SIM
Strategic Instruction Model™

The Quality Assignment Routine

The Content Enhancement Series

2021
The University of Kansas
Center for Research on Learning
Lawrence, Kansas

Content Enhancement

A way of teaching an academically diverse group of students in which:

- Both group and individual needs are valued and met;
- The integrity of the content is maintained;

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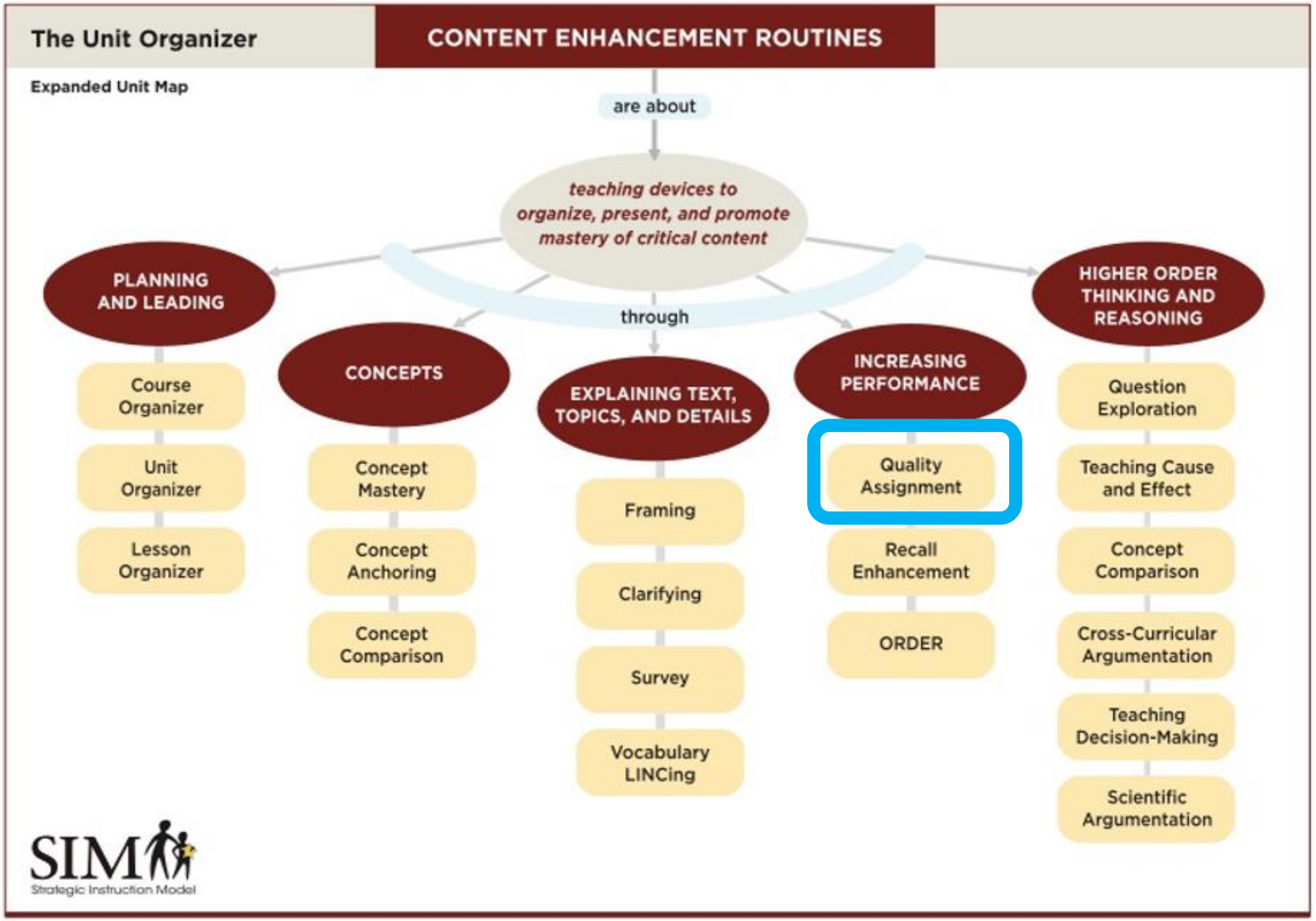
Content Enhancement

A way of teaching an academically diverse group of students in which:

- Critical features of the content are selected and transformed in a manner that promotes student learning; and
- Instruction is carried out in a partnership with students.

