 I promoted multimodal learning by having them verbally state to me what they drew. This was the catalyst for the students writing the definition in their own words. Both of the girls I am working with in this moment are English Language Learners and struggle with verbalizing their thoughts. By scaffolding and having a discussion about it, we are able to come up with the sentence they are going to write. I extend the students usage of the vocabulary even further at 3:15. The students sentence was lacking some key details of the definition. I extended her thinking by asking more in-depth questions about the angles and sides. Once the student realized what was missing, she was able to add it on to her sentence. This clip demonstrates how this learning experience had students engaged in language and literacy development through active and multimodal learning.]

b. Describe how your instruction linked children's development, prior learning, and personal, cultural, and community assets with new learning.

[Clip 1 was filmed during learning experience two. Therefore, the students have now been exposed to some of the different kinds of polygons. During clip one, you will see the students discussing places they see these shapes in their environment. The students will use their prior knowledge of shapes and their personal knowledge of their community and home life to answer the question of "where do you see these shapes in your environment?"

Students worked with a partner or a group to discuss this question. A girl in the front did not have a partner so I paired up with her. At 1:08, we begin our discussion. She says, “I see this one..” pointing to the octagon. I ask, “ok, where?” and she states, “a stop sign.” We continue on with the following shapes. She states that she sees the circle in cookies at the grocery store. At 5:20 the same student is sharing to the class some of the items we identified as those shapes on the board. She states that the circle is for a cookie and that the triangle can also be found in pizza slices. These are examples of students connecting their home, personal, and community life to their prior knowledge of these polygons. In an effort for students to make a connection as a whole, at 5:27, I referenced that the pizza slices at our school identify a polygon not listed on the board. All the students were able to relate to this connection because they have all seen the pizza slices at the school. This is how my learning experience linked prior learning with personal, cultural, and community assets to form a deeper understanding of the geometric shapes.]

4. Deepening Children’s Learning during Instruction

Refer to examples from the video clips in your explanations.

a. Explain how you **elicited and built on children’s responses** to promote children’s language and literacy development through active learning.

[Throughout clip 1, I was able to facilitate meaningful discussions with the students. I first elicited a discussion at :30 for students to turn and talk about the different shapes they see in their environment. At 1:08, I paired up with a girl who didn’t have a partner. This exchange of dialogue showed that I was able to elicit and build on her responses. I asked the initial question to get the discussion started, “Where do you see these shapes?” She replied “On stop signs.” I repeated her exact words, in order to validate her thinking, and agreed with her by saying “I see that too.” I then elicited more discussion by asking “what else do you see?” Here, we are building off of each other in order to promote literacy development. However, I was not the only individual building off of what students were saying. Students began to build off of one another as well. We see the first instance of this at 3:26. A student is having a hard time explaining the object in the environment she is thinking that represents the triangle. I repeat what she is saying and ask clarifying questions in order to provoke more discussion. At 3:56, another student adds on to what the first student was saying. She describes the object using descriptive language and states the name of the object. At 4:21, another student built off of the previous response by saying that it could also mean that “kids are playing soccer.” I added in to deepen their understanding of the sign and stated, “right. when kids are at play.” Another example of students building off of one another is at 4:30. This student begins to describe a sign that is a circle. He states that he sees this sign every morning on his way to school and it has a truck on it. He thinks the sign tells us how many trucks can be on the bridge at once. I call on a student who is engaged that is wanting to add on to the students words. The second student begins talking at 4:57. I allow the students a chance to build on one another by saying, “Jason is adding on to what you are saying, can you tell Miguel?” By saying this, I am promoting children to build their language and literacy development by facilitating a discussing between the students. The student goes on to tell what the sign is. I validate his answer when he is done speaking. This is how I promote language and literacy development by eliciting and building on children’s responses and by facilitating discussion among students.]

b. Explain how you made interdisciplinary connections in ways that deepen children’s development of language and literacy.

