Renaissance Teacher Work Sample Consortium

A Teacher Work Sample Exemplar

Submitted by: University of Northern Iowa

Grade Level: 10th

Subject: English

Topic: Short Story

Table of Contents

Contextual Factors

Community Factors

The school in which I am student teaching, herein referred to as School A, is part of a community, herein referred to as Community A, that is diverse both racially and socio-economically. Community A comprises approximately 61 square miles of Iowa's 55,869 square miles. According to the 2000 census, Community A's population is split 52% women and 48% men, with a total population of 68,747. Median household income is $34,092, five thousand dollars less than state average. The census situated 10% of families and 13.7% of the population below the poverty line, including 18.6% under age 18.

Although located in the Midwest, an area not traditionally known for multicultural communities, Community A and its industries have attracted a diverse population that often reflects national trends. According to the 2000 census, Community A is racially split 81.6% Caucasian, 13.9% African American, and 0.22% Native American. Hispanics and Latinos make up 2.6% of the population. Asians make up 0.85% of the population, Pacific Islanders 0.05%, other races 1.4%, and 1.97% are from two or more races.

African-Americans were drawn to Community A because of entry-level jobs available in meatpacking and other industries. In the 1990's, Bosnian war refugees were resettled in Community A by the federal government and a new meat packing plant attracted hundreds of Hispanics. Early on, African-Americans settled in the "East" side (geographically north-northeast, but the term has become locally fixed), while Caucasians populated both the "East" and the "West" sides, primarily the "West." Through the years, this clear division of Community A magnified the awareness of differences and the need for fairness. (Wikipedia)

District Factors

  The district is home to one alternative and two regular high schools, four middle schools and thirteen elementary schools. It is one of the 10 largest districts of Iowa's 377 public school systems. Enrollment is approximately 10,300 students. The mission of the district is to prepare each student to become a responsible and productive citizen in a complex world. According to the 2006-2007 annual report, district schools are working toward six major goals: increasing student achievement, closing the achievement gap, maintaining fiscal stability, providing a safe, caring, and inviting environment, and engaging communities in the life of the district.

  District enrollment showed a steady increase between the 2002-2003 and 2004-2005 school years, but has decreased in the last two years. Minority enrollment has risen each of the last five years. Enrollment of Title 1 students has shown significant decreases since the 2002-2003 school year. Students who qualify for the Free or Reduced Lunch program make up 57.4% of the district, and 13% of district students qualify for Special Education. Thirteen languages are spoken within the district, and English Language Learners account for 7% of total enrollment.

  The district's graduation rate is 79.2% compared to a statewide 90.8%. Average daily attendance has held steady at 93.2% for the last three years. The dropout rate for grades 7-12 is 4.1%, down significantly from 6.1% in 2001-2002. The school district has been recognized for making significant improvements in reducing the achievement gap in 2006-2007 by the state Board of Education and was commended for "providing support to struggling learners while still addressing the learning needs of its high-achieving students." (Annual Report)

School Factors

  School A is a high school housing grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 in one building. The four grades totaled 1,786 students during the 2006-2007 school year. The average class size is 24.9,

compared to a district-wide high school size of 25.6. Daily attendance rates for 2006-2007 were 92.3%, slightly higher than the high school district average of 91.7%. School A is striving to increase parental involvement, and saw 56.5% attend conferences during 2006-2007, a significant increase from 47.5% the previous year.

The building is a three-story structure with classrooms on each floor and classrooms in the basement. The building itself is in fairly good shape, with brand new athletic locker rooms and commons bathrooms. The offices, nurse, auditorium, and commons are all on the first floor. The counselors' offices, also known as Student Services, are located on the second floor. School A provides separate classrooms and teachers for ninth graders on the second and third floors, commonly referred to as "The Freshman House."

School A has multiple administrators, including a principal, a vice principal, an assistant principal, and three administrative assistants. Among other duties, the principal handles discipline for grades 10-12 with the help of other administrators. The vice principal is responsible for 9th grade discipline, and an administrative assistant is responsible for 9th and 10th grade attendance. Teachers manage their own set of classroom rules and policies, including late work and behavioral issues.

School A is located on the "West" side of Community A. Racially, the school is predominantly white, with minorities making up only 25% of enrollment. African Americans, at 17%, represent the largest minority, followed by Hispanics at 6% and Asians at 2%. These numbers compare very similarly to district high school averages, with the exception of African American students, who make up 28% on a district level. Students qualifying for the Free or Reduced Lunch program comprise 38.2% of School A's enrollment, much lower that the 45.4% district high school average.

Students from School A show a higher reading and math proficiency than both district and national norms. During the 2006-2007 school year, School A scored 72.5% reading proficiency compared to 69.7% district-wide and 60% nationally. Math proficiency showed School A at 74.9%, well above the district average of 70.8% and national average of 60%. School A students also perform above national norms in all areas of the ACT and perform above state norms in English. Advanced Placement classes, community college dual-credit courses, and courses taken at a local college campus challenge students to excel beyond the high school level. (Annual Report)

Classroom Factors

The English classroom to which I am assigned is located on the second floor. It sits beside a hallway intersection considered a "high-traffic" area in the school, and numerous fights and disruptions are known to occur. Hall monitors and the school police officer regularly station themselves at this intersection. As a teacher, I am expected to monitor the hallway before school, after school, and in between classes along with other teachers. Students are expected to be in their seats by the end of the bell or they are marked as tardy.

The classroom desks are arranged in five rows. Five desks complete the far row by the windows, whose blinds are nearly always closed to hide duct tape and dinginess. The middle three rows contain seven desks each, and the row nearest the door contains only six, with an empty third space to allow more mobility and to better maneuver when the overhead projector is in use. The teacher's computer, podium, chalkboards, overhead projector, and pull-down screen are at the front of the room. Also at the front of the room is the teacher's office that contains a desk, a large cabinet containing books and supplies, filing cabinets organized for each class, and a storage space for miscellaneous items, such as games and bulletin board decorations.

On top of the filing cabinets in the teacher's office is a long card file. In this file are small cards with the names, phone numbers, and emails of each student's parents or guardians, along with any medical or academic needs each student may require. Students in each class fill out theses cards on the first day of class at the teacher's request. While parents are many times contacted in the event of disciplinary problems or failing grades, they are also contacted with positive feedback and reports of exceptional work. The importance of the parental role in this classroom is a vital **instructional implication**, and I will need to make sure I am monitoring all of my students and letting parents know what is happening in the classroom.

Funny and inspirational posters can be found all over the room, along with posters encouraging the writing process. Weekly grades are posted in one corner of the room, and dictionaries and thesauri can be found there as well. Class period schedules and classroom rules are posted on the back of the office door, which is closed during class. One bulletin board at the front of the room displays current event information, and daily events for each class are posted on the wall next to it. After each period, the teacher writes a brief description of each day's activities in a spiral notebook at the front of the room. Students who are absent can access the notebook to find out what they missed on any given day. This notebook provides an important **instructional implication**, and I will need to make sure the notebook is always kept up to date to assure that my students do not fall behind in their readings or assignments.

At the back of the classroom are two additional rooms designated for Yearbook Staff only. Each room contains computers, cameras, and other equipment essential to the yearbook process. Yearbook staffers come and go frequently throughout the day to work on their page spreads, both during and in between classes. Students are made aware of this on the first day of classes, but the frequent disruptions leads to another important **instructional implication**. I will

need to keep my students on task during the interruptions by continuing with my lesson and not acknowledging the Yearbook Staffers' exits and entrances.

Student Characteristics

The second period English IV class is a course designed for tenth graders. Of the 13 students, seven are male and six are female. Though small, the class is very diverse. Three boys are Caucasian, three are African American, and one is Bosnian. Three girls are Caucasian, one is African American, one is Bosnian, and one is Hispanic. The African American female and one African American male are in special education. The Hispanic female is an ELL student, but speaks the English language well and there appear to be no communication problems.

Behaviorally, the class seems reserved and quiet, though the Bosnian girl can be rather loud and outspoken. The students sit in random seats that were assigned by the teacher on the first day of class. During down time, a few chat quietly with each other. The Bosnian girl and a Caucasian girl appear to be friends from other classes. Two of the African American boys know each other from the basketball team and have a friendly rivalry going to see who can get the best grade in English IV. This fact is promising, as it seems the two boys genuinely want to do well in the class. Otherwise, there is not yet a lot of interaction between students other than when they are assigned to work together.

When given assignments, the students usually take to tasks well and work quietly at their desks. There is little complaining or resistance to assignments given, except when the concept of speeches was brought up. Many students were tentative, and some openly objected. Because the speech is a required English IV element and will be the first assignment I grade for the class, an **instructional implication** presents itself. I will need to go over the grading rubric with students, including required elements, point breakdowns, and possible deductions. To ensure student

success, expectations must always be clearly transmitted and a safe, non-threatening environment must be maintained. Expectations and requirements will be important when entering the short story unit so that students know what is expected of them throughout. I will provide a short introduction at the beginning of the unit addressing items we will cover and student expectations.

During class discussions or when asked questions by the teacher, many students sit quietly and do not answer right away. This may simply be because the class is still getting to know each other and could quite possible subside over time. However, lack of class participation is still a challenging **instructional implication**. I will need to make sure the material and activities I choose are engaging so that students feel like participating in class discussions and assignments. I will also need to allow appropriate amounts of wait time to allow students to think and formulate what they are going to say. This will be important during my short story unit, in which whole-group and small-group class discussions will aide students with story comprehension and element identification.

Student Skills

The African American female, herein referred to as Student 1, is in special education. There are frequent absences and her grades have been consistently low from semester to semester. She is allowed to have tests read to her if she chooses, and is also allowed extended time on tests and assignments. Her IEP also identifies graphic organizers, study guides, and frequent checks for understanding as tools to help her succeed. Student 1 reads at the 7th grade level. Because I will be teaching a short story unit that requires a large amount of reading, Student 1's special needs bring to light an important **instructional implication**. In order to provide Student 1 opportunities for success, I will use a variety of modes for story transmittal,

including reading aloud to the students, class read-alouds, playing stories on CD, and allowing in-class reading time.