Content Enhancement Routines



Characteristics Of A Good Assignment According To Students

- Is different from other assignments
- Has an understood purpose
- Has clear/well-organized directions
- Allows for interpersonal/social interactions
- Is personally relevant for students
- Provides opportunities for creative expression

Characteristics Of A Good Assignment According To Students

- Allows for feedback
- Lists available resources
- Meets criteria for optimal challenge
- Includes student choices
- Is considerate in relation to time demands
- Lists evaluation criteria

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The Purpose Of The Routine

- To improve the quality of assignments *given* to students.
- To increase the assignment completion *rate* by students.
- To improve the *quality* of work on assignments completed by students.

When To Begin Using The Routine

- Any time throughout the school year

- Best introduced at the beginning of the year or semester

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Steps in the Quality Assignment Routine

- Prepare the Assignment
- Prepare the Students
- Present the Assignment
- Evaluate the Assignment

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Get Ready!

Prepare the Assignment

- Construct a plan.
- Create a visual device.

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Construct
A
Plan

Get Ready!

Plan Two Types of Assignments

- Big, one-time assignments.
- The first in a series of assignments.

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Get Ready!

Collect the needed planning tools.

- Textbook, notes, reference materials
- Quality Assignment Planning Worksheet
- Quality Assignment Planning Chart
- Assignment Ideas Sheet

Use the Planning Worksheet to construct a high-quality assignment.

Plan for the presentation.

The Planning Worksheet

- **P**lan the purpose of the assignment.
- **L**ink the assignment to student needs and interests.
- **A**rrange clear student directions.
- **N**ote evaluation date and results.

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Plan The Purpose Of The Assignment

- Determine knowledge or skills students should be able to demonstrate by completing assignment.
- Determine *how* students will demonstrate skills or knowledge. Use “Assignment Ideas” Sheet.
- State how the knowledge and/or skills acquired will benefit students.

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Plan The Purpose Of The Assignment

Course **World History**
Unit **Ancient Greece**

The Quality Assignment Planning Worksheet

P

Plan the purpose of the assignment

1. What will students accomplish?
Analyze why the Ancient Greek culture was destroyed.

2. How will they do this?
By creating a journal from the perspective of someone who lived in Ancient Greece.

3. Why is this important? (Benefits)
So we can understand why such a highly developed civilization fell apart, and prevent the same thing from happening to our own civilization.

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Assignment Ideas

Verbs from Bloom's Taxonomy

(Select what students should do when completing the assignment)

account for	decide	judge (with a purpose)	predict	select
analyze relationships	define		present (uniquely)	simplify
arbitrate	describe	label	prioritize	summarize
assess	determine	lsit	produce	translate
break into parts	develop	manipulate	project	transpose
check	discern	match	propose a plan	try
calssify	establish	name	recall	uncover
combine	examine	outline	recognize (patterns)	underline
compare	explain	paraphrase	remember	use
contrast	formulate	perform	reorganize	verify
create	identify		reproduce	
	interpret		retell	

Assignment Ideas

(Select what students might produce as part of the assignment)

advertisement	debate	illustration	pantomime	scrapbook
audiotape	diagram	interview	photograph	sculpture
book	diary	journal	play	self-evaluation
book report	diorama	map	poem	song
cartoon	discussion (panel or group)	magazine article	poster	stitchery
chart	essay	mobile	product (new)	story
collection	film	model	puzzle	survey
commercial	filmstrip	news article	questionnaire	tape recording
conculsion	grame	newspaper	rap	television show
court trial	graph		radio show	termp paper
			record	videotape
			report	

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Link The Assignment To Student Needs And Interests

- Consider variations to prevent student boredom/frustration. Consider varying:
  - Format
  - Organization
  - Content
  - Resources
  - Purpose
  - Location
  - Social interaction
- Consider pitfalls to successful completion.
- Offer solutions to possible pitfalls.

