



Making Good Choices In Special Education

A Support Guide for edTPA Candidates

October 2013 (v2)

SCALE

Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, & Equity

edTPA™

edTPA stems from a twenty-five-year history of developing performance-based assessments of teaching quality and effectiveness. The Teacher Performance Assessment Consortium (Stanford and AACTE) acknowledges the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium, and the Performance Assessment for California Teachers for their pioneering work using discipline-specific portfolio assessments to evaluate teaching quality. The edTPA handbooks have been developed with thoughtful input from over six hundred teachers and teacher educators representing various national design teams, national subject matter organizations (AAHPERD, ACEI, ACTFL, AMLE, CEC, IRA, NAEYC, NAGC, NCSS, NCTE, NCTM, NSTA), and content validation reviewers. The edTPA is built for the profession by the profession. All contributions are recognized and appreciated.

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Introduction

This support guide will help you make good choices as you develop artifacts and commentaries for the edTPA assessment. By reading and reflecting on the questions and suggestions in *Making Good Choices in Special Education* you will develop a deeper understanding of the assessment and have many of your questions addressed. This document will help you think about how to plan, instruct, assess, and reflect on student learning, not only for completing edTPA, but also for effective teaching well into the future.

As indicated in the subject-specific edTPA handbooks, you can and should discuss with your teacher preparation instructors how the various aspects of edTPA connect with each other and to your preparation coursework and field experiences. However, the specific choices that go into the planning, instruction, and assessment tasks that are part of edTPA should solely reflect your thinking, based upon your knowledge of pedagogy and your students' needs. Knowledge about your students and how you will support their learning should be your major focus.

Making Good Choices examines the three tasks of edTPA within an interactive cycle of planning, instruction, and assessment. On the pages that follow, each section of this document addresses **key decision points** that you will encounter as you complete your edTPA. Use the live links from the questions in the Key Decisions chart to locate answers that inform your decisions. **Bold text in the answers provides specific directions to guide your choices.**

Task 1: Planning for Instruction and Assessment

Key Decisions	
Planning Ahead	How do I get started with my edTPA preparation? How do I represent my thinking and teaching in writing?
Planning For Alignment and Learning	How do I select a focus learner? How do I select a learning segment? How do I select the two learning targets and the lesson objectives for the targets? What do I do after I select my learning targets? What else should I think about when planning lessons? What should I include in my lesson plans? What if I have particular lessons that I am required to teach in a prescribed way? What if my school or grade level has a standard curriculum I must follow?
Knowledge of the Focus Learner	What do I need to include as baseline data? What information should I convey about my focus learner? How do I support the assertions I make about my focus learner and the decisions I make regarding his/her learning needs and strengths? How specific do my references to research and theory have to be?
Communication Skill (Function)/ Demands	How do I identify the communication skill (function) and other communication demands for the primary learning target?
Planning Assessments	What kinds of assessments should I choose for my edTPA learning segment?

Planning Ahead

How do I get started with my edTPA preparation?

Time management is critical to the successful completion of edTPA. Begin planning for your edTPA assessment as soon as possible. Do not procrastinate. Since it is important to understand the whole edTPA assessment before you begin, read through all of the materials in the edTPA handbook for your subject area, including the rubrics and any other support materials you may have been given by your preparation program, before you begin the first task.

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How do I represent my thinking and teaching in writing?

While the scoring rubrics do not address the quality of your writing (nor will you be penalized for errors in spelling, grammar, or syntax), you should be mindful that your written work reflects your thinking and your professionalism. Try to let your own voice come through in your writing. Writing errors may change or cloud the meaning of your commentaries, so proofreading is essential. **When writing your edTPA commentaries, consider the following guidelines:**

- **Read each prompt carefully and be sure to respond to all parts of the questions using simple straightforward prose.** Incomplete, superficial, and unelaborated responses are not sufficient. Although there may be a few exceptions, one or two sentences for an answer to a prompt will not contain enough information for a reviewer to understand your intentions, what or how you have taught, or what your focus learner has learned.
- **Move beyond summarizing your classroom practice.** Write your commentaries in a way that shows you are able to understand how to support your focus learner's development of knowledge and skills, as well as to identify and analyze the evidence of his/her learning.
- **Provide specific, concrete examples to support your assertions.** Do not merely repeat prompt or rubric language as your responses to commentary prompts—you must always include examples and evidence of YOUR teaching. If you make assertions about your focus learner in your responses to commentary prompts, always include examples and evidence of the support your assertions. For example, if you suggest that your focus learner was able to understand a concept, then you should provide concrete examples from the focus learner's written or oral work that demonstrate and support your claim. You might point to a specific aspect of the focus learner's response or behavior on an assessment that supports your statement. Your assertion that the focus learner understands what you have taught must be backed up with evidence that you specify.

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Planning for Alignment and Learning

How do I select a focus learner?

The focus learner you select for the Special Education edTPA **must have an exceptionality identified on his/her individualized educational program/plan**. You should identify a learner with varied challenges that will provide opportunities for you to demonstrate your skill in planning, instruction, and assessment. **When selecting a learner, do not choose a learner who has few needs.** Doing so will create difficulties for you in providing complete responses to commentary prompts. Instead, select a learner who represents the variety/range of learner needs in your caseload or class. **The focus learner you select must have iep goals in two or more curricular areas. The table below provides examples of curricular areas and iep goals.** (See your edTPA handbook for more descriptions of curricular areas.) Finally, because you are required to document your focus learner's learning over a number of days, you will want to choose a focus learner who typically has good attendance.