One African American male, herein referred to as Student 7, and one of the Caucasian males, herein referred to as Student 12, are juniors who failed English IV last semester. Student 7 seems to want to do well but is a procrastinator. He puts off his work until the last minute, falls behind, and becomes overwhelmed with the prospect of catching up. If and when he does catch up on work, he usually falls behind again. A challenging **instructional implication** for me, I will need to make sure I am constantly checking to see that Student 7 is working on and completing the work he needs to be successful in class. He is in special education not only to help with organizational and self-evaluative skills but to improve his reading as well. Because Student 7 reads individually at the 4th grade level and instructionally at almost a 6th grade level, he will require many of the same tools that Student 1 needs to succeed. These tools include additional time for reading and testing, reading aloud tests and assignments if needed, and a quiet place for testing if Student 7 so desires.

The Hispanic female, herein referred to as Student 6, is an English Language Learner who speaks the English language fluently and appears to have no problems with communication. She appears to be a bright student, but frequent absences and indifference regarding assignments has led to only a C average in her English classes. She often misses assignments and/or projects and either cannot or does not make them up. Despite the fact that I have been with the class only a short time, Student 6 has failed to complete two assignments even though she was in class for the assigning and explanation of both. Student 11 is also frequently absent, particularly on Friday. This causes a major problem for Student 11's grade because vocabulary tests are given on Fridays. There is little or no effort from Student 11 to make up these tests.

Learning Goals

*The standards and benchmarks referenced below are from School A's district website.

Learning Goal I (LG I): Students will be able to identify and show understanding of the relationship between new vocabulary words and their corresponding definitions.

DISTRICT STANDARD 1: All students will read a wide range of materials from various cultures to understand and appreciate the materials and to understand themselves and others.

Benchmark 1: Apply sophisticated word meaning and word analysis strategies to understand and learn words and for reading comprehension.

BLOOM'S TAXONOMY:

Level 1. *Knowledge***:** Remembering previously learned material.

Level 2. *Comprehension*: The ability to grasp the meaning of material.

Level 3. *Application*: The ability to use learned material in new and concrete situations.

LG I corresponds to this district standard and benchmark because vocabulary knowledge and growth are vital to understanding and appreciating encountered reading material. Due to district and school emphasis on vocabulary, the students will be tested over their ability to learn and remember new vocabulary words and definitions. Because the vocabulary words are chosen by School A and do not necessarily correspond to individual lessons, I will take time to introduce new words and definitions, review regularly, and allow opportunities for students to use the new words in relevant and meaningful ways. Whenever possible, I will connect the weekly vocabulary words with the stories we are reading. Though words are not directly connected to the short stories within our unit, vocabulary scores factor in to overall English IV grades. Therefore weekly vocabulary scores are as important to my unit as the short stories and take up a great deal of class time.

LG I addresses the Knowledge level of Bloom's Taxonomy because students will need to remember the new vocabulary words and be able to match them with their proper definitions. **LG I** also addresses the Comprehension level of Bloom's Taxonomy as students formulate definitions and examples of the vocabulary definitions in their own words during note-taking and review. Finally, **LG I** addresses the Application level of Bloom's Taxonomy. Students will demonstrate their grasp of vocabulary knowledge by using the vocabulary words correctly in sentences and identifying synonyms and antonyms.

<u>Learning Goal II (LG II):</u> Students will develop an understanding of the elements of short story (character, setting, plot, theme, and point of view) as well as literary devices (style, tone, irony, and suspense) and correctly identify them within various unit stories.

> **DISTRICT STANDARD 1:** All students will read a wide range of materials from various cultures to understand and appreciate the materials and to understand themselves and others.
>
> **Benchmark 2:** Use effective strategies to read and comprehend fiction and nonfiction.
>
> **Benchmark 3:** Use knowledge of expository and narrative structures and genre characteristics to aid reading comprehension.
>
> **BLOOM'S TAXONOMY:**
>
> **Level 1.** *Knowledge*: Remembering previously learned material.
>
> **Level 3.** *Application*: The ability to use learned material in new and concrete situations.
>
> **Level 4.** *Analysis*: The ability to break down material into its component parts so that its organizational structure may be understood.

LG II corresponds to this district standard and its benchmarks as students learn about short story elements and devices. **LG II** addresses the Knowledge level of Bloom's Taxonomy because after taking notes on the various elements and literary devices, students will be expected to remember definitions throughout the unit. **LG II** also addresses the Application level of Bloom's Taxonomy. Not only will students be expected to remember definitions, they will apply the knowledge as we read multiple stories and use the learned definitions to identify various elements and devices within each story. Finally, **LG II** addresses the Analysis level of Bloom's Taxonomy as students look at short stories as not just stories but as narrative texts with parts both interesting and important to overall comprehension and enjoyment.

Learning Goal III (LG III): Students will develop an understanding of the elements of plot

story (conflict, rising action, climax, falling action) and correctly identify them within various

unit stories.

> **DISTRICT STANDARD 1:** All students will read a wide range of materials from
>
> various cultures to understand and appreciate the materials and to understand themselves
>
> and others.
>
> **Benchmark 2:** Use effective strategies to read and comprehend fiction and nonfiction.
>
> **Benchmark 3:** Use knowledge of expository and narrative structures and genre
>
> characteristics to aid reading comprehension.
>
> **BLOOM'S TAXONOMY:**
>
> **Level 1.** *Knowledge*: Remembering previously learned material.
>
> **Level 3.** *Application*: The ability to use learned material in new and concrete situations.
>
> **Level 4.** *Analysis*: The ability to break down material into its component parts so that its
>
> organizational structure may be understood.

> **LG III** corresponds to this standard and its benchmarks in much the same way as LG II.

Because the pre-test and post-test required by School A focus heavily on plot structure, students

will learn about the elements of plot throughout our short story unit. **LG III** addresses the

Knowledge level of Bloom's Taxonomy as students remember plot element definitions

throughout the unit. **LG III** also addresses the Application level of Bloom's Taxonomy.

Students will not only remember definitions, but will apply knowledge as we read and use the

learned definitions to identify the various plot elements within each story. Finally, **LG III**

addresses the Analysis level of Bloom's Taxonomy as students look at plot as an important story

element that is itself broken down for purposes of story examination and comprehension.

Learning Goal IV: Students will evaluate a story using textual evidence, story elements, and personal considerations.

DISTRICT STANDARD 2: All students will use writing to share information and knowledge, to influence and persuade, and to create and/or entertain.

Benchmark 1: Write to communicate ideas, opinions and feelings effectively.

Benchmark 3: Write in a variety of forms and genres for different audiences and purposes.

BLOOM'S TAXONOMY:

Level 1. *Knowledge*: Remembering previously learned material.

Level 3. *Application*: The ability to use learned material in new and concrete situations.

Level 6. *Evaluation*: The ability to judge the value of material for a given purpose.

LG IV corresponds to this district standard and its benchmarks as students use writing to express their opinions and display their knowledge of encountered stories, short story elements, and literary devices. **LG IV** addresses the Knowledge level of Bloom's Taxonomy as students remember elements, devices, and story details and meaning. **LG IV** also addresses the Application level of Bloom's Taxonomy. Students will be expected to apply knowledge of story structure and meaning to their essay assignment. Finally, **LG IV** addresses the Evaluation level of Bloom's Taxonomy as students evaluate and assess a story of their choosing by identifying elements and/or devices they liked and providing personal and textual evidence to defend their position.

Appropriateness for students:

       LG I concerns learning new words and their definitions. Vocabulary growth is vital to both reading comprehension and appreciation. These skills can also be applied to other classes and to reading outside of the classroom. The words and definitions will be given to the students in note-taking fashion and will be reviewed regularly before the students are tested. Because the vocabulary words are chosen by School A and are not often related to any current lesson or assignment, it is important to present and review the words in ways that are both relevant and meaningful to students. Connecting words to the short stories in our units and providing examples from the stories or from students' lives will help students make concrete connections with the words and their definitions.

       LG II concerns learning and identifying the various elements of a short story, including character, setting, plot, theme, and point-of-view as well as literary devices such as style, tone, irony, and suspense. English IV students have encountered short stories in previous English classes, but appear to have limited knowledge regarding the elements used to create stories or their purpose in regard to making meaning and comprehension. Definitions will be given to students in the form of note-taking prior to reading stories that deal with the latest element or device being focused on. Students will then be asked to identify various elements during story discussions. We will also discuss story meaning and how the various story elements aid in comprehension. Exploring short story elements will assist in the understanding and appreciation of narrative text and benefit students in future English classes, other classes, and reading throughout their lifetimes.

       LG III, much like LG II, concerns learning and identifying elements. With **LG III**, however, in align with the school-required testing, the focus becomes the various elements of

plot, including conflict, rising action, climax, and falling action. I will use "Cinderella," a story all students were familiar with, to help begin identifying elements of plot. While students are somewhat familiar with plot elements, their ability to identify them within stories and use the elements to make meaning needs repetition and practice. While reading stories and focusing on plot, students will be asked to identify the various plot elements during discussions and will consider how the plot and its elements affect the reading of the story and its meaning. Analyzing and dissecting text in order to understand and appreciate can again help students in future classes and when encountering material outside the classroom.

LG IV concerns writing to express opinion and will occur during the short story unit's final evaluation. Students will need writing skills throughout their academic and post-academic lives, and will need to write in a variety of formats for various audiences. Because students will complete a literary analysis separate from this unit at a time when I will no longer be in the classroom, it would be superfluous to have students choose a story and analyze its elements. Instead, I will have students choose their favorite story and defend their choice using story elements and/or literary devices, textual evidence, and personal considerations.

Assessment Plan

The English IV unit I will be teaching is a short story unit. The short stories must come

from the required text, <u>Elements of Literature Fourth Course with Readings in World Literature</u>

published by Holt, Rinehart and Winston. Though this is the required text, I was allowed to

choose stories based on my personal preference and their alignment with unit learning goals. A

graphic representation of my assessment plan and its alignment with chosen learning goals can

be found on page 20.

Vocabulary words, chosen by School A and distributed to teachers, are a required

element of English IV and influenced **LG I.** New words are provided each week, account for a

great deal of points, and affect the overall English IV grade.   I determined the short story unit

goals, but all goals were strongly influenced by the English IV pre-test and post-test required by

School A. The tests focus on identifying various short story elements, which shaped **LG II**. The

multiple-choice questions are heavy concerning the elements of plot, which in turn shaped **LG**

III. My cooperating teacher assured me I was able to supplement the required tests with

questions regarding story details or essay questions, so I decided to do so and created **LG IV**.