Link The Assignment To Student Needs And Interests

L

Link assignment to student needs & interests (HALO)

1. How can the assignment be made personally relevant for students?	2. Options/Choices?	3. Pitfalls to successful completion of work?	4. Solutions to these pitfalls?
Choose 1 aspect of Greek life that interests you (e.g., sports, art, politics, religion)	With partner or by self; Diary or audio tape; Athens/Sparta	1. Diary format 2. Find/use tape recorders	1. Show sample diary 2. Tell where to get/how to use tape recorders

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Types Of Students

- **H**igh Achievers
- **A**verage Achievers
- **L**ow Achievers
- **O**ther Students

Types Of Pitfalls & Ways To Eliminate Them

- Confusing vocabulary: Define terms.
- Unavailability of equipment: Provide equipment.
- Unfamiliarity with equipment: Teach use.

Types Of Pitfalls & Ways To Eliminate Them

- Lack of particular academic skill: Provide appropriate options for skills.
- Low access to resources: Teach about resources & their use
- Low motivation: Provide a variety of rationales and rewards

Arrange Clear Student Directions

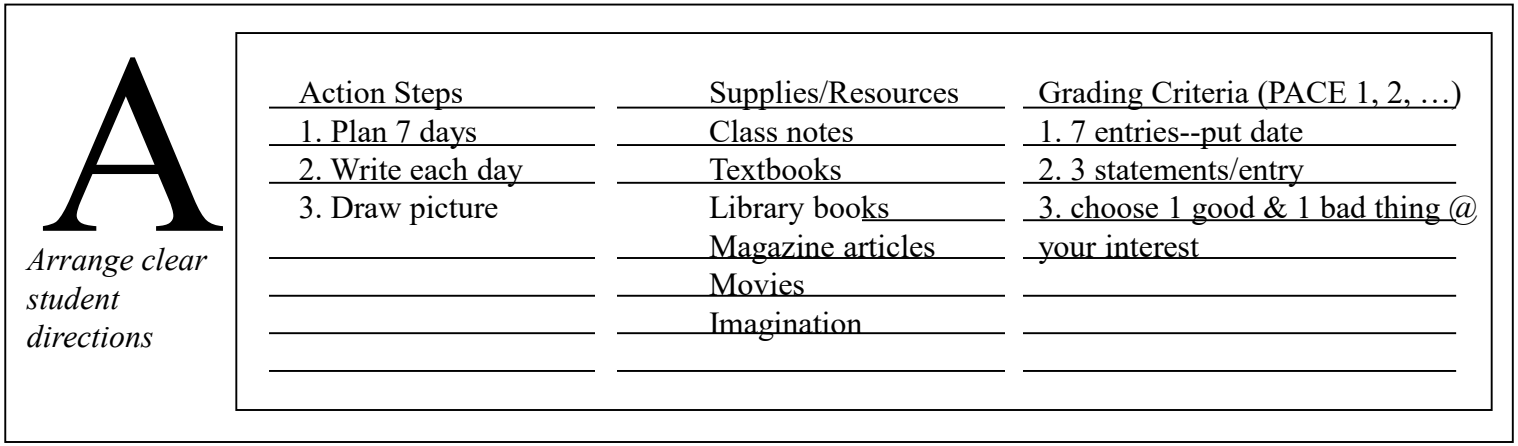
- Action Steps: The task broken into component parts
- Supplies/Resources: The human and material resources needed to complete the work.
- Grading Criteria: How grades will be determined.

Arrange Clear Student Directions

- Due Date(s): The day on which work should be handed in; shows time consideration.

- Points: The total points assignment is worth.