Examples of curricular areas	Examples of iep goals in each area
Academics	By May 2014, the student will independently make accurate predictions about what will happen next in stories, movies, or cartoon strips 3 out of 4 trials for 3 consecutive class sessions
Functional academics	By May 2014, the student will independently purchase single items by using "next dollar up strategy" 100% of the time for 5 consecutive purchases.
Independence	By May 2014, without prompting, the student will identify and request disability-related accommodations in academic settings 100% of opportunities for one semester. By May 2014, the student will use the appropriate eating utensil for various foods 80% of the time for 3 days. By May 2014, the student will make progress towards participating in collaborative conversations by maintaining proper care of her hearing aids as evidenced by independently storing them and cleaning them properly at the end of the day with less than 2 reminders per week for 8 consecutive weeks
Communication	By May 2014, the student will participate in small group discussions, taking turns and staying on topic with no more than 2 verbal prompts 2 out of 3 group discussions for four school days. By May 2014, the student will use his communication device to express activity preference 3 out of 4 opportunities for 5 days. By May 2014, the student will make progress towards answering questions about what a speaker says by attending to the interpreter in a general education classroom as evidenced by keeping eyes on the interpreter with less than 2 reminders per session, 3 out 5 sessions per

	week for 6 consecutive weeks.
Learning strategies	By May 2014, when reading assigned text selection, the student will independently use SQ3R procedure (survey, question, read, recite, review) to improve comprehension 80% of time for 5 consecutive days as recorded on self-monitoring checklist. By May 2014, when completing a writing assignment, the student will independently self-correct work using a writing-mechanics-checklist with 90% accuracy, 2 out of 3 assignments for 5 days.
Expanded core curriculum	By May 14, the student will demonstrate correct placement of fingers on braillewriter, with 75% accuracy for 5 class sessions.
Vocational/Career	By May 2014, the student will independently complete all work tasks using a picture prompt system 100% of work shifts for 5 consecutive work shifts.
Other: motor, social skills, community, etc.	By May 2014, using a finger-thumb pincer grasp, the student will pick up small objects in 4 out of 5 trials for 3 days. By May 2014, the student will appropriately acknowledge peer-initiated interactions, with no more than one prompt, 100% of initiations for 5 free-time activities. By May 2014, when disagreeing with a peer, the student will remain calm, state his position, and utilize a conflict resolution strategy 90% of opportunities for 3 consecutive days, as measured by teacher observation.

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How do I select a learning segment?

When selecting a learning segment for your edTPA, identify your focus learner's curricular areas for instruction. The learning segment you choose should be consistent with your normal teaching responsibilities. The learning segment itself will likely be part of a larger unit of instruction. In addition, the learning segment should provide opportunities for instruction and assessment of both a primary and secondary/supporting learning target for your focus learner. **As with any learning segment, decisions about what to teach should be driven by what the focus learner is expected to learn at his/her particular grade level and/or as reflected in the learner's individualized education program/plan. You will want to think carefully about how much content to address in your edTPA learning segment.** This is a significant decision about manageability, not only for the scope of your edTPA assessment, but also for the capacity of your focus learner to learn within the allotted time. **District guidelines, school goals, and student interests must be considered as well. While your cooperating teacher must not choose a learning segment for you, his/her input can be useful in guiding you to consider all of the relevant factors in your selection.**

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How do I select the two learning targets and the lesson objectives for those targets?

After identifying the content of the learning segment, you will need to select two learning targets: a primary learning target and a supporting learning target. This selection of learning targets is based on the work that your focus learner is doing.

For a focus learner who has academic/functional academic learning needs on the iep, the primary learning target should be an academic target or functional academic target. The supporting learning target should be from another curricular area that is needed to help the learner access instruction or demonstrate learning in relation to the primary learning target. **At least one of the two learning targets must be related to an iep goal.**

For a focus learner who is not working on academic or functional academic content, the two learning targets must be from different curricular areas, with one designated as primary and the other as secondary. For this focus learner, both learning targets must be related to a goal on the iep.

The lesson objectives are developed based on the learning targets, the baseline data collected for each learning target, and what might be achieved in 3-5 lessons.

Some examples of primary and secondary learning targets in different curricular areas are shown in the tables below. The tables include the standard, iep goal (if applicable), and lesson objectives that correspond to each learning target. The first set of examples are for a focus learner who is working on academic or functional academic content.

Example 1 -- Academic Primary Learning Target: Retell 3-part story.	
Academic Standard	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1.2 Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.
iep Goal	Student will recall main ideas and supporting details of a story 100% of time, 4 out of 5 stories.
Lesson Objectives	Responding to model & verbal prompts (beginning, middle, end), student will accurately sequence 3 pictures of story events as a short story is being read out loud, 2 out of 3 short stories. (lesson 1) Responding to model and verbal prompts (beginning, middle, end), student will accurately sequence 3 pictures of story events after a short story has been read out loud, 2 out of 3 short stories. (lesson 2) Responding to verbal prompts (beginning, middle, end), student will accurately sequence 3 pictures of story events after a short story has been read out-loud, 2 out of 3 short stories. (lesson 3)
Supporting learning target: Use verbal rehearsal to follow instructions	
Academic Standard	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.
iep Goal	Not required
Lesson Objectives	Student will accurately repeat 3-step instructions 2 out of 3 times, with no more than one teacher repetition. (lesson 1)