LG I will be **pre-assessed** with a pencil-and-paper test (Appendix A) prior to giving

students the list of words and definitions on the overhead. Because vocabulary occurs at School

A each week, I will choose one week during our Short Story Unit in which to pre-assess and

evaluate scores. The pre-test has fifteen possible points, including a usage review that is on-

going from week to week. For my purposes, only the ten vocabulary questions corresponding to

LG I will be evaluated and pre-test scores will not be entered into the gradebook. **Formative**

assessments for **LG I** will occur regularly as students review and use the vocabulary words.

Activities such as using the words in original sentences and vocabulary BINGO will be used to

aid students in connecting with the new words. **LG I post-assessment** (Appendix A) is created by School A and will again be paper-and pencil.

  LG II and **LG III** will run on the same assessment plan. **Pre-assessment**, in the form of a pencil-and-paper test (Appendix B) will occur on the first day of class prior to the start of the short story unit. Of the ten questions, all pre-determined by School A, five pertain to **LG II** and five pertain to **LG III**. **Formative assessment** will occur throughout the short story unit as students are asked to identify the various story elements in the specific story we are discussing. This assessment will include quizzes, graphic organizers, writing assignments, and observing students as they participate in class discussions. Prior to the final exam, I will hold a review day with students to go over the information we have been focusing on throughout the unit. **Post-assessment** for **LG II** and **LG III** will be a pencil-and-paper test (Appendix B) identical to the pre-assessment test.

  Because **LG IV** involves choosing a favorite story and defending that position, pre-assessment is somewhat challenging. **Pre-assessment** for **LG IV** will come from the ten Short Story Pre-Test questions used to pre-assess LG II and LG III. **Formative assessment** will take place throughout the short story unit as I view various writing samples from the students, both creative and formal, listen to their contributions during class discussions, and gauge their understanding of the elements and devices and their use within each story. **LG IV post-assessment** will take place with **LG II** and **LG III** post-assessment (Appendix B). Students will answer an essay question identifying their favorite short story from the unit. They will use textual evidence and story elements and/or devices, and data will be compared to pre-assessment scores on an item-to-item basis depending on which elements are used within the essay.

Students will also receive points for identifying personal connections with the story. Since this information cannot be pre-assessed, these points will not be included in final data.
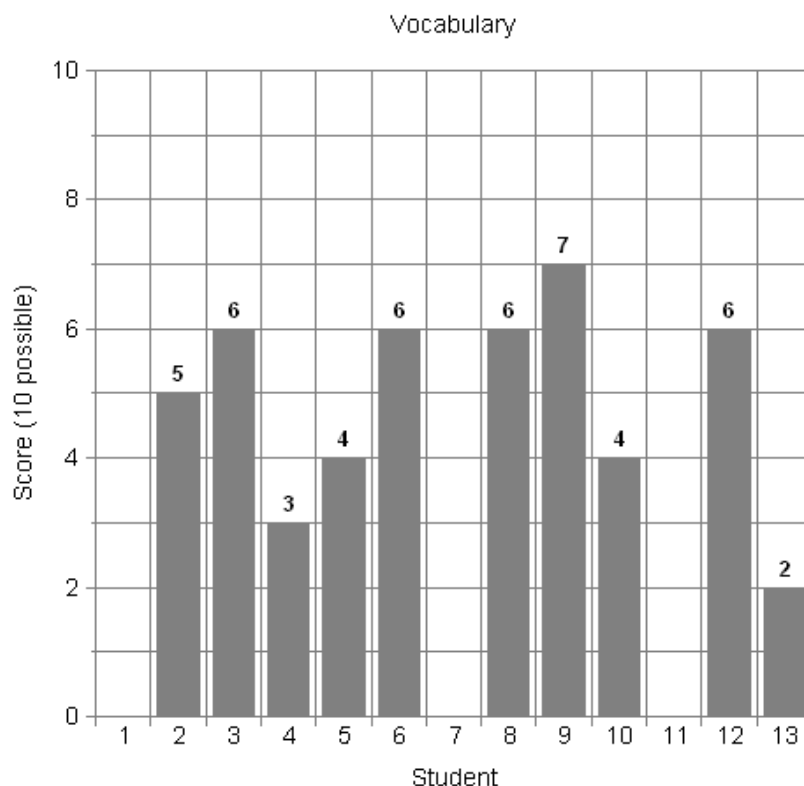
Adaptations are available for all three forms of assessment and align with those students who have IEPs and for those students who become anxious during testing. Students will be given the option of working in a separate classroom for quiet and/or concentration purposes. For students who struggle with reading, test questions may be read aloud to aid in successful test-taking. Writing time for formative assignments and the essay portion of the final assessment can be extended if students are struggling to complete. If I feel the current seating arrangement is not conducive to successful and/or accurate student assessment, I will choose new seats for the students. Due to the small class size, students can be required to sit every-other desk.

School A determines a student proficient who scores 80 percent or higher, so my goals will follow accordingly. My proficiency goal for **LG I** will be for 75 percent of students to score 80 percent (8 correct answers) or higher on the vocabulary post-assessment. Because students did fairly well on **LG II** and **LG III pre-assessment**, proficiency goals for both **LG II** and **LG III** will be for 80 percent of students to score 80 percent (4 correct answers) or higher. My **LG IV** proficiency goal is that 75 percent of students score 80 percent (8 out of 10 points) or above.

| Learning Goal	Assessments	Format of Assessment		Adaptations
Learning Goal 1 Students will be able to identify and show understanding of the relationship between new vocabulary words and corresponding definitions.	Pre-Assessment	Paper/Pencil, 10 Vocabulary Questions		I will choose new seats for the students depending on whether or not I feel the current arrangement provides successful and/or accurate student assessment.
	Formative Assessment	Review activities including relevant application.		
	Post-Assessment	*(See Pre-Assessment)*		
Learning Goal 2 Students will develop an understanding of the elements of short story (character, setting, plot, theme, and point of view) as well as literary devices (style, tone, irony, and suspense) and correctly identify them within various unit stories. **Learning Goal 3** Students will develop an understanding of the elements of plot story (conflict, rising action, climax, falling action) and correctly identify them within various unit stories.	Pre-Assessment		Paper/Pencil 5 LG II Questions 5 LG III Questions	Students are given the option of working in a separate classroom. Students are given the option of having the assignments and/or assessments read to them. Extended time for writing can be given if students are struggling to complete assignments and/or assessments in the time allowed.
	Formative Assessment		Quizzes, graphic organizers, writing assignments, and class discussions.	
	Post-Assessment		*(See Pre-Assessment)*	
Learning Goal 4 Students will evaluate a story using textual evidence, story elements, and personal considerations.	Pre-Assessment	Paper/Pencil 10 LG IV Questions		
	Formative Assessment	Writing samples, observations, discussion, and review		
	Post-Assessment	Essay Question		

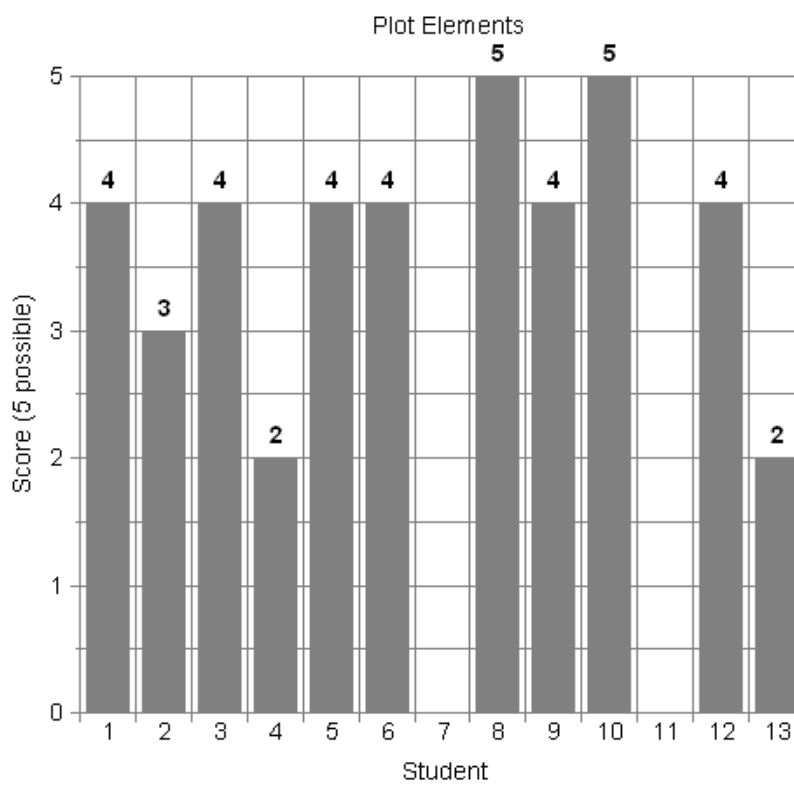## Design For Instruction

Table I (LG I)

Vocabulary

The above chart shows the scores of the 10 students who took the Vocabulary Pre-Test during 2nd period English IV. For the **LG I pre-assessment**, scores ranged from 2-7 points out of 10 possible points. The average score was 4.9. Students 1, 7, and 11 were absent during the pre-test. School A does not require students to make up pre-tests.

Nine students correctly identified "confrontation" and eight correctly identified "epilogue." The other words gave most students trouble. Of concern is that students appear to care very little about vocabulary as words have little connection to classroom activities. Also of concern is that while I created the Pre-Test, the post-test is created by School A. My proficiency goal for **LG I** is that at least 75 percent of students score 80 percent (8 correct answers) or higher on the **LG I post-assessment**. Currently, no students show proficiency.