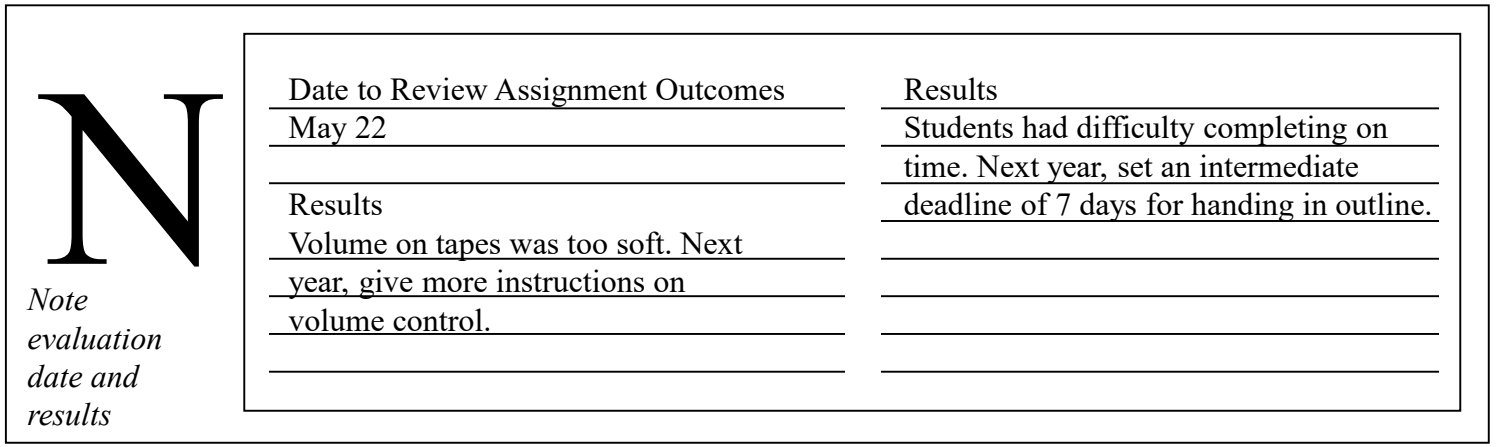
Arrange Clear Student Directions



Note Evaluation Date And Results

- Assignment Review Date: Note the date when the graded assignment results will be ready and an assignment discussion can be conducted.
- Results: Record necessary changes in the assignment to ensure better performance the next time it is used or the course is taught.

Note Evaluation Date And Results



Involve Students In Planning An Assignment

- Explain the purpose of the worksheet: to plan a high-quality assignment.
- State expectations for everyone to participate.
- Briefly describe the unit on which the assignment is to be based.

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Involve Students In Planning An Assignment

- Give each student a copy of the Assignment Planning Worksheet. Explain assignment purpose.
- Give students a copy of the Assignment Ideas Chart. Ask students to use this information to create an interesting assignment that will accomplish the assignment purpose.

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Involve Students In Planning An Assignment

- Discuss possible directions, options, grading criteria, supplies, and due date. Help students complete the “L” and “A” sections of the worksheet.
- If a team is planning the assignment, determine who will present the assignment to the entire class.

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Involve Students In Planning An Assignment

- After assignment has been completed, involve students in evaluating the assignment outcomes and whether future changes should be made.

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Quality Assignment Planning Chart

Plan the purpose of the assignment

1. Answer the question, "What will students accomplish" by determining the knowledge or skills students should be able to demonstrate by completing the assignment.
2. Answer the question, "How will they do this? by determining how students will demonstrate their knowledge. To do this, select a verb and an assignment idea from the "Assignment Ideas" Sheet.
3. Answer the question, "Why is this important?" by stating how the knowledge and /or skills they acquire by completing the assignment will be of benefit in the future.

Link assignment to student needs & interests

1. To make the assignment personally relevant for students, consider the physical, intellectual, social, emotional, and cultural characteristics and interests of students.

Consider offering assignments based on:

- current events
- heroes/heroins
- social interaction
- cultural values
- community involvement
- TV
- fantasy
- futurism

2. Consider ways to produce a final product without boring or frustrating students.

Consider variations according to:

- **Format** (match modality strengths-oral, written demonstration, etc.)
- **Organization** (lists, diagrams, outlines)
- **Content** (topics, task selection)
- **Purpose** (practice, prepare, extend, create)
- **Location** (library, home, study hall)
- **Social interaction** (partner, small group)
- **Resources** (books, film strips, etc.)

3. Consider pitfalls that might prevent successful completion of the assignment. For example:

- Confusing vocabulary words
- Unavailability of equipment
- Unfamiliarity with equipment
- Lack of particular academic skill
- Low access to resources
- Low motivation

4. Offer solutions to such problems.

Arrange clear student directions

To arrange clear student directions, jot down information that is complete and easy to follow. This includes:

Action Steps:
The task broken into its component parts.