	Student will accurately repeat 3-step instructions 2 out of 3 times, with no more than one prompt. (lesson 2) Student will accurately repeat 3-step instructions 2 out of 3 times (Lesson 3).
Example 2 -- Functional Academic Primary Learning Target: Read men and women's bathroom door signage by matching and naming sign pictures to door signage	
Alternate Standard	[State] Language Arts A. 4.1 Use effective reading strategies to achieve their purposes in reading: Use a variety of strategies and word recognition skills, including rereading, finding context clues, applying knowledge of letter-sound relationships, and analyzing word structures
Iep Goal	Student will increase reading skills by reading 10 new community words/symbols in 2 different community contexts, 3 consecutive opportunities for each word.
Lesson Objectives	From an array of sign pictures, student will accurately select and name Women's bathroom sign 4 out of 5 times. (lesson 1) From an array of sign pictures, student will accurately select and name Women and Men's bathroom signs 4 out of 5 times. (lesson 2) When in front of bathroom doors in 2 different settings, student will accurately match and name sign picture to door signage, with no more than one prompt, 2 out of 4 times. (lesson 3)
Supporting learning target: Maintain focus on current task	
Academic Standard	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally
Iep Goal	Not required
Lesson Objectives	When presented with instructional materials and a request, student will look at materials and comply with request within 5 seconds, with no more than 2 prompts (verbal and/or pointing), 2 out of 3 times. (lessons 1, 2, and 3).

The next set of examples are for a focus learner with primary learning needs related to non-academic areas (e.g., vocational, social, motor, communication, expanded core curriculum):

Example 3 -- Non-Academic Primary Learning Target: Use a checklist to independently complete all tasks at job site	
Career and Technical Education Standard	[State] Standard 3a: Universal Foundation Skills Students will demonstrate mastery of the foundation skills and competencies essential for success in the workplace.
Iep Goal	Student will independently identify and complete job tasks during a given work day/shift 100% of the time for 5 consecutive work shifts.

Lesson Objectives	While performing job duties as instructed by job coach, for each work task, student will dictate work tasks and steps to his job coach. (lesson 1) While performing job duties, student will use the checklist and job coach prompts to complete each task, dictating changes that need to be made to the checklist. (lesson 2) Student will independently use the checklist to complete all work tasks with no more than 3 prompts during the work shift. (lesson 3)
Secondary Learning Target -- Communicate work-related needs	
Career and Technical Education Standard	[State] Standard 3a: Universal Foundation Skills Students will demonstrate mastery of the foundation skills and competencies essential for success in the workplace.
iep Goal	Student will appropriately communicate work-related needs to coworkers or supervisor 90% of the time.
Lesson Objectives	During practice activities, student will identify the need for more work materials for 3 consecutive trials. (lesson 1) During practice activities, with no more than 2 prompts, student will verbally identify missing/empty work materials for 3 consecutive trials. (lesson 2) During practice activities, student will accurately request needed materials for 3 consecutive trials. (lesson 3)
Example 4 -- Non-Academic Primary Learning Target: Use scissors to cut lines	
Early Learning Standard	[State] B.EL. 2 Exhibits eye-hand coordination, strength, control, and object manipulation
iep/IFSP Goal	Student will use scissors to independently cut out basic shapes, 4 out of 5 trials for 3 days.
Lesson Objectives	With no more than 2 prompts, student will hold paper and scissors in a "thumbs-up" position and cut along short, straight lines, 5 consecutive times. (lesson 1) With no more than 2 prompts, student will hold paper and scissors in a "thumbs up" position and cut along straight and curved lines, deviating no more than ¼" from the lines 5 consecutive times. (lesson 2) Student will independently hold paper and scissors in a "thumbs up" position and cut along straight and curved lines, deviating no more than ¼" from the lines 5 consecutive times. (lesson 3)
Secondary Learning Target: Maintain eye contact with scissors	
Early Learning Standard	[State]: C.EL. 1 Uses senses to take in, experience, integrate, and regulate responses to the environment

iep/IFSP goal	Student will improve safe use of objects by directing and maintaining eye gaze when reaching for and manipulating objects 100% of time for 5 days.
Lesson Objectives	With no more than 1 prompt, student will look at scissors when reaching for scissors, 3 out of 4 times. (lesson 1) With no more than 2 prompts, student will look at scissors when she picks them up and the entire time she is cutting, 3 out of 4 times. (lesson 2) When no more than 1 prompt, student will look at scissors when she picks them up, during the entire time she is cutting, and when she puts them down, 3 out of 4 times. (lesson 3)

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What do I do after I select my learning targets?

After determining the learning targets for the learning segment, you will create a daily measurable objective related to each learning target and identify the objectives on the lesson plans. **Daily objectives must be measurable, describing what you expect your learner to exhibit by the end of the lesson.** You are asked to identify the standard(s) (e.g., early childhood, academic content, modified, alternative) that you will address in the learning segment. Though you may find many standards that relate tangentially to your planned learning segment, **choose only one standard for each learning target.** In your commentary, **list the standard(s) you have selected as central to the primary and supporting/secondary learning targets. You may include the standard(s) on your lessons plans, but that is not required for this assessment.** If your state does not have early childhood, modified, or alternative standards, there may not be a relevant standard related to some learning targets. In that case, you should state that there are no relevant standards for the selected curricular area.

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What else should I think about when planning lessons?

