

FACTOR I: CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

IS#3. The candidate makes educational decisions (i.e. plans instruction and/or administrative) based on a Christian philosophy of education and promotes Godly principles among students, colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community.

IS#8. The candidate is a reflective, transformed educator who uses research, research findings, contextual information, and other evidence to adapt his/her practices to meet the needs of each learner.

IS#18. The candidate demonstrates an understanding of individual differences and diverse communities by creating inclusive learning environments and educational opportunities that allow each learner to reach his/her full potential.

Discussion:

- A) Describe *community environmental factors* that affect planning, teaching, and learning. These should include such considerations as location (e.g., rural, intercity), socio-economic (e.g., high income level), unique characteristics of the population (e.g., drug problems, mostly farming), etc.
- B) Describe the district, school, and classroom *environmental factors* that affect planning, teaching, and learning. These should include the district and school environmental considerations (e.g., district regulations about books), the physical classroom setting (e.g. self-contained, portable), non-traditional students (e.g., handicapped), and the number of students in the school and in the classroom. (See the Contextual Information Form)
- C) Describe the important characteristics of students in your classroom. Describe these factors: ethnic/cultural make-up, gender make-up, school socio-economic status make-up, students with *special needs* and those at risk, and previously demonstrated academic performance/ability, *developmental characteristics*. Include a brief, general description of students in your class and then identify the groups for whom you will separate (disaggregate) data for analysis in Factor 6. Below are some websites to help better understand *developmental characteristics*.

Toddlers and kindergarten

<http://www-personal.ksu.edu/~anippert/characteristics.html>

Five and six year old

<http://www.pnc.edu/ed/Eisenhauer/develcharact.html>

All ages

<http://homepages.utoledo.edu/kpugh/5-7320/ITcomponents/development.html>

You may use a table to illustrate discussion items A, B, and C above. The Sample Optional Contextual Factor Table below provides several illustrative examples. You may have more or less contextual and environmental factors to address and they may be entirely different. The examples are provided only to help clarify your task, not to indicate the number you should have or to provide an exhaustive list of factors. Implications for instruction will not be specific in nature at this point of your planning. Specific instructional plans, including specific *adaptation*, will be included in later TWS Factors. A thoroughly prepared contextual table will reduce or completely eliminate, the need for additional narrative but be sure there is sufficient information to address the *rubric* items. If there is no implication for instruction for a contextual or environmental factor, be sure to explain why.

- D) For the rubric, discuss the implications for your instruction in consideration of environmental, personal, demographic and background characteristics, and the knowledge, skill, cognitive capacities, dispositions and readiness of your students. Discuss the learning needs of individual or clusters of students and how these considerations will influence your approach to instruction in order to address the learning and affective needs of all students in your class.

I. CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION SHEET

Complete the Contextual information sheet provided in the appendices to determine the following:

- ❖ What are some important characteristics of the *learning context* for your students in your *classroom environment*?
- ❖ Resources available for the Classroom
- ❖ Personnel Resources
- ❖ Individual Student Differences
- ❖ Students in Pull-out/Supplementary Programs
- ❖ Describe School's Immediate Community

II. CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION NARRATIVE

A. Description of the Learning Environment (See Sample Optional Contextual Factor Table)

- ❖ What implications will these factors have on your teaching methods, instructions, assessments, and activities?
- ❖ Describe the **specific** learning needs of individual students that require you to change your plans.
- ❖ Your response will be judged on the specificity of your decisions.
- ❖ If no changes are made, a rationale must be stated and supported.

B. Specificity

- ❖ Describe developmental characteristics of students (intellectual, social, physical)
- ❖ Your description must include (but is not limited to) previously demonstrated *academic performance/ability*, including students with special needs.
- ❖ Include factors that will help the evaluators of this assignment better understand your instructional decisions.

Sample Optional Contextual Factor Table

Contextual and Environmental Factors	Identify source of Factor: <i>Community, District, School, or Classroom</i>	Implications for Instruction
Rural Community	Community	Include farming illustrations in my teaching.
Low Socio-economic Community	Community	Be careful not to ask students to bring or use materials that would cost money.
There is a great deal of drug related activities	Community	Include information the dangers of drugs in as many lessons as possible, some unobtrusively.
District office specifies textbooks that can be used	District	Be sure all supplemental books meet district guidelines before using them in the classroom.
1 student in wheelchair	School and Classroom	Be sure school facilities are handicapped accessible. Adapt <i>psychomotor</i> activities to match student's physical ability to perform.
No air conditioning in the school	School and Classroom	Avoid strenuous activities on hot days; think of ways to provide air movement in the classroom.
First graders' fine motor skills are still developing	Classroom	Provide opportunities for students to color and cut.
First graders are still egocentric	Classroom	Use small group size or pairs.
Mixed ethnic backgrounds among students	Classroom	Provide guidance and opportunities for cooperation among all students.
12 boys, 13 girls	Classroom	Provide mixed gender grouping during cooperative learning activities.
3 below, 17 at grade level, 5 above grade level	Classroom	Provide extra time for the below grade level students and challenging work for above grade level students.