Table 2 (LG II)
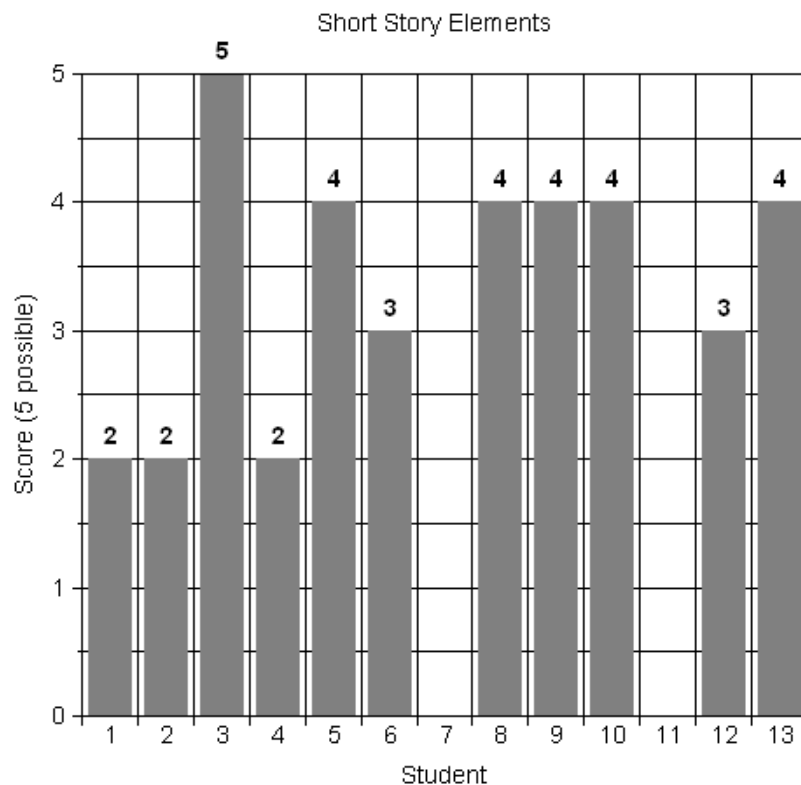
Short Story Elements

The above chart shows the scores of the 11 students who took the Short Story Pre-Test during 2nd period English IV. For the **LG II pre-assessment**, scores ranged from 2-5 points out of 5 possible points. The average score for students taking the Short Story Pre-Test was 3.4. Student 7 was absent and Student 11 added the class after the pre-test was given. School A requires these elements to be post-tested but does not require absentees to make up pre-tests.
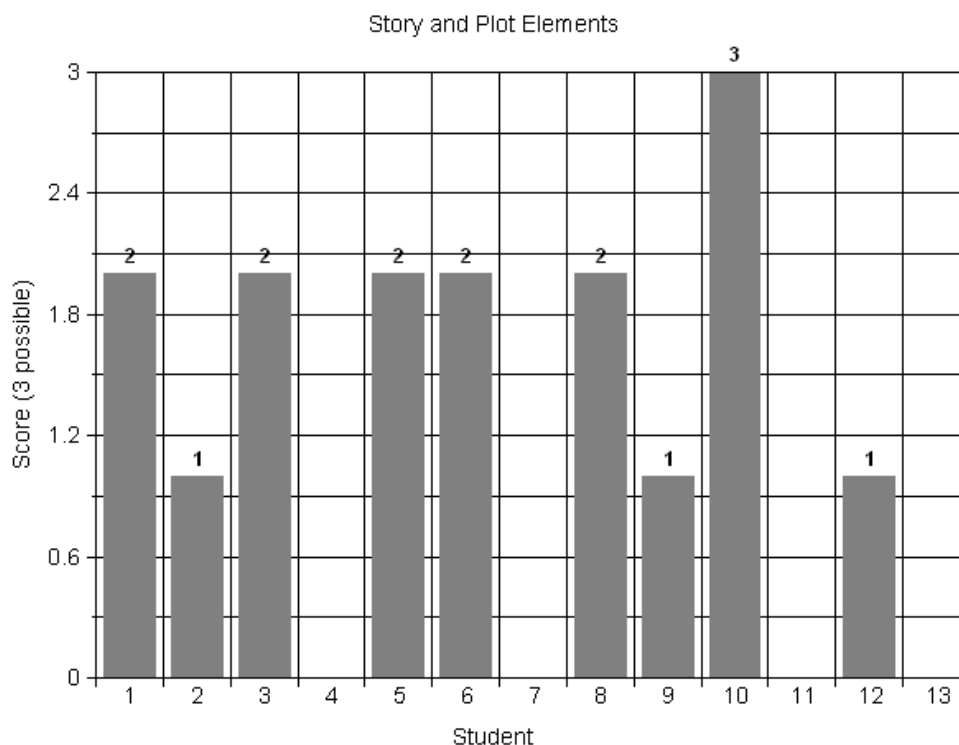
After students took the Short Story Pre-Test, I examined the questions relating to **LG II**. Questions regarding theme and dynamic characters were commonly missed. I will need to spend more time on these concepts, addressing them in each story we read to provide multiple opportunities for identification and retention. My proficiency goal for **LG II** is that at least 80 percent of students score 80 percent (8 correct answers) or higher on the **LG II post-assessment**. Currently 46 percent of students show proficiency.

Table 3 (LG III)

The above chart shows the scores of the 11 students who took the Short Story Pre-Test

during 2nd period English IV. For the **LG III pre-assessment**, scores ranged from 2-5 points out

of 5 possible points. The average score for students taking the Short Story Pre-Test was 3.7.

Student 7 was absent and Student 11 added the class after the pre-test was given. School A

requires these elements to be post-tested but does not require absentees to make up pre-tests.

After students took the Short Story Pre-Test, I examined the questions relating to **LG III**.

Commonly missed questions were those concerning climax. I will need to spend more time on

climax, addressing it in each story we read and reviewing its importance. My proficiency goal

for **LG III** is that at least 80 percent of students score 80 percent (8 correct answers) or higher on

the **LG III post-assessment**. Currently, 62 percent of students show proficiency.

Table 4 (LG IV)

Story and Plot Elements

The above chart shows the scores of the 11 students who took the Short Story Pre-Test during 2nd period English IV. For the **LG IV pre-assessment**, scores ranged from 0-3 points out of 3 possible points. The average score for students taking the Short Story Pre-Test was 1.5. Student 7 was absent and Student 11 added the class after the pre-test was given.

Questions relating to **LG IV** vary from student to student and are based on their **LG IV post-assessment** essay questions in which they must choose three things they liked about a particular story and explain which story or plot elements they are addressing. Students are also scored on two examples of personal connections with the story, data that will not be addressed here. My **LG IV** proficiency goal is that 75 percent of students score 80 percent (8 out of 10 points) or above on the final essay. **LG IV pre-assessment** shows only one student proficient.

Unit Overview

Note: The Short Story Pre-Test was given before I took over 2nd period English IV.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		Vocabulary Review Story elements: Character overhead Pre-read: What are some childhood events that left a lasting impression? Begin reading aloud "Distillation." **LG I, LG II, LG IV**	Finish "Distillation." Discussion: Character "Meet the Author" (Hugo Martinez Serros) **LG II, LG IV**	Vocabulary Test Story elements: Style Class read-aloud of "Geraldo No Last Name" Begin discussion: Style **LG I, LG II, LG IV**
Finish discussing "Geraldo No Last Name." "Meet the Author" (Sandra Cisneros) Read selections from <u>The House on Mango Street</u> Character biopoem. **LG I, LG II, LG IV**	Story elements: Tone Pre-read: If you had to leave suddenly and take one item, what would it be? Read "Liberty." Discussion. Creative writing—what happened to Liberty? **LG II, LG IV**	Vocabulary BINGO **LG I**	Story elements: Plot overhead Pre-read: Differences and stereotypes concerning boys and girls. Begin listening to "Boys and Girls." **LG III, LG IV**	30-Word Vocabulary Test Finish "Boys and Girls." Discussion: Plot (Focus on climax.) "Meet the Writer" (Alice Munro) "Battle of the Sexes" Game **LG III, LG IV**

New Vocabulary (Administer Pre-test) Complete expectations worksheet. Begin reading aloud "Two Kinds."	Finish "Two Kinds." Discussion: Plot (Focus on conflict.) "Meet the Author" (Amy Tan) Locate similes and metaphors in Tan's writing. Read "Everyday Use" for homework.	Vocabulary Review "Everyday Use" Quiz Discussion: Character and Conflict Create quilt squares—heritage, culture.	Story elements: Setting Author/story background information. Class read-aloud of "The Pedestrian." Discussion: Setting, author's purpose or intent. *(Leading up to theme.)*	Vocabulary Test "Meet the Writer" (Edgar Allan Poe) Pictures from Poe's gravesite—discuss mysteries surrounding his death. See pictures in text, make predictions about story. Begin reading aloud "The Pit and the Pendulum."
LG I	**LG II, LG IV**	**LG I, LG II, LG III, LG IV**	**LG II, LG IV**	**LG I, LG II, LG IV**
New Vocabulary Continue Reading "The Pit and the Pendulum."	Finish "The Pit and the Pendulum." Discussion: Setting, conflict, climax. Poe Poetry: "The Raven" and "The Lake" Create a Poe-like poem: What's in the pit?	Vocabulary Review Pre-read: Strange places, objects. Class read-aloud of "The Book of Sand." Discussion: Character, plot.	Story elements: Theme View video of "The Bet" Hand out and explain graphic organizer, note three differences between film and story. Read story and complete organizer for homework.	Vocabulary Test Go over graphic organizer and film/story differences. Discussion: Theme, character, plot
LG I	**LG II, LG III, LG IV**	**LG I, LG II, LG III, LG IV**	**LG II, LG IV**	**LG I, LG II, LG III, LG IV**

SOPHOMORE SCHEDULING NO CLASS	New Vocabulary Pre-read: Vietnam information. Read aloud Vietnam poetry by Vince Gotera. Read aloud "Where Have You Gone, Charming Billy?" Discussion: Theme, character, plot Vietnam memorial photos. **LG I, LG II, LG III, LG IV**	Vocabulary Review Short Story Post-Test Review Review Crossword Puzzle **LG I, LG II, LG III, LG IV**	SOPHOMORE SCHEDULING NO CLASS	Vocabulary Test Short Story Post-Test **LG I, LG II, LG III, LG IV**

Activities
<u>Vocabulary BINGO</u>

School A sets the schedule for vocabulary. School A does no **pre-assessment**, so I will

implement a pre-test during one of the vocabulary weeks to gauge student learning. Each week

vocabulary words are presented on Monday via a Power Point presentation, created by my

cooperating teacher at the beginning of the school year. Students copy down the words and

definitions as I read through the list, clarifying confusing words or phrases and providing

examples that the students can relate to. **Review** of the words takes place mid-week, usually on

Wednesday, and then the **post-assessment** test is given on Friday. After three weeks of new

words, a 30-word test is given in the fourth week.