You will be asked to **describe the strategies used to foster greater independence for your focus learner – maintenance, generalization, self-determination, self-directed learning, self-instruction, etc. Think about what you can be doing to support the focus learner to move toward greater independence, even if the learner has not yet mastered the targeted knowledge/skills.** For example, you can model or prompt the learner to focus on cues to help shape a response or direct the learner to engage in verbal rehearsal to set the stage for him/her being able to act independently.

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What should I include in my lesson plans?

You will submit lesson plans for every lesson taught and documented in your edTPA learning segment. Using your preparation program's lesson plan format as a guide, the plans should provide enough detail so that educators scoring your edTPA can determine the sequence of the lesson objectives, the plan for assessment, and a description of what you and the focus learner will be doing during each lesson. If you are teaching a group, including working as a co-teacher, write the plans for the group lesson. In your plans, you may have specific strategies and adaptations for learners other than the focus learner. If, however, you are over the lesson-plan page limit (i.e., 4 pages per lesson plan) **you may remove the strategies or adaptations that apply solely to other learners** and include only those that apply to the focus learner. Make sure that the specific strategies and adaptations for the focus learner are clearly delineated in the group plan.

Be sure to address all lesson plan components described in your edTPA handbook, while making sure that each submitted plan is **no more than 4 pages in length**. If you are using a lesson plan model that extends beyond that limit, you will need to condense your plans or excerpt the necessary components listed below. As noted in the Evidence Chart found in your edTPA handbook, planned assessments/data collection forms should be submitted as separate artifacts.

Each day's lesson plan should include:

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Two lesson objectives (one for each learning target) with measurable criteria | • Instructional strategies and learning tasks (including any modifications and adaptations for the focus learner) |
| • A list of assessment tools and data collection procedures to monitor progress toward both lesson objectives | • A list of instructional resources and materials (including modifications or adaptations for the focus learner) |

Note: Do not put explanations and rationales in your lessons plans. Scorers will not search your lesson plans for explanations and rationales. Explain your thinking and justification for plans in your responses to the commentary prompts.

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**What if I have particular lessons that I am required to teach in a prescribed way?
What if my school or grade level has a standard curriculum I must follow?**

Many teachers teach lessons that are from published or prescriptive curriculum guides that are required in a particular district, school, or department. In some cases, pedagogy is prescribed by the curriculum or iep. If this is the case for you, **your plans and commentary should describe the requirements and also address both how you selected or modified curriculum materials with your focus learner's background, strengths, and needs in mind and how you adapted a lesson to meet your focus**

learner's learning needs (e.g., provided alternative examples, asked additional questions, offered supplementary activities).

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Knowledge of the Focus Learner

What do I need to include as baseline data?

You need to have baseline data of your focus student's knowledge and/or skills related to both the primary and the secondary/supporting learning targets. **Baseline data is crucial to show learner progress as well as to justify strategies and supports. You can either collect the data yourself prior to planning the learning segment or you can obtain information from your cooperating or master teacher or relevant records. When possible, collect baseline data that will mirror that which will be collected in the assessment at the end of the learning segment.** Academic and functional academic learning targets should have baseline data from a test, performance assessment, or assignment. Baseline data for other learning targets is likely to come from a performance assessment or record of performance.

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What information should I convey about my focus learner?

In addition to the baseline data you collect about your focus learner, you need to provide other information about your focus learner. The Planning Task requires you to demonstrate your **depth of knowledge of your focus learner in relation to the two learning targets you plan to teach. Making casual references or surface level connections to the learner's background, interests, strengths, and learning needs is not enough.** When describing how your knowledge of the focus learner affects your instructional and support decisions for Task 1, **your response should provide detail about your focus learner's prior learning/experiences, development, and strengths (including personal, cultural, and community assets) in addition to his/her learning needs. Your written commentary and lesson plans should reveal what you plan to do in the learning segment to capitalize on your focus learner's strengths and to meet his/her varied needs.**

Be sure that your descriptions are based on your observations of your focus learner and not on assumptions or stereotypes associated with his/her age or ethnic, cultural, or socio-economic background. A good way to ensure you are avoiding stereotypes or assumptions is to ask yourself if you can back up your assertions with evidence, and then be sure to include that evidence in your responses.

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How do I support the assertions I make about my focus learner and the decisions I make regarding his/her learning needs and strengths?

Provide specific, concrete examples to support your assertions. It is vital that you use **concrete examples** to support your assertions. When describing your focus learner's strengths, personal/cultural/community assets or their prior academic/functional academic learning, specifically describe what the asset or prior learning encompasses and how it is related to your learning segment. In order to support your explanations, refer to the baseline data and the instructional materials and lesson plans you have included as part of Task 1.

Do not merely repeat prompt or rubric language as your responses to commentary prompts—you must always include examples and evidence of YOUR teaching.

Provide specific and concrete examples of strengths and needs from your focus learner's prior written, oral, or demonstrated work that demonstrate and support your assertion. Two examples in different curricular areas are as follows:

Academic: *When tested at the beginning of the year, Terry could read 24 simple CVC words independently. By January, he was reading 62 words correctly with several self-corrects. He is now working on CVCe words to reach his iep goal of 75 CVC and CVCe words read correctly by the end of the year.*

Vocational: *Sonya is good about using her checklist to complete regular tasks in her work placement. However, if she completes these tasks early, she does not check to see if there are additional tasks that could be done. She also did not notify her supervisor last week when she was sick. She gets very upset when she makes mistakes, and shuts down. Therefore, I am working with her on communication in the workplace, identifying different scenarios and using role-play and error prevention to help her learn what she might say.*

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How specific do my references to research and theory have to be?