Supplies/Resources
The human and material resources *(text books, dictionaries, magazines, computers, people)* needed to complete the work.

Grading Criteria
The way grades will be determined.

Due Date(s)
The day on which the work is to be handed in; shows time consideration.

Points
The total points assignment is worth.

Note evaluation date & results

Specify a date for reviewing the appropriateness and outcomes of the assignment:

Assignment Review Date
Note the date when the assignhment results will be ready and an assignment discussion can be conducted.

Results:
Record necessary changes in the assignment to ensure better performance the next time it is used or the course is taught.

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Create a Visual Device

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The Assignment Window

- Is a graphic device that:
  - Is prepared ahead of time by the teacher.
  - Allows the teacher and students to record important information related to an upcoming assignment.
  - Is presented to the class through a co-construction process.
  - Is used to promote student understanding of how to complete an upcoming assignment.

The Assignment Window

??? Directions ?? Materials/Resource ?? Grading ???

Subject _____ Date: Given _____ Due _____ Turned In _____ ☐

Read *Answer* *Write* *Other*

_____

_____

_____

Parts: _____ # of study sessions: _____ Actual Grade Received:

_____ Grade Goal: A☐ B☐ C☐ ___ A B C D F

_____ Quality Goal: A☐ B☐ C☐ Other: _____

Goal: _____

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Subject English Date: Given 5/4 Due 5/5 Turned In ____

Read *Answer* *Write* *Other*

D: Define 5 vocab. wds., p. 67. Write meaningful sentence/ea.

O: Choose which 5 words

G: 1. spell vocab. wds. correctly, 2 underline wds. Worth: 20 pts.

S/R: Text; glossary

Parts: 1. Pick wds 5 min.

2. Defins/exps 45 mins

3. Check 10 min

# of study sessions: 2

Grade Goal: A☐ B☐ C☐ ___

Quality Goal: A☐ B☐ C☐

Actual Grade Received: A B C D F

Other: _____

Goal: Use COPS

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Subject English | Date: Given 5/4 Due 5/5 | Turned In

Read *Answer* *Write* *Other*

D: Define 5 vocab. wds., p. 67. Write meaningful sentence/ea.

O: Choose wh

G: 1. spell voca

S/R: Text; gloss

Critical Dates

The date the assignment is given.

The date the assignment is due.

Parts: 1. Pick wds

2. Defins/exps 45 mins

3. Check 10 min

Received:

Grade Goal: A☐ B☐ C☐ ___ A B C D F

Quality Goal: A☐ B☐ C☐ Other: _____

Goal: Use COPS

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Subject English Date: Given 5/4 Due 5/5 Turned In

Read *Answer* *Write* *Other*

D: Define 5 vocab. wds., p. 67. Write meaningful sentence/ea.

O: Choose which 5 words

G: 1. s

S/R: T

Parts:

2. Defins/

3. Check 10 min

eceived:

F

Quality Goal: A B C Other:

Goal: Use COPS

Major Activity

The primary activity that students must perform to complete the assignment.

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Subject English Date: Given 5/4 Due 5/5 Turned In

Read *Answer* *Write* *Other*

D: Define 5 vocab. wds., p. 67. Write meaningful sentence/ea.

O: Choose which 5 words

G: 1. sp

S/R: Tex

Parts: 1.

2. Defins/ex

3. Check 10

Received:

D F

Goal: Use COPS

Directions

A description of what students must do to complete the assignment.

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Subject English Date: Given 5/4 Due 5/5 Turned In

Read *Answer* *Write* *Other*

D: Define 5 vocab. wds., p. 67. Write meaningful sentence/ea.

O: Choose which 5 words

G: 1. spell vocab. wds. correctly, 2 underline wds. Worth: 20 pts.

S/R: Text; glos

Parts: 1. Pick wd

2. Defins/exps

3. Check 10 min

Goal: Use C

Options/Choices

The options students have for completing the assignment.

Includes choice of content, format, due date, social interaction, and resources.

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Grading Criteria

A statement related to requirements for the assignment and how the assignment is to be graded. Includes the number of points the assignment is worth.

