**Assessment Commentary Directions:** Respond to the prompts below (no more than 8 single-spaced pages, including prompts) by typing your responses within the brackets following each prompt. Do not delete or alter the prompts; both the prompts and your responses are included in the total page count allowed. Refer to the evidence chart in the handbook to ensure that this document complies with all format specifications. Pages exceeding the maximum will not be scored.

1. **Analyzing Focus Learner(s)' Performance**
   a. Identify the lesson objectives from the learning segment measured by each daily assessment record.

   [Lesson 1: This lesson provided the pre- and post-assessment data that was collected on the focus learner, as well as a couple progress monitoring samples. The pre- and post-assessments were exactly the same: student was shown 75 flashcards of nonsense words, and it was recorded how many he knew and how many he didn’t know. The pre-assessment data was the baseline data used to create the rest of the lessons (based on the letter sounds that were mispronounced). From that data, lessons and lesson targets were created to increase the student’s knowledge and ability to identify specific letter sounds. Two instances of progress monitoring were implemented to track the student’s rate of fluency by words per minute. The post-assessment data showed if and where the student made any progress on the letter sounds he was able to pronounce correctly.

   Lesson 2: A student dictation page (that is a standard form used by the school’s prescribed reading system) was used to collect data on the student’s ability to transcribe dictated sounds, words, and sentences. On this page the student also showed their knowledge of the targeted language/communication words and phrases.

   Lesson 3: Informal data was collected from this lesson. I kept a record on a piece of notebook paper of the pictures the student incorrectly sorted, and noted in which pile the picture was misplaced.

   Lesson 4: Informal data was collected from this lesson. As I observed the student correctly or incorrectly identify a letter, or not identify any letter at all, I made tally marks on notebook paper.

   Lesson 5: Informal data was collected from this lesson. After the learner would read a joke, I had him go back through the text and identify the letters /b/ and /d/ by either pointing to them or underlining them and then saying the letter name. If he incorrectly identified a letter I circled it.]

   b. Describe any changes in the assessments, daily assessment records, and/or lesson objectives from what was described in the lesson plans, and explain why changes were made.

   [ Not applicable ]

   c. If a work sample is an excerpt from video from Task 2: Instructing and Engaging the Focus Learner(s), provide a time-stamp reference here.

   [Almost the entire video segment, until time 10:10, is a work sample for Lessons 3 and 4. The student pointed to letters to identify the sounds they made. Other work samples are the Assessment Records. ]

   d. Summarize each focus learner’s progress toward the lesson objectives. This summary can be presented in a chart or described in several paragraphs.
[In reviewing the pre-assessment data, it was clear the learner struggled with identification of the letters /b/ and /d/. (There were other problem areas, but having such a short amount of time to conduct the lessons, I chose to focus on those two letters.) In the baseline data, the student mispronounced 38 out of 75 flashcards. The lessons planned, materials used, and activities executed were all developed to help the learner increase his knowledge and recognition of /b/ and /d/, thus increasing his fluency. Throughout the instruction process, the learner was also exposed to many words containing other letter sounds he struggled with on the pre-assessment, thus increasing his fluency even more.

I saw improvement with the learner every day. I don’t necessarily have written, audio, or visual documentation of all of the bits that show his improvement, but it was evident through my observations of and discussions with the learner that he was making progress. We discussed several strategies he could use for differentiating between /b/ and /d/ and I observed him using these strategies throughout the lesson segments.

Each of the lessons was created with the objective for the learner to be able to more easily identify /b/ and /d/. From the actual data I collected it is evident that the learner made progress toward both of his learning targets. Each additional instance data was collected on a lesson, the learner performed better than he had the previous time. For examples: When his progress was monitored on his fluency of correct words per minute (lesson 1), he increased his fluency from 75% to 87.5%; When given the picture sort activity (lesson 3), the second time he performed it his number of incorrect sorts was cut in half; When reading the picture book for the second time (lesson 4), his number of incorrect or no responses both dropped; and when given the post-assessment, he went from 50.6% words unknown to only 18.6% words unknown.]

e. Analyze what each focus learner appears to understand or do well and where s/he continues to struggle or need greater challenge, including any patterns in misunderstandings, errors, confusions, or needs. Be sure to cite evidence from your summary (above) as part of this discussion.