When justifying your instructional choices in your plans, reference the theories and research you have learned in courses in your preparation program or elsewhere. Draw upon educational philosophy and **specific** theories of development, learning, group work, and motivation, as well as conceptions and research-based practices of the discipline you are teaching. **You do not need to use formal citations, but you should explain the theoretical concepts and lines of research that support/inform your instructional decisions. Do not merely name-drop (e.g., Vygotsky or Bloom said), cite a textbook author, or describe a concept without making an explicit and well-developed connection between the theory or research finding and your plans for instruction and knowledge of your focus learner. Be sure your justification centers on instructional and support choices that move the learner toward meeting the lesson objectives.**

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Communication Skill (Function)/Demands

How do I identify the communication skill (function) and other communication demands for the primary learning target?

Communication demands of a learning task include the receptive communication skills (i.e., listening; reading text, pictures, or signs), expressive communication skills (i.e., speaking, writing, demonstrating), and/or representational communication skills (e.g., symbols, notation, gestures, facial expressions) needed by the focus learner in order to engage in and complete the learning task successfully.

Communication demands are so embedded in instructional activities that you may take many for granted.

The communication skill (function) is basically the PURPOSE or reason for communicating in a learning task. In other words, what major communication skill does the focus learner need to use to participate in the learning tasks and communicate his/her understanding of content? Often, the standards and/or objectives for the learning segment will include communication skills embedded in the lesson objectives for the content to be learned in the form of verbs (i.e., explain, signal, compare, argue, request, select). Choose one communication skill (function) that the focus learner will need to develop in order to deepen learning across the learning segment for the primary learning target. If the primary learning target is academic/functional academic, the selected communication skill (function) should reflect the receptive and expressive language of the discipline represented in the academic learning target.

You are also asked to identify additional communication demands involving **vocabulary, as well as syntax, social use, and/or situational expectations, that the focus learner needs to develop in order to effectively use the targeted communication skill (function) during the learning segment.**

Vocabulary refers to words/symbols/signs/behaviors that represent information, concepts, meanings, and feelings.

Syntax is the set of conventions for organizing words, phrases, and symbols together into structures (e.g., sentences, formulas, staves in music). For example, syntax refers to the set of conventions for organizing symbols, words, and phrases together into structures (e.g., words composed of letters or braille symbols, sentences, tables, formulas, sequenced pictures on a picture board). Syntax for the structure of a sentence refers to its length, word order, grammar, arrangement of phrases, active or passive voice, etc.

Social use of communication is using communication for different purposes (e.g., establishing relationships, communicating intent or emotion, participating in activities) and changing communication to meet the needs of the listener/receiver. Social use includes the verbal and nonverbal aspects of expressive and receptive communication. Appropriately decoding and responding to nonverbal signals that communicate when it is a learner's turn in a game or class discussion reflects a social use demand.

Situational expectations are rules and conventions associated with communication in specific situations. In an academic context, this is referred to as discourse, and carries expectations of the use of particular, often subject-specific, terms and formats (e.g., using complete sentences when writing reports, following particular formats for science lab reports or for showing solutions to mathematical problems). In other types of situations, it means that learners must adjust various aspects of their communication (choice of words; expressive behavior; tone, intensity, or volume of voice; timing, etc.) to meet the situational demands. For example, a focus learner must learn how to adjust her/his tone of voice or vocabulary when talking with an employer as compared to talking with friends.

Examine your instructional materials (texts, assessments, and other resources), instructional setting, and learning tasks. Identify the specific vocabulary, syntax, social use of communication, and/or situational expectations related to the targeted communication skill (function) that you will need to teach to ensure that your focus learner can engage in learning tasks and demonstrate understanding during your learning segment.

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Planning Assessments

What kinds of assessments should I choose for my edTPA learning segment?

The assessments and daily assessment records for your selected learning segment should be aligned with both learning targets for your focus learner. They should provide opportunities for students to show their understanding of content or skills related to all the lesson objectives you will teach. **You must include both formal and informal assessments throughout the learning segment.**

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Planning Task Key Points

What to Include	What to Avoid
• A focus learner who has learning needs in two different areas • TWO learning targets (primary academic/functional academic and supporting OR non-academic/non-functional academic primary and secondary) • Standards and iep goal(s) for the learning targets, as directed • One lesson objective for each learning target, in the daily lesson plans • Rationale for your instructional choices (all rationale should be written in your commentary, not in your lesson plans) • Explicit justification of why your instructional strategies, materials, and planned supports are appropriate for YOUR focus learner • Up to 11 pages of commentary • Lesson plans that are a maximum of 4 pages each	• Deficit or stereotypic description of the focus learner • Content inaccuracies • Lack of alignment between iep goals, standards, learning targets, lesson objectives, learning tasks, and/or assessments

Task 2: Instructing and Engaging the Focus Learner

Key Decisions	
Videorecording	What if videotaping is not allowed in my placement? What are my professional responsibilities for maintaining confidentiality? What are the features of a quality edTPA video? How do I prepare my edTPA videorecording for my learning segment? What resources do I need to consider (equipment, software, and tutorials)? Which video formats are acceptable?
Learning Environment	What do I look for when selecting clips that demonstrate respect and rapport? How do I demonstrate a positive learning environment that supports and challenges the focus learner?
Engaging the Focus Learner	How do I select my video clip(s) to show active engagement of the focus learner in developing knowledge and skills related to the primary learning target?
Deepening Learning	How do I show that I am deepening the focus learner's understanding of knowledge and skills related to the primary learning target?
Analyzing Teaching Effectiveness	What is important to remember as I identify changes I would make to the learning segment?