Subject English

Read

D: Define 5 vocab. wd

O: Choose which 5 words

G: 1. spell vocab. wds. correctly, 2 underline wds. Worth: 20 pts.

S/R: Text; glossary

Parts: 1. Pick wds 5 min.

2. Defins/exps 45 mins

3. Check 10 min

# of study sessions: 2

Grade Goal: (A) ☐ B ☐ C ☐ ___

Quality Goal: (A) ☐ B ☐ C ☐

Actual Grade Received: A B C D F

Other: _____

Goal: Use COPS

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Supplies/Resources

A statement related to the supplies and resources students are to use to complete the assignment.

Subject English Da

Read

D: Define 5 vocab. wds., p. 6

O: Choose which 5 words

G: 1. spell vocab. wds. correctly, 2 underline wds. Worth: 20 pts.

S/R: Text; glossary

Parts: 1. Pick wds 5 min.

2. Defins/exps 45 mins

3. Check 10 min

# of study sessions: 2

Grade Goal: A☐ B☐ C☐

Quality Goal: A☐ B☐ C☐

Actual Grade Received: ___ A B C D F

Other: _____

Goal: Use COPS

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Assignment Plan

An outline of the action steps required to complete the assignment.

An estimation of how much time each task will take.

Subject English

Read

D: Define 5 vocab. wds.

O: Choose which 5 word

G: 1. spell vocab. wds. c

S/R: Text; glossary

Parts: 1. Pick wds 5 min.

2. Defins/exps 45 mins

3. Check 10 min

# of study sessions: 2

Actual Grade Received:

A B C D F

Other: _____

Goal: Use COPS

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Goals

A statement related to the student's goals for the assignment.

The student's grade goal for the assignment.

The student's quality goal for the assignment.

Subject English

Read

D: Define 5 vocab. wds., p

O: Choose which 5 words

G: 1. spell vocab. wds. co

S/R: Text; glossary

Parts: 1. Pick wds, 5 min

# of study sessions: 2

Grade Goal: (A) ☐ B ☐ C ☐ ___

Quality Goal: (A) ☐ B ☐ C ☐

Actual Grade Received:

A B C D F

Other: _____

Goal: Use COPS

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The Assignment Window

Course & Assignment:

Date Given: **Date Due:**

Directions:

Options:

Grading Criteria:

Supplies/Resources:

Goal:

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The Assignment Window

Course & Assignment: History/journal: Ancient Greece

Date Given: May 12 **Date Due:** May 18

Directions: Create a journal of life in Ancient Greece. Develop journal from perspective of someone who might have had an interest similar to one of yours (e.g., cooking, technology, athletics).

Options: Format: can complete as either a written diary or audiotape; can do by self or with a partner.

Grading Criteria: 1. Seven entries with dates; 2. Three statements/ entry; 3. Choose 1 good & 1 bad thing about your interest

Supplies/Resources: Notes, text, library books, magazine articles, movies, imagination

Goal: To get an A

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The Assignment Window

Subject History Date: Given 3/12 Due 3/18 Turned In ____

Read *Answer* *Write* *Other*

See handout

Parts: _____ # of study sessions: _____

_____ Grade Goal: A☐ B☐ C☐ ___

_____ Quality Goal: A☐ B☐ C☐

Goal: _____

Actual Grade Received:

A B C D F

Other: _____

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ASSIGNMENT HANDOUT

World History

March 12, 1997

Assignment: Journal on Ancient Greece
Date due: March 18
Points: 100 points (1/10 of unit grade)
Purpose: So we can analyze why such a highly developed civilization fell apart, and prevent the same thing from happening to our own civilization.

Directions: Choose some aspect of Greek culture that interests you (e.g., sports, politics, art, drama, music, domestic life). Focusing on that interest, create a journal that describes that aspect of life for someone who lived in Ancient Greece and had that same interest. Show one good thing and one bad about that aspect of culture.

Options:

1. You may do this assignment either by yourself or with a partner.
2. Journal may be either a written diary or an audiotape.
3. Choose whether the person you're writing for lived in Athens or Sparta.

Grading Criteria:

1. Journal must have at least seven entries. Each entry must have a date. Entries need not be consecutive (e.g., doesn't have to be March 1, 2, 3; can be Mar. 1, April 2, May 10).
2. Each entry must include at least three statements or sentences.
3. The journal should focus on one good and one bad thing about the interest you have chosen.

