

# T-TESS: Showcasing What We Do As Music Educators (Part 3 of a 4-part series)

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The past two articles in the T-TESS series have focused on the pre-conference, planning and instruction delivery. At this point, most administrators have completed their T-TESS observations and are in the process of conducting the post-conferences. As you prepare for this conversation, it is necessary to reflect on your lesson design and how the lesson evolved during the class period. Questions to consider prior to your post-conference are: How was the lesson aligned to your learning objective and TEKS? What activities were incorporated to check for student understanding? How have students progressed on an individual basis and how do you know? As you think through these questions, what artifacts support your responses? Remember, the purpose of the evaluation is to provide feedback that fosters teacher learning and enhances student learning.

(Dufour, R. & Marzano, R., 2011)

## What to look for...

Refer to your pre-conference where you explained your lesson in depth and to the actual observation; your appraiser should have seen a rehearsal with objectives and lessons aligned to the TEKS. Obviously, a rehearsal is student-centered where all students are actively engaged. As the director, you are providing immediate feedback and differentiating instruction for all members in your program. It is evident that students can demonstrate the content and mastery of the repertoire

and you reframe difficult passages for those needing additional support. Relatively simple, right? Yes, it is, but did you allow for student feedback? This is an important component in the learning process as students reflect and provide their own feedback and guidance. Finally, how did you close the lesson? Were students given an opportunity to perform the selection, did they write a reflection on how they can improve or what they heard? Write down what you recall from your observation lesson after it occurs and review the sample appraiser conferencing questions to guide your upcoming conversation.

## Post-observation conference

The post-observation conference must occur within 10 working days of your observation (scheduled or unscheduled). During this time, your appraiser will ask a series of guided questions to reinforce areas of strength and growth referred to as areas of refinement (strengths) and areas of reinforcement (opportunities for growth). The purpose of the conference is to provide educators opportunities to self-reflect, the conversation is meant to be diagnostic and prescriptive, leading back to purposeful feedback aligned to Domains I - III (Planning, Instruction, and the Learning Environment). A list of questions may be found at [teachfortexas.org/Resource\\_Files/Evaluation\\_Process/T-TESS\\_Appraiser\\_Sample\\_Conferencing\\_Questions.pdf](http://teachfortexas.org/Resource_Files/Evaluation_Process/T-TESS_Appraiser_Sample_Conferencing_Questions.pdf).

It is recommended to review the sample conferencing questions prior to your post-observation conference so you may prepare and know what to expect from your appraiser. After this discussion, you will receive a written report that has a rating for all dimensions observed by your appraiser. As you review it, provide input regarding your areas of strength and growth. The written report can be revised based on the input you provide.

## Artifacts and evidence of alignment

The T-TESS Rubric is designed where the left side is student-centered and the right side is teacher-centered, you should note that the “distinguished rating” is to the far left of the chart with descriptors which are student-centered.

(See the T-TESS Rubric on page 18.)

The post-conference is an additional evidence collection point that aligns to the rubric descriptors. It is another opportunity for the appraiser to collect additional evidence and for you to provide the documentation. Artifacts provide evidence about the T-TESS domains and may include a variety of assessments connected to classroom instruction and outcomes. For example, comment sheets from music festivals and/or solo and ensemble demonstrate mastery and proficiency across various domains with constructive feedback to improve student performance. In addition, communication with parents via


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### PLANNING DIMENSION 1.1

#### Standards and Alignment

The teacher designs clear, well-organized, sequential lessons that reflect best practice, align with standards and are appropriate for diverse learners.