[During clip 2, the students worked on making their geometry vocabulary booklets. I connected mathematics to writing and art. This is a way I made the learning experience interdisciplinary. By translating this mathematical vocabulary to writing and art, I am allowing students to use multiple modalities and interdisciplinary connections for the purpose of

finding meaningful connections to the geometric vocabulary terms they are learning. From 0:01 to 0:59 I engage the students in discussion about the term on the top of their page. I use the different tools in the room as well as the room itself to stimulate connections to the term 'acute.' At 0:59, after we have reviewed our prior knowledge of what an acute angle is, I ask them to draw the acute angle. After the students have drawn, 2:17, I ask them to explain what they drew. By eliciting discussion, students are able to think through the process they took to make the drawing and create a definition for the term they drew. Once the students have developed a sentence for what they drew, at 3:00 they are able to write a definition. In this clip we see interdisciplinary connections through discussion by reviewing prior knowledge, art by drawing the term, discussion again by verbalizing the process the student underwent in their drawing as well as writing the actual definition of the term listed.]

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 to better support children's learning related to the central focus? Be sure to address the needs of all children, including those who need greater support or challenge.

Consider the variety of learners in your class/group who may require different strategies/ supports (such as children with IEPs or 504 plans, English language learners, children at different points in the developmental continuum, and/or gifted children).

[There are two parts to the central focus of the learning segments: 'learning about shapes helps us see mathematics in art and the real world,' and 'shapes and angles help students become more creative and critical thinkers.' In light of my central focus, I would make some changes to the learning segments in the clips. Due to the majority of the classroom being English Language Learners, I find that it would benefit the students greatly to have some visuals of the objects in their community for clip 1. If I were to reteach this lesson (learning experience two), I would include real examples the shapes listed that are in their community. I would also have accurate examples of the shapes rather than just simply drawing them at 0:05. After the students had some time to share their thinking, at 5:35, I would've shown some pictures of shapes I had found in their environment. This would help the students to make more meaningful connections. I would also have included some pictures of shapes in art at this time as well, so the students could see the different places shapes can be seen. These changes would benefit the diverse learners in the classroom as well as the group as a whole.

In clip 2 (learning experience one), a change I would make is to have the students make more connections to finding real life examples of acute angles at 0:05. I briefly asked where I could find acute angles in the classroom and moved on quick without multiple responses. I could tie in the first part of my central focus by displaying some acute angles we may see in art pieces or have a place already identified in the classroom to show the students. I believe meaningful experiences make learning stick much better, therefore, by showing real life examples, we are allowing students to make those connections to objects that are familiar to them. This change would not only help the ELL's in the room but also the group as a whole.

Another change I would make in clip 2 is the way the students were seated. A student whom was barley seen throughout this clip was not participating as much as I had expected. A change I would make is to engage that student more, to ask that student more questions, and to get that student involved in the learning in order to provide more challenge if needed. It is my goal that every student is engaged and actively participating in the learning experience.]

b. Explain why you think these changes would improve children's learning. Support your explanation with evidence of children's learning **AND** principles from developmental theory and/or research.

[Lev Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory of Development has become a major influence on the field of psychology and education (Woolfolk, A., 2004). This theory states that students learn through social interactions and their culture through what he calls 'dialogues.' Vygotsky is known for his idea that "human activities take place in cultural settings and cannot be understood apart from these settings" (Woolfolk, A., 45). Therefore, our culture helps shape our thinking processes. This justifies my reasoning for wanting to bring in real examples of shapes in the students community. By bringing in real examples, students would be able to interact with their culture and their communities to delve deeper into the central focus of this learning segment.

Vygotsky also emphasized the importance of cultural tools in thinking processes. Vygotsky believes that students learn through the different cultural tools: language, media, television, etc. Vygotsky believes that higher-level processing is "mediated by psychological tools, such as language, signs, and symbols" (Woolfolk, A., 2004). After receiving scaffolding, children internalize the use of the cultural tools, and are better able to utilize the tools in the future on their own (Woolfolk, A., 2004). Therefore, by providing visual tools that are from their culture and community, I can improve the students learning by promoting higher level thinking as well as giving independence for students to use these tools again in the future.

Visuals and think time are great strategies for English Language Learners to improve comprehension and understanding. According to Claude Goldenberg, English Language learners work best when they are given "guided practice and are involved in a variety of techniques that provide hands-on practice. The students are provided with support such as prediction guides, *visual aides*, and other supplemental materials." Therefore, my idea for providing more visual aids and think time when asking questions is proven to help English Language Learners delve deeper into the learning segment while providing more support to deepen their thinking.This is how making changes would improve and support children's learning.]

Citations

Woolfolk, Anita. (2004). *Educational Psychology*. (9th ed). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Goldenberg, Claude, "Teaching English Language Learners: What the Research Does - And Does Not - Say" (2008). ESED 5234 - Master List. 27.