Supplies/Resources: Class notes, textbooks, library books, magazine articles, movies, and imaginations.

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Model Assignment Window

Course & Assignment: English: Vocabulary Sentences

Date Given: 5/4 **Date Due:**

Directions: Define five vocab words. P. 67. Write meaningful sentence for each.

Options: Choose which five vocabulary words

Grading Criteria: 1. Spell vocab words correctly; 2. Underline each vocab word

Supplies/Resources: Text, glossary

Goal: To get an A

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Get Set!

Prepare the Students

(This step is done only once with each class of students.)

- Teach students the “PACE” Requirements. (Lesson 1)

- Teach students the “REACT” Strategy. (Lesson 2)

PACE 1, 2 Requirements

For Teachers & Students to Use When Evaluating Assignments

Prompt

Arranged neatly

Complete

Edited

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

_____

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PACE 1, 2 Requirements

For Teachers & Students to Use When Evaluating Assignments

Prompt

Arranged neatly

Complete

Edited

1. Seven entries w/ date
2. Three statements/entry
3. 1 good & 1 bad thing about your interest in each entry

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How To Teach PACE (Lesson 1)

- Give an advance organizer.
- Discuss examples & nonexamples of “quality” work.
- Introduce & explain the “basic” PACE Requirements (“P,” “A,” “C,” & “E”).
- Explain the “additional” PACE Requirements (the numbers “1” & “2”).

How To Teach PACE (Lesson 1)

- Model how to check assignments with the PACE Requirements.

- Summarize and state expectations for students to use the PACE Requirements to check all future assignments.

Sample Assignment A

Ethan
Social Studies
May 8

Chapter 5

1) alien: belonging to another country
Tom is an alien.

2. flapjack → a pancake or griddle cake.
Cook made us flapjacks for dinner.

3) splendid → [redacted] worthy of high praise.
Her dress is splendid

4. riverboat - bote for transporting [redacted] people during wartime long ago.
I rote the riverbote.

[redacted]

Sample Assignment B

Tom Brown
Social Studies
May 5, 1997

Chapter 5

1. alien: belonging to another country.
Pedro is an alien who is now living in the United States.

2. complement: that which belongs to perfection.
Tomato sauce is a delicious complement to noodles.

3. flapjack: a pancake or griddle cake.
Henry can eat ten flapjacks for breakfast if there is enough syrup.

4. riverboat: boat for transporting people during wartime long ago.
In the late nineteenth century, many people traveled by riverboat.

5. splendid: worthy of high praise.
The colorful sunset was a splendid sight.

PACE 1 spelling 2 underlining

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Sample Assignment C

Gwyn Michaels
May 5, 1997
Social Studies

Chapter 5

1. alien: a person who owes allegiance to another country.
"A boat of aliens arrived on the coast of Florida."

2. complement: that which must be added to make a whole.
"Basil was the perfect complement to spaghetti sauce."

3. flapjack: a pancake or griddle cake.
"Nick was full after eating one flapjack and three pieces of bacon."

4. riverboat: a boat for transporting people and goods on rivers during the 1800s.
"Samuel Clemens travelled the Mississippi River by riverboat and later wrote about his adventures."

5. splendid: magnificent; imposing.
"The Eiffel Tower in Paris made a splendid background for the photograph."

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Checking Assignments With PACE

- Write “PACE 1, 2…” on your assignment.
- Draw two small lines under each letter and number.
- Write key words for additional requirement next to each number.
- Think about the meaning of each letter and number. Place a checkmark under/next to each item if you think you fulfilled it.

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The REACT Strategy

For students to use during the assignment presentation

- **R**eview the directions.
- **E**valuate whether the directions are complete.
- **A**sk questions.
- **C**reate a plan to complete the assignment.
- **T**arget some goals.

How To Teach REACT (Lesson 2)

- Review the PACE lesson; preview new lesson.
- Introduce and explain each step of the REACT Strategy.
- Explain and model how to record the directions of an assignment.
- Model each step of REACT.
- Conduct verbal practice on the REACT Steps.