[When the learner takes his time and uses strategies for differentiating /b/ and /d/, he does extremely well at decoding letter sounds and reading correctly. (The learner actually told me he gets confused as to when his strategies, that he doesn’t when he should use them, and I told him whenever he is unsure of the letter he should use them.) When given the post-assessment, I encouraged the learner to take his time and use strategies to decode words he was unsure of and, as you can see from the summary above, he drastically improved from the pre- to post-assessment.

However, when the learner begins to lose focus and hurries along, he guesses and makes mistakes. The learner has an easier time identifying /b/ when it is at the beginning of a word, and still struggles to identify it at the end of a word (for example, he would read “beb” as “bed”), as evidenced by the pre- and post-assessments.

Even though I was specifically targeting /b/ and /d/, based on the pre- and post- assessments, the learner increased his identification of several other letters as well (including /r/, /s/, /z/, /k/, and /l/), which is evidenced in the pre- and post-assessments, and the picture sorting lesson.

There were times when the learner seemed to really have a grasp on the learning target of /b/ and /d/ and would generalize his knowledge across contexts. For example, we were done with the lesson for the day and I said I had to give my dog a bath that night. Without any prompting the learner said, “hey! Bath- /b/! There’s a /b/ in bath!” However, there were times when he seemed like he just had no clue and was only guessing. I really think his ability to differentiate
/b/ and /d/ has a lot to do with his focus, attention, and interest. While he has certainly made improvements in this area and towards the learning target, he still requires continued support with these letters to concrete his knowledge of them.]

f. Analyze connections between each focus learner’s outcomes and instruction, support, and/or the learning environment. How did your instruction, support, or modifications of the learning environment lead to each focus learner’s progress on or attainment of lesson objectives? Cite evidence from the assessments to support your conclusions.

Cite evidence from the learner work sample(s), the baseline data, daily assessment records, and final assessment (if different from the daily assessment record) as needed, to clarify or illustrate your summary and analyses.

[As I have mentioned several times, the learner sometimes has difficulty staying focused and can struggle with distractions. Because of the nature of the school and availability for pull-out instruction, we would conduct our lesson in any number of places. In three out of the four locations, the learner remained relatively undistracted by the surroundings; however, for one lesson we were at a table at the end of a hallway and the learner, understandably, became distracted when people were in the hallway.

In the lessons in the video clip, the learner used a finger pointer to point to the letters he identified. He loved using this pointer and I think it helped him stay focused on the activities because he wanted to make sure he had the opportunities to use the pointer.

I gave the learner support in terms of over exaggeration of words and sounds, ample wait time for him to respond, and gentle prompts for him to respond or self-correct. These supports helped the learner use his knowledge to construct his responses or to analyze his error and self-correct.

I also gave support in the form or repetition. We did each lesson at least twice so he was able to become familiar with it, and then use his prior knowledge to perform better the second or third time we conducted the lesson. The learner was always eager to begin a new lesson and explore a new activity, but seemed to perform better after the activity had been conducted at least once (as evidenced from the multi-day data that was collected.)

2. Feedback to Guide Further Learning

Refer to specific evidence of submitted feedback to support your explanations.

a. In what form did you submit your evidence of feedback for each focus learner for the final assessment? (Delete choices that do not apply.)

- Written directly in a separate document
- [I gave the learner ample verbal feedback and praise for the great work he had accomplished. I showed him his pre-assessment data and we compared it to the assessment he just completed. We discussed the words he still struggled with, the letters that he knew he was unsure of, and how he could improve his knowledge of those letters/words.]

b. Explain how feedback provided to each focus learner addresses his/her individual strengths and continuing needs relative to the lesson objectives measured.

[feedback to address strengths and continuing needs]

c. How will/did you support each focus learner to apply the feedback to guide improvement within the learning segment or in subsequent learning activities?

[feedback to apply and improve]
I gave the learner immediate positive feedback when he had success with an activity which encouraged and motivated him to keep working and responding correctly. When the learner struggled with something I would give him prompts to help him try to figure out the response and then we would discuss the response and what he can do to get it correct in the future. I would use examples from prior learning segments to create examples of correct and incorrect responses. If he gave an incorrect response I would give him a suggestion for a strategy to use or something to remember for the next lesson.

d. How will/did you support each focus learner to move towards self-assessment, self-instruction, and/or self-correction?