[Suggested total page length for the narrative component of the **Contextual Information**: 2 pages (the Contextual Information Form is not included in the 25 page maximum number)]

CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION SHEET

Please indicate:

Semester (Fall or Spring)_____ Year: 20_____

Your certification/licensure level (check all that apply):

_____ Early Childhood (Birth - Grade 3) _____ Secondary (Grades 6 - 12)
_____ Elementary (Grades K - 6) _____ Dual (Elem. and Secondary, Grades PK - 12)
_____ Middle School (Grades 5 - 8)

Your certification/licensure area(s) (check all that apply):

_____ Art	_____ Lang. Arts, Middle Level	_____ Physics
_____ Biology	_____ French	_____ Psychology
_____ Business	_____ Health	_____ Science, General
_____ Chemistry	_____ Journalism	_____ Science, Middle Level
_____ Early Childhood Ed.	_____ Mathematics	_____ Social Studies-Middle Level
_____ Early Child., handicap	_____ Mathematics, Middle Level	_____ Social Studies
_____ Earth-Space Science	_____ Music	_____ Spanish
_____ Elementary	_____ Physical Education	_____ Speech and Theatre
_____ Language Arts	_____ Physical Science	_____ Other:_____
_____ ESOL		

Identify the course, unit content area, (e.g., "Language Arts," "Biology," "Math," Social Science," etc.), and grade level(s) of your Teacher Work Sample.

Course _____ Content Area _____

The grade(s)/level of students in your classroom (check all that apply):

_____ Preschool	_____ 4 th Grade	_____ 9 th Grade
_____ Kindergarten	_____ 5 th Grade	_____ 10 th Grade
_____ 1 st Grade	_____ 6 th Grade	_____ 11 th Grade
_____ 2 nd Grade	_____ 7 th Grade	_____ 12 th Grade
_____ 3 rd Grade	_____ 8 th Grade	

Please note: Some of the following information must be obtained directly from the teacher or the school's administrator(s)

A. Class/Classroom Information

Grade levels in class (List all that apply.) _____

Ages in class (List all that apply.) _____

Number of students enrolled in class _____

Number of students typically present _____

Time available each day to teach all students (in this class) _____

How would you rate the overall socio-economic status represented in classroom? (Provide approximate percentages of students that represents each category.)

Upper class _____

Middle class _____

Lower class _____

Ethnicity(ies)/Cultures represented (please specify):

<u>Ethnicity</u>	<u>Number of Students</u>
African American	_____
Asian	_____
Hispanic	_____
Caucasian	_____
Pacific Islander	_____
Other	_____

Gender make-up:

Number of males _____

Number of females _____

Number of students who perform at the following levels:

Below grade level _____

At grade level _____

Above grade level _____

If students are above or below grade level, identify the different grade levels represented.

Teaching interruptions (ex. frequent intercom messages, student, parents, or teachers who enter class etc.):

Few	_____
Some	_____
Many	_____

B. Resources (equipment and supplies) available for this class (Mark all that apply.)

Overhead/Elmo projector	_____
Number of computer(s)	_____
Video projector	_____
Phone/intercom	_____
TV	_____

Please list additional resources (ex. maps, lab equipment, manipulatives, reading resources, etc.—please list):

C. Personnel resources available to you (Indicate all that apply.)

Instructional assistants(s)	_____
Peer (student) tutors	_____
Parent volunteers	_____
Resource Teachers (describe)	_____
Other (describe)	_____

D. Individual Differences

Number of ESL students in class _____
(Students can speak basic or broken English, however, their primary language is NOT English)

Number of non-English speaking students _____
(Students who do not speak English at all)

Number of students in class with IEP's _____
(Students who have an Individualized Education Plan on file with the teacher or school)

Number of identified 504 students in class _____
(Students who have been officially tested and are physically or mentally impaired in some fashion)

Number of identified gifted students in class _____

E. Number of students in pull-out or supplementary programs

Title I _____
Gifted _____

Other (please list, for example: remedial reading, math, etc.)

F. Please briefly describe the school's immediate community:

Population (city or town) _____

Please list major industry(ies) (ex. oil, farming, steel mills, technology, automotive, etc.):

Please list major employer(s) (ex. American Airlines, IBM, Wal-Mart, etc.)

Students in your classroom mostly from:

Rural areas _____
Urban areas _____
Suburban areas _____

Describe the school district:

Number of elementary schools _____
Number of junior high or middle schools _____
Number of high schools _____
Other types of school configurations _____
(i.e. 4th & 5th grade centers, etc.)

Are there any of the following in your community? (Mark all that apply):

Community Colleges _____
Career Technology schools _____
Colleges or University _____