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How To Teach REACT (Lesson 2)

- Give an actual assignment as students record it and use the REACT Strategy.
- Review the REACT Strategy. Prompt students to use it from now on.
- Conclude the lesson with a reminder to use PACE on the finished assignment.
- On the following day, review assignment.

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Present the Assignment

Optional Plans For The Presentation

- Use the Planning Worksheet as notes to complete an Assignment Window on an overhead transparency as students record the assignment in their notebooks.
- Construct a draft of the Assignment Window ahead of time. Add to or clarify information with students as they record the information into their notebooks.

Optional Plans For The Presentation

- For complex examples, create a handout with all important information. (Examples on p. 54 of manual.)
- Estimate the amount of time you will need to present the assignment by using the Cue and Do (ASSIGN) in the Cue-Do-Review sequence.
- Add at least 5 or 10 minutes for students to get started on the assignment.

Present the Assignment

- Cue
  - State that an assignment is about to be given.
  - Prompt students to record the assignment in their notebooks.
  - Specify expectations.

Present the Assignment

- Do
  - **A**nnounce the assignment and its purpose
  - **S**tate clear instructions.
  - **S**top for students to "REACT."
  - **I**nvestigate student understanding.
  - **G**ive start-up time and offer help.
  - **N**ote expectations.

Evaluate the Assignment

The "RATE" Evaluation Steps

Rate finished assignments with "PACE."

Analyze student error patterns.

Talk about student responses on the assignment.

Extend offers

- that students can submit corrected work
- that you will provide help to anyone who wants it

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Summary Of How To Use The Components Of The Routine

- Plan an assignment using the Quality Assignment Planning Worksheet.
- Consider how to present the assignment to students.
- Teach the PACE Requirements.
- Teach the REACT Strategy.
- Present the assignment. (Cue-Do)

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Summary Of How To Use The Components Of The Routine

- Evaluate the students' completed assignments. (Review)
- Plan, present, and evaluate other assignments.
- Involve students in the planning of future assignments.

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The Cue-Do-Review Sequence

- Cue
  - State that an assignment is about to be given.
  - Prompt students to record the assignment in their notebooks.
  - Specify expectations.

The Cue-Do-Review Sequence

- Do
  - **A**nnounce the assignment and its purpose
  - **S**tate clear instructions.
  - **S**top for students to "REACT."
  - **I**nvestigate student understanding.
  - **G**ive start-up time and offer help.
  - **N**ote expectations.

The Cue-Do-Review Sequence

- **Review**

  Rate finished assignments with “PACE.”

  Analyze student error patterns.

  Talk about student responses on the assignment.

  Extend offers

  - that students can submit corrected work
  - that you will provide help to anyone who wants it

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Two Big Wins!

- Students learn more when they're sure they:
  - are doing authentic work as they are learning,
  - gain personal satisfaction from their learning, and
  - see that their learning is reflected in the grades they receive.
- Teachers win because
  - improved learning for students is professionally and personally rewarding.

Student Comments About The Routine

- “I thought it was fun because we could make more assignments that were better for us and more fun.”
- “I’ve learned to check my paper. Now I do better. I think about it now, and I’ve noticed a change in my grades.”

Student Comments About The Routine

- “I take more time on my assignments and try to put more effort into them.”
- “The thing I liked was we had input on the assignments.”
- “It sure makes you more willing to learn if you can learn what you want to learn and think it is important.”

Beware Of These Pitfalls

- “Students don’t need time to REACT.”
- “Assignments don’t have to be prepared outside of class.”
- “If I don’t get it right the first time, I won’t ever get it right.”
- “Students will automatically see the advantages of using an assignment notebook.”

Student Comments On What Teachers Should Do When Giving Assignments

- Offer challenge & choices
- Consider amount of work/time
- Offer help
- Give clear directions
- Offer variety
- Promote understanding
- Provide feedback
- Provide opportunities to redo work
- Demonstrate enthusiasm

Research Results On The Quality Assignment Routine

- Teacher Behaviors

	Before Training	After Training
Planning Behaviors	50.5%	96.1%
Presenting Behaviors	32.8%	89.3%
Evaluating Behaviors	8.2%	93.8%

For more information
https://sim.ku.edu/quality-assignment-routine

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