Pre-assessment of LG I shows that students tend to have little prior knowledge of the

chosen vocabulary words and will need regular and relevant interaction in order to retain them.

The Vocabulary BINGO activity, which pertains strictly to **LG I**, will be used mid-week to help

students review vocabulary words and their definitions. (This activity is particularly useful

during the 30-word week when students have many definitions to remember.)

I will not need any **technology** for this activity, though I will print out the Power Point

slides to use during BINGO. **Materials** will come from the students and myself. The day

before we play, I will instruct students to make their BINGO cards and bring them to class,

providing an example on the board. Students are instructed to choose vocabulary words in order

to fill in the cards and may include the traditional free-space in the center. I will randomly read

aloud definitions or examples while students use checks, dots, and other markings (a different

one each round) to mark the words. When applicable, I will use examples from the stories we

have read to help students connect with the words. Students will be allowed to use their notes

for the first two rounds, and then must put them away. Much like regular BINGO, prizes will be

awarded. These prizes include materials provided by my cooperating teacher such as folders,

pencils, book covers, and other school items, as well as a few candy items provided by me.

As mentioned in the **Contextual Factors** section, a lack of student participation in this

class is a challenge for many lessons. Vocabulary BINGO ensures that all students are actively

engaged and participating, though do not feel the pressure of having to speak up or give correct

answers during class. Student 1 and Student 7, who struggle with reading, will benefit from

having the definitions and examples read aloud to them during the review.

I will **assess student learning** throughout the activity. Since students will not be

shouting out answers, I can individually evaluate as they bring up their BINGO cards, checking

to make sure the definitions I have read aloud match the words marked on the cards. I can

address words that are repeatedly giving students trouble and go over them for the benefit of the

entire class. This will be particularly important when students are told to put their notes away

and are matching words and definitions without any help.

Plot Overhead and Analogy

For this pre-reading activity, I will present the elements of plot on the overhead projector.

As an important activity pertaining to **LG III** and **LG IV**, I will instruct students to take notes on

the various parts as I go over each element (basic situation, conflict, rising action, climax, falling

action.) Because **pre-assessment** indicated that students struggled most with a story's climax, I

will spend more time on that element, addressing both a turning point and the highest emotional

point in a story. To help students grasp elements of plot, I will use the example "Cinderella," a

story I have confirmed each student is familiar with. As I discuss each element, I will ask

students to think of "Cinderella" and which parts of the story correspond to various elements.

We will discuss each, agree on corresponding parts, and students will make note of our decisions

so they can refer to them in the future. After reading the current short story aloud to the students, class discussion will focus primarily on elements of plot, though we will discuss meaning and important themes as well. In particular, students will be asked to identify conflict, both internal and external, and climax.

The **technology** I will need for this activity is the overhead projector, which provides students with visual information and an opportunity to write at their own speed as elements are covered. **Materials** needed include the Plot overhead sheet and the story of Cinderella. Students will need their notebooks and pencils. I will **assess student learning** by observing and listening to students during both the overhead presentation and the follow-up discussion. This way problems and confusion can be addressed on the spot.

As with my other activities, the overhead presentation addresses the challenging classroom participation **contextual factor**. This activity promotes active student participation by providing a discussion structure for students to follow and provides notes that students can refer to in future discussions. While taking notes from the overhead seems simple, it provides a framework that is beneficial to future lessons.

Short Story Review

Before taking the Short Story Post-Test students will spend an entire day reviewing the stories and their elements. **Pre-assessment** showed that most students struggled with the concepts of climax and theme. In this activity **LG II, III**, and **IV** are all addressed as students work on identifying and analyzing various short story elements in the stories we have read.

Technology needed for this activity includes the overhead projector to go over the review sheet and directions to ensure each student understands the assignment and is aware of

expectations. **Materials** needed for this activity, the review sheet and a partner, will be provided or assigned. Students will need to bring their textbooks, notes, and pencils to class.

I will pair students up and assign them each a short story from the unit. Students will then be instructed on how to complete the review sheet, which includes a blank for each short story element: point-of-view, character, plot, setting, and theme.   I will go over directions and address questions, after which students will have class time to work. Once everyone is finished, students will present their review sheets to the class. This allows students to work intensively on one story and benefit from classmates' work regarding other stories. I will collect the review sheets at the end of the period and **formatively assess** them on a 10-point scale.

Giving students class time to work addresses an important **contextual factor**, particularly for those students who struggle with reading or procrastinate when it comes to assignments. The review sheet also addresses those students and their needs, while providing all students with an active review technique. I also chose this activity because class participation is a **contextual factor** of particular concern. By working in pairs and presenting information, students have multiple interactions with the material and each other.

Technology

The most useful technology available is the overhead projector, which can be used to transmit paper notes onto the screen at the front of the classroom. It is also useful because the teacher's computer, a laptop docked into a hard drive, can be hooked up to the projector. Power Point presentations can be run, and a hand-held remote controls the slide show. The remote will allow me to move around the room to ensure students are on task and check for understanding.

A television, VCR, and DVD player are also available. I will utilize these items during the short story unit when showing films of the stories we are reading. Stories can be played on

CD for the students to listen to and can also be downloaded to an iPod for easier stopping and

starting. I can also utilize the CD that accompanies the teacher's edition of the textbook to create

worksheets, graphic organizers, discussion questions, quizzes, and test questions.

Contextual Factors

While planning my unit, I will focus on the somewhat quiet nature of the group, which is

relatively quiet during discussion. I will have questions prepared for each short story in the unit

that address all levels of **Bloom's Taxonomy** so students can experience success answering

questions and thinking at various levels. If certain students are not participating, I will say,

"Student 1, what do you think of the story?" or "Student 4, what question do you have about

what we've read?" By asking open-ended questions, students can participate without the fear of

answering incorrectly. I will also create lessons that provide activities in addition to discussion.

Another **contextual factor** I will need to address while planning my unit is the frequent

absences of many students in the class. Because of this, the class website is an important tool.

Students are given the website on the first day of class and it is posted at the front of the room.

After class each day, I will update the website with information regarding assignments and due

dates, worksheets and handouts, and important announcements students may have missed.

Students who are unable to access the website can also refer to the class notebook at the front of

the room. Like the website, the notebook is updated each day after class. Students referring to

the notebook will also check with me for worksheets or other handouts. Absent students will be

given an extra day to complete assignments before late penalties are assessed. Student 11 is

almost always absent on Fridays. Because vocabulary tests are given on Fridays, Student 11's

grades have suffered. Students are allowed to make up vocabulary tests, but there is little effort

on Student 11's part to do so. Therefore, I will need to keep a constant eye on what tests Student 11 is missing and make regular efforts to schedule a time for him to make them up.

Student 1 is in **special education**. Her IEP identifies graphic organizers as a successful learning tool, so I have built graphic organizers into several lesson plans during my Short Story Unit. She reads at the 7th grade level, which presents further challenges. In order to provide her opportunities for success, I will provide a variety of modes for story transmittal, including reading aloud to the students, class read-alouds, playing stories on CD, and allowing in-class reading time. When reading stories in class, I will model reading techniques that students can implement on their own. I will frequently stop and ask students to summarize and make predictions. I will not make any student read out loud who is uncomfortable doing so, and ample reading time will be provided when individual reading is required.

Various reading modes will also benefit Student 7, who failed English IV last semester and is also in **special education**. He reads individually at the 4th grade level and instructionally at almost a 6th grade level. Besides struggling with reading, Student 7 puts off his work until the last minute, falls behind, and becomes overwhelmed with the prospect of catching up. I will need to make sure I am constantly checking to see that Student 7 is completing the work he needs to be successful in class. I will include in-class work time in many of the lessons to ensure students are completing and handing in their work. Keeping in contact with Student 7's Resource Room teacher regarding assignments and testing will also help him be successful.

Instructional Decision Making

The 2nd period English IV class, starting at 8:40, is my first period of the day after 1st

hour planning. This early start time brought both positives and negatives. Due to the early

morning and small class size, I dealt with very few discipline issues. It was also much easier

getting to know each student and to provide each with personal attention. On the negative side,

the early time and small class size sometimes caused a lack of energy and little class

participation, something I dealt with throughout the short story unit. Teaching English IV during

2nd period also posed challenges due to a particularly snowy winter. Besides full days missed

due to snow, late starts often disrupted the school day, causing morning periods to be shortened.

Modifications to lesson plans were made continually due to weather. Below, however, I have

addressed two examples of how I modified my teaching based on student response, student work,

and observations.

"The Bet" Graphic Organizer

One of the last stories we read during our unit was "The Bet" by Anton Chekhov. We

had used graphic organizers to help us analyze character during another story, and I decided to

use one to help students analyze theme, an element important to **LG II** and a frequently-missed

question during **pre-assessment**. I first had students view a short video of the story. The video

served as an important pre-read for the students, introducing them to the story and its theme. At

the conclusion of the movie, I handed out the graphic organizers, which required students to use

both textual evidence and personal inferences. I read through the directions, addressed

questions, and gave students the rest of class to read "The Bet" and complete the graphic

organizer (Appendix C).

I was excited during the next day's class when almost every student handed in their graphic organizer. I had planned to start our final story after collecting the organizers so we had ample time to read, discuss the story, and start reviewing for the final test. However, after glancing through the worksheets, I realized that the students had not fully understood the organizer's intentions. Students were to track what the main character was reading throughout a long confinement and write down what they thought he was learning at the time. A final thematic question at the end of the organizer was present to help students sum up their thoughts. With the exception of a few, students appeared to have simply written down the names and types of books the character was reading with little or no regard to what he might have been learning. A few students answered the thematic question correctly, but many appeared to not have grasped the story's theme.