Standards Basis: 1A, 1B, 3A, 3B, 3C

Distinguished	Accomplished	Proficient	Developing	Improvement Needed
STUDENT-CENTERED ACTIONS				TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIONS
<p><b>Instructional Planning Includes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All rigorous and measurable goals aligned to state content standards.</li> <li>• All activities, materials and assessments that:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ are logically sequenced</li> <li>◦ are relevant to students' prior understanding and real-world applications</li> <li>◦ integrate and reinforce concepts from other disciplines</li> <li>◦ provide appropriate time for student work, student reflection, lesson and lesson closure</li> <li>◦ deepen understanding of broader unit and course objectives</li> <li>◦ are vertically aligned to state standards</li> <li>◦ are appropriate for diverse learners</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Objectives aligned and logically sequenced to the lesson's goal, providing relevant and enriching extensions of the lesson</li> <li>• Integration of technology to enhance mastery of goal(s).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Instructional Planning Includes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All measurable goals aligned to state content standards.</li> <li>• All activities, materials and assessments that:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ are sequenced</li> <li>◦ are relevant to students' prior understanding</li> <li>◦ integrate other disciplines</li> <li>◦ provide appropriate time for student work, lesson and lesson closure</li> <li>◦ reinforce broader unit and course objectives</li> <li>◦ are vertically aligned to state standards</li> <li>◦ are appropriate for diverse learners</li> </ul> </li> <li>• All objectives aligned and logically sequenced to the lesson's goal.</li> <li>• Integration of technology to enhance mastery of goal(s).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Instructional Planning Includes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All goals aligned to state content standards.</li> <li>• All activities, materials and assessments that:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ are relevant to students</li> <li>◦ provide appropriate time for lesson and lesson closure</li> <li>◦ fit into the broader unit and course objectives</li> <li>◦ are appropriate for diverse learners.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• All objectives aligned to the lesson's goal.</li> <li>• Integration of technology when applicable.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Instructional Planning Includes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most goals aligned to state content standards.</li> <li>• Most activities, materials and assessments that:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ are sequenced</li> <li>◦ sometimes provide appropriate time for lesson and lesson closure</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Lessons where most objectives are aligned and sequenced to the lesson's goal.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Instructional Planning Includes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Few goals aligned to state content standards.</li> <li>• Few activities, materials and assessments that:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ are sequenced</li> <li>◦ rarely provide time for lesson and lesson closure</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Lessons where few objectives are aligned and sequenced to the lesson's goal.</li> </ul>
		<p><b>Possible Sources of Evidence:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conferences and Conversations with the Teacher</li> <li>• Formal Observations/Walkthroughs</li> <li>• Classroom Artifacts</li> <li>• Student Growth Processes</li> </ul>		



Retrieved from Teach for Texas: <https://teachfortexas.org/>

progress reports or student reflections of their work shows opportunities for broader understanding of the lesson(s) which provide feedback pertaining to instruction that supports student-directed learning. Implementing “Think-Ink-Pair-Share” (where students jot down a quick reflection on a passage requiring attention for improvement) is a great way to show writing and analysis in your class. If the artifacts presented warrant the ratings to be modified, it may occur during this time. If the ratings given are not an accurate measure, you may request a second appraisal by another appraiser after receiving the observation summary. It is important to know the timelines set and follow them accordingly and not wait until the end-of-the-year. The second appraisal must be requested within 10 working days from receiving the observation summary. The second appraisal for an observation will rescore Domains I-III. If you decide to request a second appraisal **after your end-of-year summative report**, this second appraisal will

only score Domain IV (*T-TESS Annual Appraisal Process Timeline*, 2016). It is recommended you check with your Human Resources Department and review Board Policy for district protocols in making such a request.

### Terms to remember

**End-of-Year Conference**, also referred to as the **Summative**, is the time to discuss any information pertaining to Domain IV, Professional Practices and Responsibilities. Bring any evidence that supports your goal setting from the beginning of the year. During this time you will also discuss goals for the upcoming year.

The **Post-Observation Conference** is conducted after your T-TESS Evaluation. A post-conference must occur after an announced and unannounced observation.

**Pre-Conference** occurs prior to an announced (formal) observation.

The final installment of this series will entail goal setting for the upcoming year.

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