Videorecording

What if videorecording is not allowed in my placement?

Some placement settings (e.g., psychiatric facilities, juvenile correctional institutions, hospitals) do not allow videorecording for safety or security reasons. If you are placed in one of these settings with such a policy, then contact your edTPA coordinator for guidance in developing alternative evidence. **Candidates are expected to provide videotape evidence of instruction for all other placement settings. If**

videorecording is not allowed by a district, school, or institutional policy in a setting not listed above, then contact your edTPA coordinator immediately to gain assistance in securing permission or to find another placement.

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What are my professional responsibilities for maintaining confidentiality?

You are required to collect consent forms for **all** learners - not just the focus learner (unless there are no other learners in the video) – and from any adults who appear in your edTPA video clip(s). Unless the learner is over 18 and able to provide consent, a parent or legal guardian should sign consent forms for learners. This is a professional responsibility that should not be ignored. Your program will provide you with a consent form to use. It is also vitally important that you only use the video for the purpose of completing your edTPA and not share it with others publicly. This includes job interviews and sharing with your family (unless you get additional permission **specifically** allowing this). **Video of your teaching should NEVER be posted in public venues like YouTube, Facebook, etc., or shared with people not involved with the edTPA assessment, as this violates the confidentiality of the learner(s) you teach and their families.**

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What are the features of a quality edTPA video?

There is no requirement or expectation for you to create a professional-quality production. The use of titles, opening and closing credits, a musical soundtrack, or special effects must be left to Hollywood, as reviewers will be examining only what the video shows you and your learner(s) doing within the learning segment. However, while it is not necessary to be technically perfect, it is important that **the quality of the video (i.e., clarity of picture and sound) be sufficient for scorers to understand what happened in your classroom.** In most cases, the sound quality will be most important, but if the learning task demands skills or communication that are best understood through viewing (e.g., ASL), then the video quality will be important. If communication that is important to understand is not audible or, in the case of sign, visible, in the video clip(s), you may provide a transcript as described in the Task 2 Evidence Chart of your handbook. **Read your edTPA handbook carefully to be sure your video clip(s) are the appropriate length.**

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How do I prepare my edTPA videorecording for my learning segment?

- **Advise your cooperating/master teacher and the principal at your school of your need to video record** lessons for your learning segment. If necessary, discuss with them any arrangements that need to be made for a camera operator (use of a camera operator is optional).

If you do need a camera operator, considering using people who already have approval to be in classrooms, such as your cooperating teacher, your university supervisor, or a teaching assistant.

- **Collect the necessary consent forms from a parent/guardian of your learner(s) and from adults who might appear in the video.** Respecting students' privacy as well as protecting yourself and your cooperating teacher are professional responsibilities that should not be ignored.
- **Make arrangements for the necessary video/audio equipment well in advance.** If you do not have ready access to video equipment, reach out to peers, family members, your cooperating/master teacher, university supervisor, or technology staff.
- **Location. Location. Location.** Think about where you and your learner(s) will be located in the classroom/setting during the activities to be portrayed in the video. What evidence do the rubrics call for that the camera will need to capture? Where will the camera/microphones need to be placed in order to optimize sound quality? Try to plan ahead and minimize the need for a camera operator by thinking in advance about the placement of the camera and the learner(s). In particular, think about where to place any learner who does not have permission to be filmed so that s/he can participate in a group lesson off-camera. If you do need a camera operator, meet in advance to share the lesson plan and video needs.
- **Practice videorecording BEFORE teaching the learning segment.** This will provide a chance to test the equipment for sound and video quality as well as give your learner(s) an opportunity to become accustomed to the camera in the room.
- ***Try to record the ENTIRE set of lessons in your learning segment.** This will provide you with plenty of footage from which to choose the clip(s) that best provide the evidence called for in the commentaries and rubrics.
- **Be natural.** While recording, try to forget the camera is there (this is good to explain to your focus learner as well) and teach like you normally do. If possible, record other lessons prior to the learning segment so that the camera is not a novel item in the classroom. If using a camera operator, advise him or her not to interject into the lesson in any way and to minimize camera movement.
- **Be sure that the video clip(s) you select and submit have quality audio** so that those viewing the clip(s) can hear the focus learner as well as you and any relevant discussion the focus learner may have with other students. It is often helpful to watch the video each day, so you can check for audio quality and note, with time stamps, possible examples of evidence for later consideration in choosing the clip(s) you submit.

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What resources do I need to consider (equipment, software, and tutorials)?

The edTPA assessment does not specify the use of any particular equipment, software, tutorials, etc., although there are formatting requirements outlined in the Evidence Chart in the edTPA handbook. An expensive camera is not necessary for the demands of this assessment. Many low-end cameras are capable of producing a picture and sound quality that is suitable for your video needs. However, certain situations (e.g., groupings where the students are not facing the camera microphone, lots of ambient noise) may necessitate the use of some kind of external microphone. **The only way to know for sure is to test the equipment while teaching.**

Videorecording and editing tutorials. As soon as the videorecording is finished, make a backup copy of the video by copying it onto a hard drive, a USB drive, or a CD/DVD. Since the clip(s) you submit for your edTPA must consist of a continuous scene without any edits, you will need to use editing tools to extract a clip from the longer video you record. **If you are new to videorecording or to the camera you are using, be sure to read the instruction manual that comes with the camera. Even if the manual has been lost, most manuals are available online at the manufacturer's website. Manufacturers may also have online tutorials to help you learn how to use the camera.** YouTube has a plethora of videos that demonstrate how to set up and operate a camera.