Because of the student work and my observations, I made a decision to lead a class discussion regarding the story and its theme rather than move on right away to the final story. Because **pre-assessment** of **LG II** indicated that theme was something most students struggled with, I did not want to rush through the concept. Using questions from the teacher's edition textbook, questions I formed myself, and questions from the students, we held a class discussion regarding the story and talked at length about theme. I also asked students to think back to previous stories we had read, as well as movies and music, to help them understand and identify theme. I was pleased with the amount of student response during the discussion, and observed most students correctly identifying thematic ideas in a variety of contexts.

As an educator, I am in constant reflection mode. After class, I concluded that the discussion was much more beneficial to students when analyzing theme. Though character had been successfully analyzed using a graphic organizer, the difficult concept of theme was

something that needed more attention and guidance. In the end, students looked to me, not a sheet of paper, to help them understand theme and its importance to a story.

Short Story Test Review

I planned a review activity before students took the Short Story Post-Test. Students were to spend one class period reviewing the stories and their elements. **Pre-assessment** showed that most students struggled with various short story elements, including climax and theme. In this activity **LG II, III**, **and IV** were all addressed as students worked on identifying and analyzing various short story elements in the stories we had read.

The initial plan was to pair students up and assign them each a short story from the unit. Students would work together to complete the short story review sheet, which included a blank for each short story element: point-of-view, character, plot, setting, and theme. Once everyone was finished, students would present their review sheets in pairs. This would allow each student to work intensively on one story and benefit from classmates' work regarding the other stories. I planned to collect the review sheets at the end of the period.

Alterations to this activity took place as soon as class started. Due to absent students, there were not enough students for everyone to work in pairs. I assigned stories to individual students instead, and two students were assigned to the two longer stories in the unit. These students were allowed to work together but each needed to fill out a review sheet. I went over directions and addressed questions, after which students had some class time to work. As I walked around the room, observing students and answering questions, I realized that the students would not be finished in time to give presentations. Analyzing the stories and breaking them into pieces was a much longer process than I had anticipated.

Because I wanted to give my students the best review possible, I made the decision to move the presentations to the next day. This, in turn, meant moving the test. I informed the students of the changes and gave them the rest of the period to work on the review sheets. I emphasized the importance of filling out the review sheets completely and correctly and not rushing through, as their classmates depended upon the information as well.

Presentations the next day went well, and I was glad that I had given an extra day. As students presented their story review sheets, questions arose, confusion was clarified, and small discussions presented themselves. Having the whole period to present and reflect on the stories allowed me to focus on individual students, problem areas, and misinterpreted information. Because reviewed material addressed **LG II, LG III,** and **LG IV**, the extra time was well spent. The review sheets were thoroughly filled out, something that would not have happened if we had rushed through the day before, and students were able to interact with the stories and each other multiple times and in multiple ways.

Analysis of Student Learning

Table 5 (LG I)
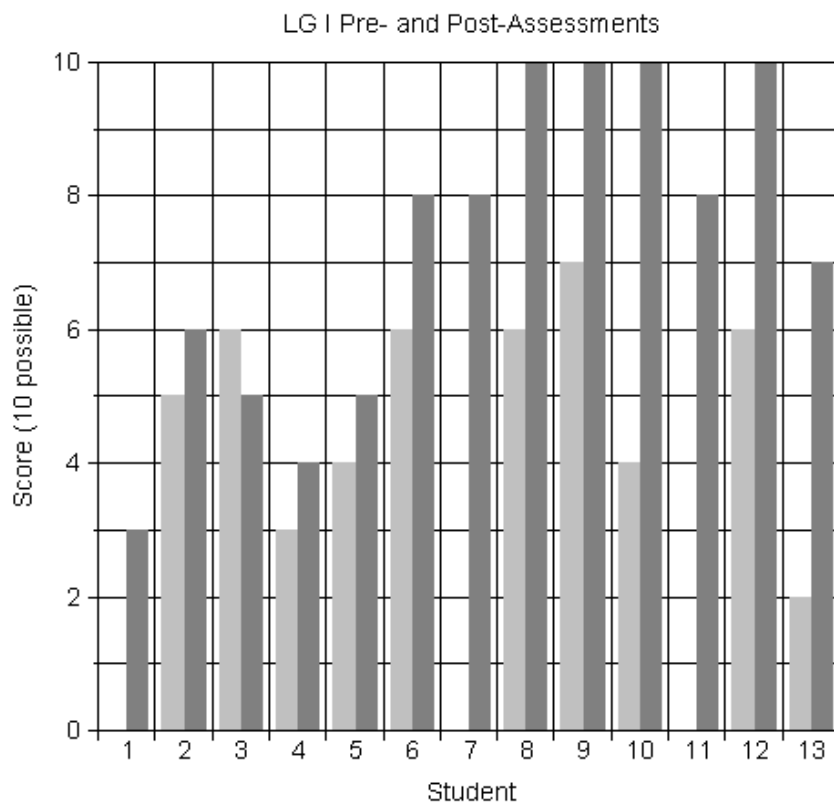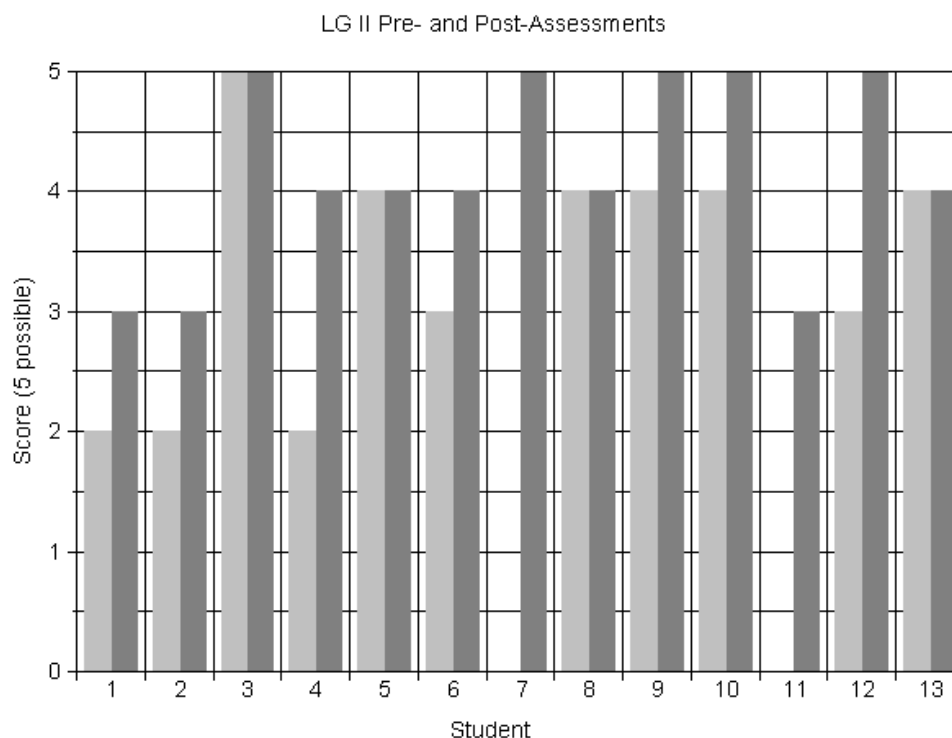
LG I Pre- and Post-Assessments

The above chart shows the scores for the 13 students who took both the pre- and post-assessments for **LG I**. For the **LG I pre-assessment**, scores ranged from 2-7 points out of 10 possible points, and the average score was 4.9. For the **LG I post-assessment**, scores ranged from 3-10 points out of 10 possible points, and the average score was 7.2. **LG I pre-assessment** and **LG I post-assessment** addressed the same 10 vocabulary words. The pre- and post-assessments were composed of different questions but were similar in format. All but one student improved on their pre-assessment score by one or more points. Of the 13 students, 8 students improved their scores by 3 or more points.
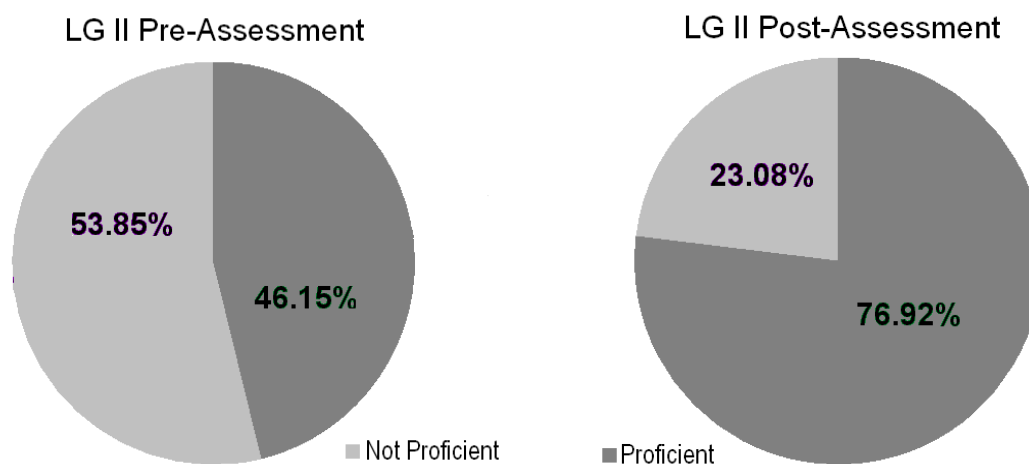
<u>Table 6 (LG I)</u>

