

The Basics of Planning for Instruction and Assessment:

Task 1 - Special Education

INTRODUCTION

Task 1 of the edTPA focuses on planning for instruction. Just as planning is the foundation for a successful class, Task 1 is the foundation for a successful edTPA portfolio. A well-planned learning segment is crucial for fostering a positive and challenging learning environment (Task 2) and creating an assessment plan (Task 3).

LESSON PLAN TIPS

The Special Education edTPA showcases the candidates' ability to support an individual student (called the focus learner), who has a rich and complex set of learning needs. Successful lessons for the Special Education edTPA should:

- 1. Be tailored to the needs and strengths of the focus learner.** Conduct this learning segment in the educational setting in which the candidate normally teaches the focus learner, whether that's a regular education classroom, one-on-one support, or any other environment. Regardless of the setting, the actual lesson plans submitted for the edTPA should include information pertaining to the focus learner and their individualized goals and supports only.
- 2. Increase the focus learner's autonomy.** Each lesson plan should contain supports that are appropriate in intensity and challenge, while moving the focus learner towards self-regulation.
- 3. Contain measurable daily learning outcomes.** Candidates must maintain a daily assessment record throughout the learning segment to monitor the focus learner's progress in meeting the learning goal. Therefore, the learning outcomes for each day should be observable and measurable.

- 4. Adhere to your school's policies and guidelines.**

A successful edTPA experience does not require you to violate the policies of your school, district, or state.

- 5. Be aligned.** Activities and assessments in each daily lesson plan support that day's outcomes, which support the learning goal, which support the content you are teaching. More information on alignment follows.

LEARNING SEGMENT ALIGNMENT

Lesson plan alignment is key for success on Task 1. An aligned learning segment is one which all of the components fit together to build the focus learner's understanding during 3-5 days of connected instruction. After choosing your focus learner, you must design a **learning goal**. This requires an in depth understanding of the focus learner's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), as well as their interests. If the focus learner is working on any academic content in the four core subjects (literacy, mathematics, social studies, or science), the learning goal should be related to one of those four subjects. This emphasis on academics takes precedence over the stated goals on the IEP. Once you have chosen your learning goal for the 3-5 days, you will determine the **related content standards and IEP goals** (as applicable) and the requisite **communication skills** needed for students' success.

The **daily supports** designed for the learning segment should scaffold student success in meeting the learning goal. These supports, as well as each **daily learning outcome, activity, and assessment** during your learning segment, should support the learning goal directly. The components of a successful learning segment should be aligned both **vertically** and **horizontally** so that the activities and assessments not only support the learning goal, but the lessons build on each other to achieve higher levels of success and autonomy for the focus learner. A visual representation of learning segment alignment follows.

Learning Segment Alignment