The free video editing software that comes with most computers is perfectly adequate for preparing and saving the clip(s) in the format required in your edTPA handbook. PCs have the program Windows Movie Maker (found in the START menu under PROGRAMS), while Macs provide you with iMovie. There are many online tutorials that will support you in learning how to use these programs.

[Tutorials for using Windows Movie Maker to edit your video \(click here\)](#)

[Tutorials for using iMovie to edit your video \(click here\)](#)

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Which video formats are acceptable?

Saving your video in an acceptable format is necessary for a successful upload when you submit your edTPA. There are a number of formats that are acceptable: .flv, .asf, .qt, .mov, .mpg, .mpeg, .avi, .wmv, .mp4, and .m4v. Each of these formats will upload successfully to the edTPA submission platform and scoring system if your video has been properly saved. If a video clip is not in the correct format, you will receive an error message and be asked to resubmit the video clip properly. When you are preparing a video clip for your edTPA, follow the directions provided with the editing software you are using to save it in the proper format. Your editing software may give you a few choices or perhaps just one. For example, Windows Movie Maker saves in only one format (.wmv), but it is a format that is widely used and is acceptable for an edTPA submission. Other software programs may save in a different format, and that format is usually explained in the help files that accompany any software. If you want to be sure your

video clip is saved correctly, simply right click to look at the file properties (or use the “Get info” command on a Mac) and check to see if one of the file suffixes listed above is present at the end of the filename.

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Learning Environment

What do I look for when selecting clips that demonstrate respect and rapport?

Establishing respect and rapport with your focus learner and all other learners is critical for developing a mutually supportive and safe learning environment. Respect is the positive feeling of esteem or deference toward a person and the specific actions and conduct representative of that esteem. Rapport is a close and harmonious relationship in which members of a group understand each other's ideas, respectfully collaborate and communicate, and consider one another's feelings. Both respect and rapport are demonstrated by how you treat students and how they treat each other. You should work to make respect and rapport evident in your video clip(s). While you may be working with a learner or learners who face challenges in these areas, your video should show you are actively working to create an environment of respect and rapport within the context of your learner(s)' disability-related characteristics.

In your commentaries, cite specific scenes (time stamps are very helpful) from the video clip(s) you select for submission that illustrate the respect and rapport you have established with your learner(s).

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How do I demonstrate a positive learning environment that supports and challenges the focus learner?

Examples of support and challenge should be related to the primary learning target. Choose a video clip that shows you using supports that are consistent with the focus learner's needs and prior learning experiences. These do not have to be unique to the focus learner if s/he has common needs with other learners in the video. **Challenge can be demonstrated by including prompts or opportunities for the focus learner to learn content or demonstrate learning beyond his/her current performance level.**

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Engaging the Focus Learner

How do I select my video clip(s) to show active engagement of the focus learner in developing knowledge and skills related to the primary learning target?

The evidence you need to collect for edTPA Task 2 should demonstrate how you engage the focus learner while teaching. **The video should feature instruction where there is focus on focus learner-teacher interaction and/or focus learner-other learner interaction and you have an opportunity to engage in learning tasks that increase the focus learner's understanding related to the primary learning target. In addition, the video clip(s) should provide evidence of how you link prior learning to new learning to engage and motivate the focus learner.**

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Deepening Learning

How do I show that I am deepening the focus learner's understanding of knowledge and skills related to the primary learning target?

The video clip(s) should show how you elicit responses from the focus learner during instruction related to the primary learning target and how you respond to the focus learner's performance and application of learning. You can draw upon any of the interactions in the video to **highlight how you prompt, listen to, or observe the focus learner and respond in such a way that you are supporting him/her to develop and/or apply new learning.** Your feedback can be verbal or non-verbal (such as pointing) and should be more specific than "yes" or "no" or other general comments. In group instruction, relevant feedback is likely to be provided to the group or to another learner as well as directly to the focus learner. At a minimum, **the video clip(s) should also show you eliciting responses, closely monitoring learner progress, and providing feedback relevant to the focus learner, some of which is individualized. The clip(s) should also show opportunities for the focus learner to apply the feedback.**

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Analyzing Teaching Effectiveness

What is important to remember as I identify changes I would make to the learning segment?

You should analyze and describe what you have learned about teaching the primary learning target to your focus learner based on your observations of how s/he responded to the instructional strategies and materials you provided shown in the video clip(s) submitted. **Be specific about any changes you would make if you were able to teach the lesson(s) again.** The changes may address some logistical issues (time management, giving directions, etc.), but **should mainly focus on how you would improve the actual instruction to both draw upon the focus learner's strengths and address and support the focus learner's needs in relation to the primary learning target.** You will also need to cite evidence that explains why you think these changes will work. **Cite specific examples of what the focus learner understood/could do and did not understand/could not do (as well as any other strengths and needs) that informed your proposed changes.** Lastly, explain how principles of research and theory informed your decision-making about the changes. ([Click here to return to the Planning Task explanation of citing research.](#))