LG I Pre-Assessment   LG I Post-Assessment

100%   46%   54%

Not Proficient   Proficient
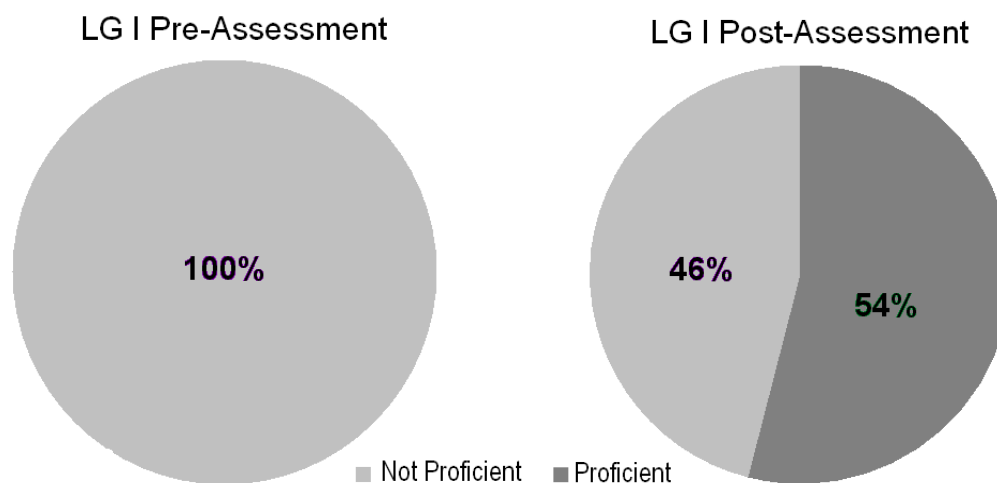
My proficiency goal for **LG I** was that 75 percent of students score at or above 80 percent on the Vocabulary Post-Test, as School A determines a student proficient at 80 percent. As the pie charts show, there was significant improvement in class scores. Unfortunately, I did not meet my 75 percent proficiency goal. Three more students needed to score 80% in order for my goal to have been met. There was, however, an increase between **LG I** pre- and post-assessment proficiency. No students were proficient on the pre-test while 7 reached proficiency on the post-test.
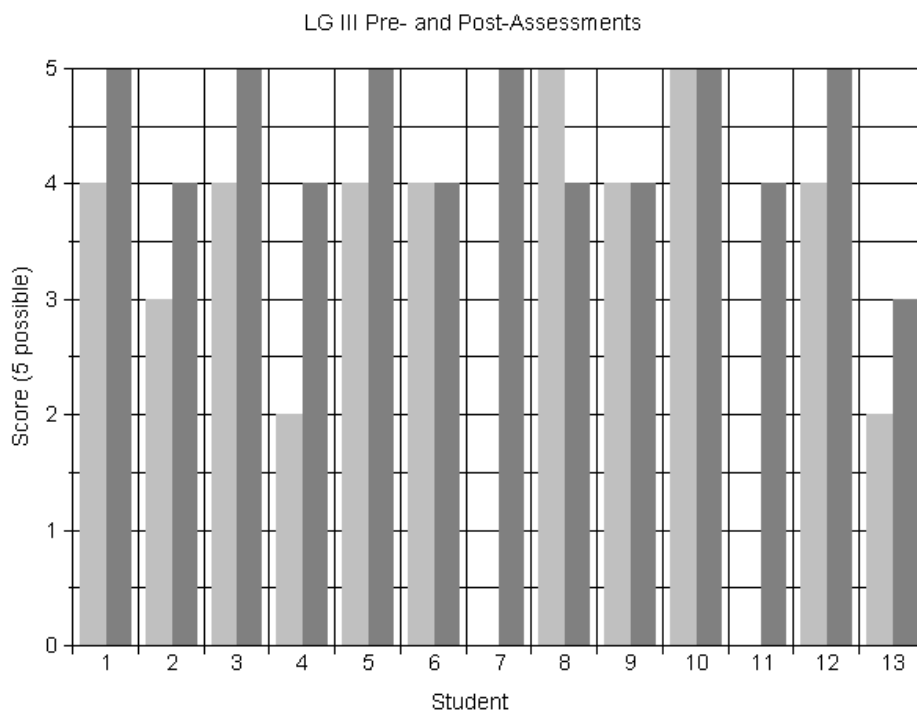
Table 7 (LG II)

LG II Pre- and Post-Assessments

The above chart shows the scores for the 13 students who took both the pre- and post-assessments for **LG II**. For the **LG II pre-assessment**, scores ranged from 2-5 points out of 5 possible points with an average score of 3.4. Because it is required by School A, the same questions were used for pre- and post-assessment. For the **LG II post-assessment**, scores ranged from 3-5 points out of 5 possible points. The average score for the Short Story Elements section of the Short Story Post-Test was 4.2. Out of 13 students, 9 improved their scores from pre-test to post-test and 4 remained the same.

Table 8 (LG II)

LG II Pre-Assessment

53.85%

46.15%

■ Not Proficient

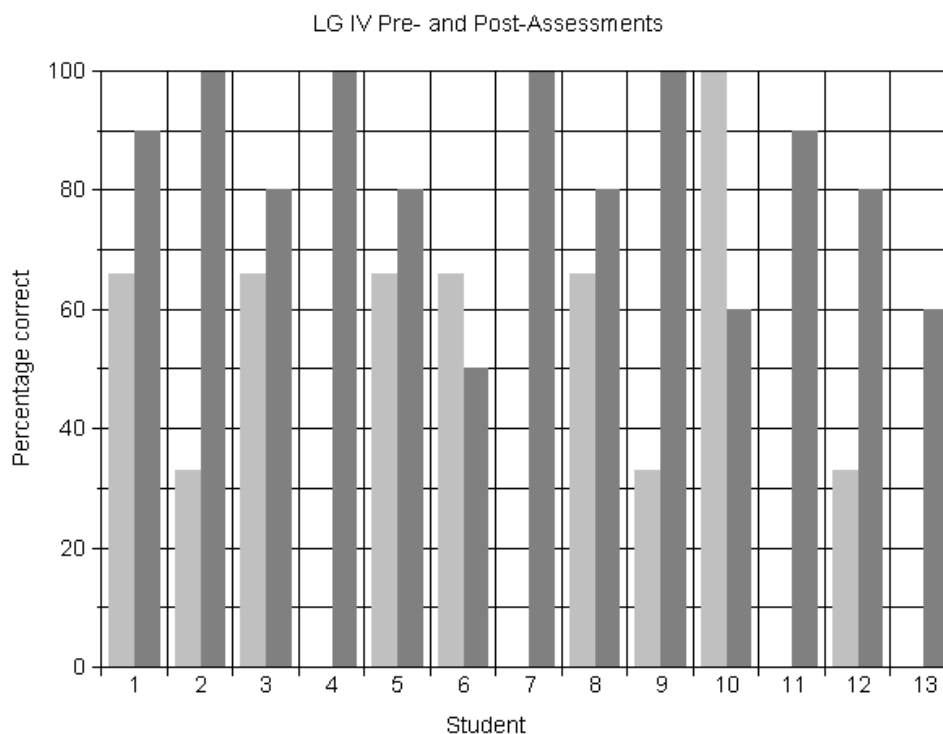LG II Post-Assessment

23.08%

76.92%

■ Proficient

Due to higher scores on the Short Story Pre-Test, my proficiency goal for **LG II** was that 80 percent of students score at or above 80 percent on the Short Story Elements section of the Short Story Post-Test, as School A determines a student proficient at 80 percent. As the pie charts show, there was significant improvement in class scores. I nearly met my 80 percent proficiency goal as over 75 percent of students reached proficiency levels. Only 1 additional student needed to score at or above 80% in order for my goal to have been met, and 3 students were 1 point away from doing so. There was also an increase between **LG II** pre- and post-assessment proficiency. Only 6 students were proficient on the pre-test while 10 reached proficiency on the post-test.

Table 9 (LG III)

LG III Pre- and Post-Assessments

The above chart shows the scores for the 13 students who took both the pre- and post-assessments for **LG III**. For the **LG III pre-assessment**, scores ranged from 2-5 points out of 5 possible points with an average score of 3.7. Because it is required by School A, the same questions were used for pre- and post-assessment. For the **LG III post-assessment**, scores ranged from 3-5 points out of 5 possible points. The average score for the Plot Elements section of the Short Story Post-Test was 4.4. Out of 13 students, 9 improved their scores from pre-test to post-test and 3 remained the same.

Table 10 (LG III)

LG III Pre-Assessment

LG III Post-Assessment

38.46%

61.54%

7.69%

92.31%

Not Proficient   Proficient
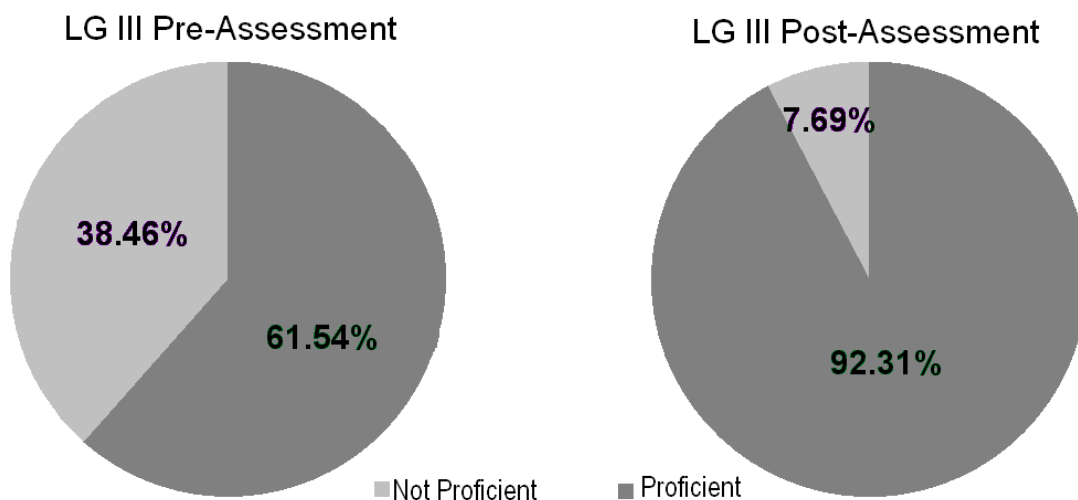
Due to higher scores on the Short Story Pre-Test, my proficiency goal for **LG III** was that 80 percent of students score at or above 80 percent on the Short Story Elements section of the Short Story Post-Test, as School A determines a student proficient at 80 percent. As the pie charts show, there was significant improvement in overall class scores and I exceeded my 80 percent proficiency goal as 92 percent of students scored 80 percent or higher. There was also an increase between **LG III** pre- and post-assessment proficiency. At the time of pre-assessment, 8 students scored at proficiency levels while post-assessment showed 12 students, 1 student short of the entire class, reaching proficiency.