I encouraged the learner to self-correct when he mispronounced a word, chose the wrong letter, etc. I would prompt him to reconsider his response by asking if he was sure about his answer, if he thought there might be another answer, and by facial cues I gave. I gave the learner time to think about if he wanted to change his response and time to actually change it. If he struggled with changing it, I would give him assistance by over-exaggerating a word, helping him tap it out, showing him one of his strategies, etc. It was only when it was evident he simply did not know the correct response that I would say it for him, but then have him repeat it and discuss why that was correct.

3. Evidence of Language or Communication Understanding and Use

You may provide evidence of understanding and use of the targeted language/communication with your video clip(s) from Task 2 AND/OR through a learner work sample(s) provided in Task 3.

Refer to examples from the clip(s) (with time stamps) and/or each focus learner’s work sample as evidence.

- Explain the extent to which each focus learner had opportunities to understand and use the targeted language/communication demands (function, vocabulary, symbols, and other demands) to access the learning task and to demonstrate learning.

In lesson 2, the learner showed his understanding of the language/communication targets as evidence on the work sample. While going through the lesson we discussed the target vocabulary (digraphs, welded sounds, bonus letter, and symbols), and on his dictation page he used symbols to demonstrate his knowledge of the vocabulary.

In lesson 3, after we completed the word sort we reviewed the targeted vocabulary terms and then went through the pictures to find any words that included the vocabulary terms (digraphs, welded sounds, bonus letters).

I do not have any other evidence of using the targeted vocabulary terms, but I did try to incorporate them into the lessons when I could. For examples, I asked the learner to identify any words with bonus letters, welded sounds, or digraphs on the bingo cards; if he heard a word from the story in lesson 4 that included one of those terms he could tell me the word and which vocabulary term fit with it.

4. Using Assessment to Inform Instruction

Consider what you know about each focus learner and the effectiveness of your instruction/intervention and the learning environment when designing next steps. Connect your next steps to your analysis of each focus learner’s performance for both learning targets.
Support your decisions with principles from research and/or theory, particularly as it relates to evidence-based practices, when appropriate.

- Describe next steps for instruction to reinforce current progress toward or attainment of the lesson objectives and/or to support further progress, generalization, maintenance, and/or self-directed use of knowledge, skills, or future learning. Consider all aspects of instruction, including support and environmental modification, as appropriate.

[I worked on the letters /b/ and /d/ with the learner for nearly two weeks. As I said in my Instruction Commentary, I was afraid that we were beginning to spend too much time on just those two letters and they were starting to get mixed up even worse for the learner and he was undergoing semantic satiation. While the use of repetition is an evidence-based practice, I think two weeks of repetition might be the limit for this learner and these learning targets. I would discontinue intensive lessons on those two letters alone and move on to other letters and/or sounds the learner struggles with. I would continue to use some of the same lessons (the Wilson’s Reading System, Incremental Rehearsal, using picture books), but I would target other areas in which the learner struggles, which can be identified from that data collected in the post-assessment. However, I would still embed some instruction of the /b/ and /d/ into the new lessons. For instance, I would select words that include the new targeted letters and sounds but also might include /b/ or /d/. Periodically the learner can be assessed on his retention of identifying /b/ and /d/ to ensure the student no longer needs intense instruction of those letters.

The learning environment is appropriate for this learner. He needs focused one-on-one support (per his IEP), and can be easily distracted so it is unrealistic for him to receive intensive interventions in his general education classroom. As a part of Activity Based Intervention (an evidence-based practice), embedding instruction is an effective strategy to promote learning. I used activities in which the learner showed interest and embedded instruction within those activities. His classroom teacher can be provided with ways to embed instruction into her plans so that the learner can continue to work on letters and sounds that he struggles with, thus increasing his fluency.

The student’s IEP goal (and the first learning target) of increased fluency is still a tier one need for the student, but he still requires interventions on a tier three level of identifying letters and not confusing them for other letters. Working on that tier three need creates progress towards the tier one need as it is a prerequisite to increased fluency. By using the data from the post-assessment, more interventions can be put in place for the learner to target the sounds and letters with which he struggles. Increasing his ability to identify sounds and letters will increase the learner’s fluency. I would recommend a few more weeks of instruction of targeted letters and sounds, and then return to fluency lessons the student received earlier in the year (given one minute to read new text). I am confident that once the learner is able to better identify letters and sounds his fluency will increase and his words per minute count on the unrehearsed texts will also increase.]