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Instruction Task Key Points	
What to Include	What to Avoid
- References in your commentary responses to specific examples found in your video clip(s) - Video evidence that addresses each criterion in the rubrics - Time stamps identifying evidence in the video clip(s)	- Sharing your video PUBLICLY on YouTube, Facebook, or any other website (please respect the privacy of learners) - Choosing a video clip that shows you making significant content errors - Showing disrespect to any student or allowing students to be disrespectful to each other - Choosing a video clip that reveals a mismatch between your instruction and support choices and the needs and strengths of your focus learner

Task 3: Assessing Learning

Key Decisions

Analyzing the Focus Learner's Performance

[What kind of assessment data should I analyze for my edTPA?](#)

Feedback

[What types of feedback to the focus learner should I include in my edTPA?](#)

Analyzing the Focus Learner's Use of Communication

[How do I identify evidence of the focus learner's use of the targeted communication?](#)

Using Assessment to Inform Instruction

[What do I need to think about when determining "next steps" for my teaching?](#)

Analyzing the Focus Learner's Performance

What kind of assessment data should I analyze for my edTPA?

You will use the baseline data, daily assessment records, final assessments and work sample to inform your analysis of your focus learner's performance as it relates to both learning targets. **There is more than one option for the format of your submitted work sample (e.g., a document, a video clip with a time-stamp), so read the handbook specifications closely.** The different options make a work sample possible for any type of learning target.

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Feedback

What types of feedback to the focus learner should I include in my edTPA?

The feedback given to the focus learner should be related to the primary learning target. Feedback should offer the focus learner clear and specific information on his/her performance around the lesson objectives and also reflect the analysis of learning for the primary learning target. At the very least, your feedback should make the focus learner aware of his/her strengths and errors. **Effective feedback will denote areas where the focus learner did well and where he/she needs to improve related to the specific learning objectives.** Marking the percent correct and providing non-specific comments such as “Good job” are not sufficient, as the focus learner will have little idea of what exactly s/he did well. In contrast, comments such as “Great job for recognizing that ‘who’ questions refer to people” [academic learning target] and “You are doing much better waiting for [name of BOSS/SUPERVISOR] to finish talking before you start talking” [vocational or communication learning target] direct attention to the details of performance, deepening the focus learner’s understanding of the learning target.

The same expectation applies to feedback on how the focus learner can improve. For example, citing the number of problems the focus learner completed incorrectly is not sufficient. **In order to identify an area for improvement, the focus learner needs to know what skill, understanding, or behavior needs correction.** Some examples of feedback that give a focus learner appropriate information for improving the target area are as follows:

- “Your topic sentence needs more focus.” (academic)
- “Watch what I do. See how my thumb is on the top of the paper and pointed up when I hold it? Make your thumb look like mine.” (motor)
- [Teacher demonstrates sign and points to the way his/her thumb is placed on the fingers, and motions for the focus learner to do the same, moving the focus learner’s thumb, if needed] (communication)
- [point to picture on a communication device] “This is ‘my turn.’ When you want a turn, touch this picture [model pointing to the picture]. Listen to what it says when I touch the picture [touch “my turn” picture]. It says, ‘My turn.’ Now you try it.” (communication and social)
- “Listen. What do you hear? Yes, you hear the clock. So, where are you? [by the office] Listen for the sounds that tell you where you are.” (expanded core curriculum)
- “What happened when you yelled at Darrin? How did that make Darrin feel? Did you get what you wanted by yelling? What could you have done differently?” (social)

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Analyzing the Focus Learner's Use of Communication

How do I identify evidence of the focus learner's' use of communication?

You will explain in your analysis and provide evidence that your focus learner used or attempted to use the targeted expressive and/or receptive communication skill related to the primary learning target. The communication skill (function) and other communication demands (vocabulary, syntax, social use, situational expectations) were defined, with examples, in Task 1. **You must support your explanations by citing specific evidence from your video clip(s), using a time stamp, and/or from the focus learner's work sample. The evidence cited must clearly demonstrate how the focus learner used or attempted to use the targeted communication skill (function) and other communication demands.**

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Using Assessment to Inform Instruction

What do I need to think about when determining "next steps" for my teaching?

Informed by your analysis of the focus learner's performance related to both learning targets of the learning segment, "next steps" should detail the instructional moves you plan to make going forward for the focus learner in relation to **both** learning targets. These next steps may include additional feedback to the focus learner, a specific instructional activity/learning task, or other strategies. The next steps should aim to maintain, support, or extend learning of the learning targets. You will also need to support your next steps with principles from research and/or theory. ([Click here to return to the Planning Task explanation of citing references to research and theory.](#))

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Assessment Task Key Points

What to Include	What to Avoid
- Completed daily assessment records (and baseline assessment data, if not evident in a daily assessment record) - A graphic (table or chart) or narrative that summarizes the focus learner's progress toward EACH learning target - Description of patterns of focus learner performance in relation to supports used - A work sample from the final assessment of the primary learning target (the work sample of the focus learner only) - Evidence of the feedback that you provided to the focus learner related to the primary learning target - Specific references to the focus learner's work sample and assessments to support your commentary responses - Concrete evidence of targeted communication use (video clip or work sample)	- Superficial analysis of the focus learner's performance (i.e., there is no citation of evidence from the baseline data, daily assessment records, final assessments, or the work sample) - Misalignment between the daily assessment records, learning targets, learning objectives, and/or analysis - Feedback that is developmentally inappropriate or age-inappropriate, or which contains significant inaccuracies - Identifying next steps for learning that are not related to your analysis of the focus learner's progress toward both learning targets