Table 11 (LG IV)

LG IV Pre- and Post-Assessments

The above chart shows the percentage correct for the 13 students who took both the pre- and post-assessments for **LG IV**. For the **LG IV pre-assessment**, scores ranged from 0-3 points out of 3 possible points with an average score of 1.5. For the **LG IV post-assessment**, scores ranged from 5-10 points out of 10 possible points. The average score for the Essay section of the Short Story Post-Test was 8.2. Because the pre- and post-assessments had different point totals, the chart shows the students' scores as percentages. The mean percentage for the **LG IV pre-assessment** was 48.1. The mean percentage for the **LG IV post-assessment** was 82.3. Out of 13 students, 11 improved their percentages from pre-test to post-test.

Table 12 (LG IV)

LG IV Pre-Assessment

7.69%

92.31%

■ Not Proficient   ■ Proficient

LG IV Post-Assessment

23.08%

76.92%
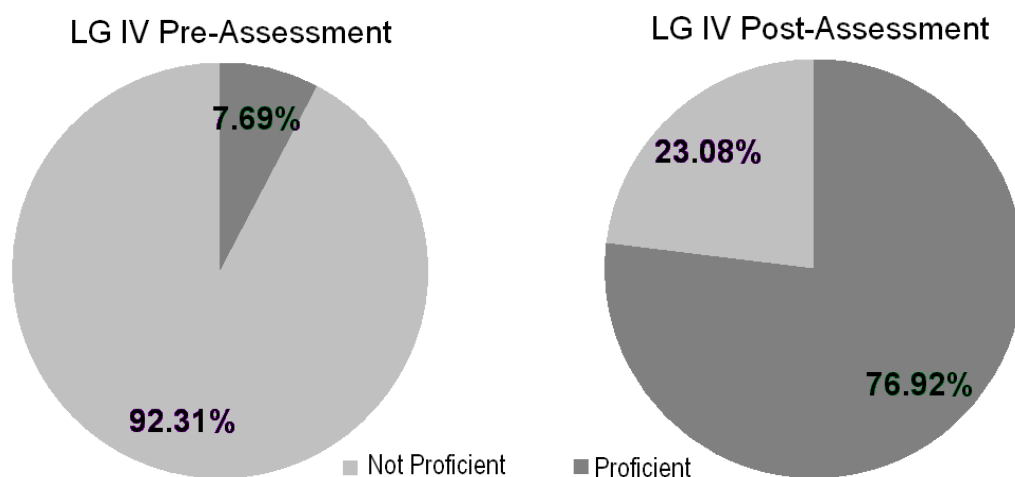
My proficiency goal for **LG IV** was for 75 percent of students to score at or above 80 percent on the Short Story Elements section of the Short Story Post-Test, as School A determines a student proficient at 80 percent. As the pie charts show, there was significant improvement in overall class scores and I attained my 75 percent proficiency goal as nearly 77 percent of students reached proficiency levels. There was also an increase between **LG IV** pre- and post-assessment proficiency. Only 1 student was proficient on the pre-test while 10 reached proficiency on the post-test.

<u>Individuals</u>

Student 1, a **special needs** student, started off the semester doing poorly on vocabulary tests and struggling to complete and hand in assignments. She almost never spoke during class discussions and was frequently absent. I was encouraged, however, because the assignments that Student 1 did hand in were often the strongest in the class. After telling Student 1 this fact after a particularly well-done assignment, she began speaking up more in class and handing in her work on time.

Disappointingly, Student 1 was absent during **LG I pre-assessment** and scored only 3 points out of 10 on the **LG I post-assessment**. Vocabulary seems to be of particular difficulty for Student 1. Though **LG I** results appear disappointing, Student 1 showed some improvement regarding **LG II**. **LG II pre- and post-assessment** showed her improving from 40 percent to 60 percent**.** She also made improvements regarding **LG III** scoring 80 percent on the pre-test and 100 percent on the post-test. She showed significant improvement on **LG IV**, scoring only 66 percent on the pre-test and 90 percent on the Short Story Post-Test essay. Student 1 ended the Short Story Unit testing at or above proficiency levels for 2 out of 4 learning goals.

I was concerned about Student 7, another **special needs** student, early on in the class. While he seemed like a bright young man, early absences, disorganization, and the inability or unwillingness to turn in assignments caused his grade to suffer. Student 7 failed English IV last semester and was failing this semester for the majority of time I taught. I was encouraged, however, by his thoughtful contributions to class discussions and his grasp of the ideas and elements we encountered.

Unfortunately, Student 7 was added late to the class and was not required by School A to make up the Short Story Pre-Test. He was also absent on the day of the Vocabulary Pre-Test.

This information, however, does not detract from the improvements Student 7 made throughout the Short Story Unit. He scored 80 percent on the **LG I post-assessment**, though absences allowed him little in class review with the vocabulary words. Student 7 also showed strides in **LG II and LG III**, scoring 100 percent on both post-assessments. Student 7's **LG IV** final essay was one of the best in the class and also earned him 100 percent. Because he struggled throughout the semester, scoring at or above proficiency levels on all 4 learning goals is a significant accomplishment for Student 7.

Student 6, a Spanish-speaking ELL student, was absent at least 40 percent of the time I spent in the English IV classroom and did not complete a number of assignments. Assignments that were handed in were usually late and therefore received only partial credit. She was also absent for an entire week preceding the test and did not benefit from many in-class discussions and reviews.

Though Student 6 struggled with absences, she did make improvements throughout the semester. **LG I pre- and post-assessments** showed her improving from 60 percent to 80 percent. Student 6 also showed improvement regarding **LG II**, scoring 60 percent on the Short Story Pre-Test and 80 percent on the Post-Test. She remained constant regarding **LG III**, scoring 80 percent on both the pre- and post-assessments. **LG IV** was a disappointing goal for Student 6, though not because of a lack of knowledge regarding material. After scoring 66 percent on the Short Story Pre-Test, she wrote a great post-test essay that would have earned her almost full credit. Unfortunately, Student 6 did not turn in the essay at the time of testing and therefore only received half credit.

<u>Reflection and Self-Evaluation</u>

The learning goal in which the students were **most successful** was **LG IV**, the Short Story essay. Though 12 out of 13 students finished the unit proficient in LG III compared to 10 students proficient in **LG IV**, students showed the most improvement in **LG IV.** Class proficiently levels increased from 7.69 percent at the time of pre-testing to 76.92 percent during post-assessment and 11 out of 13 students improved their scores from pre- to post-test. These numbers are also promising when compared to LG I, II, and III, goals assessed using multiple choice tests. Because **LG IV** required students to apply their knowledge of short story and plot elements to a chosen story in essay form instead of just regurgitating material, it was an extremely useful goal in assessing student learning.

LG IV's success can be related to a couple of factors. First, students were allowed to choose which story they would address in their essay and could therefore choose a story they enjoyed and related to on a personal level. Students could also choose which elements they were addressing. Because students chose their own stories, all but one student finished in the time allowed. Student 1, a special education student, was allowed extra time to complete the essay per my previously stated **adaptations** and scored 90 percent. Second, class discussions almost always involved identifying various elements within the stories, and the review activity allowed students to focus on one story and its elements while learning from classmates regarding the other stories. By **adapting** the review activity both in time and format, students were afforded a more thorough review session and felt more prepared for the test. Students 4 and 9 both chose to do their essays on the stories they had reviewed and each received 100 percent. The success of the review activity relates to **Piaget and Vygotsky's** ideas promoting the active student and collaboration in the classroom and contributed greatly to the success of **LG IV**.

The learning goal in which the students were **least successful** was **LG I**, vocabulary. Students took both the pre- and post-tests in multiple-choice format. Though there were individual improvements with 12 out of 13 students increasing scores between pre- and post-assessment, I did not meet my 75 percent proficiency goal as only 54 percent reached **LG I** proficiency. I was also disappointed to see the 5 students who did not meet proficiency scored 60 percent or lower.

LG I's lack of success can be attributed to multiple factors. First, the vocabulary words, chosen by School A at the beginning of the year, usually have little to do with classroom curriculum. Though I made every effort to connect the weekly words with the stories we were encountering by having students write sentences or locate synonyms and antonyms, most students still seemed disconnected. The only enthusiasm came during Vocabulary BINGO, though upon reflection that may have had more to do with the prizes awarded than with the actual words. I think Vocabulary BINGO can be an engaging review tool, but students also need meaningful interaction with the words on a regular basis.

Second, while we discussed the words in context with the stories we were reading, the final test was created by School A and was composed of generic fill-in-the-blank sentences and synonym/antonym matching. I did not have access to the test until the day of. This caused disjointedness between how students interacted with the words and how the words were actually assessed. The **adaptations** I provided were somewhat irrelevant. The students tested well and did not need new seats and no one needed material read aloud. However, Student 7 did choose to take his test in the resource room and scored 80 percent.

Though not directly tied to the Short Story Unit, I think **LG I** was a goal in which I learned a great deal about student learning. **Noam Chomsky** speaks of learning as only having

lasting results when students see the point. In order for students to be successful, their natural

curiosity should be aroused. My students were not at all interested in the weekly vocabulary

words and that lack of appeal led to **LG I's** lack of success. In the future, I will focus more on

vocabulary as an integrated part of the curriculum instead of as an outside "activity." If allowed

to choose vocabulary words, I will chose words that are relevant to both current curriculum and

student life. If, like School A, the words are chosen for me, I will go to great lengths to

incorporate the words into lessons and activities on a regular basis.

Professional Development

As I enter the teaching profession, I will strive to incorporate rigor, relevance, and

relationships into my classroom on a daily basis. I will challenge my students and myself to

think and connect with material in new ways. I will help students enjoy learning and make

personal connections with the curriculum. Finally, I will form safe and meaningful relationships

with students in order to help them succeed. To accomplish this goal, I will need to get to know

each of my students on both an academic and personal level in order to provide opportunities for

success. I need to be willing to try new things and not be afraid to fail. Failure simply means I

have learned what does not work and puts me one step closer to what does.

Another aspect I would like to improve upon is creating adaptations for curriculum and

assessment. Adaptations were challenging for me, and I see now how beneficial they can be if

planned ahead of time. Many of the adaptations I created were behaviorally based, and having

adaptations for the curriculum would have made some lessons run more smoothly. In order to

create successful adaptations, I will need to get to know the classroom dynamics, including

curriculum and the students themselves, and plan lessons well ahead of time.

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