

Five-Step Problem-Solving Process

Assignment Description

Due: Date listed within Blackboard

Purpose: The five-step problem-solving process assessment is administered within the Division of Education's Elementary, Secondary, and Early Childhood programs during EDUC 390 Special Needs in an Inclusive Environment. This course typically occurs near the mid or end point of a teacher candidate's plan of study after full admission to the teacher education program. Teacher candidates complete the five-step problem-solving process six times during the semester of enrollment.

The purpose of this assessment is to scaffold the thinking, skills, and attitudes of teacher candidates with the goal to recognize the assets and needs of learners. The five-step problem-solving process is developed to support the learner's inability to use the following skills: plan and problem solve, use short and long-term memory skills, organization, focusing attention, or impulse control and self-monitoring. The teacher candidate will choose strategies that will be implemented to support and develop the lacking skills of the learner to ensure academic success in the classroom. The repetition of this assignment, completed six times throughout the semester, allows for a teacher candidate to refine and master the five-step problem-solving process. Teacher candidates are allowed to fall below the acceptable target five times prior to the sixth and final key assessment. If a teacher candidate falls below the acceptable target, a one-on-one consultation with the course instructor is scheduled to review the rubric results, the teacher candidate verbally explains their adjustments to improve the five-step problem-solving process, and this allows the instructor to gauge their understanding of the process. As an education division, the key assessment results are reviewed annually by early childhood, elementary, and secondary education programs and concerns about teacher candidate's progression are brought to the Teacher Education committee for discussion and further action.

Objectives (The key assessment components are aligned to InTASC, CAEP, and CEC standards):

- Define a student's strengths (InTASC 6, 7; CAEP R1.3; CEC 1).
- Analyze a student's behavior and academic concerns (InTASC 6; CAEP R1.3; CEC 4).
- Evaluate the social, emotional, cognitive, cultural, economic, and environmental factors, and diagnose the missing academic skills of the student (InTASC 6; CAEP R1.3; CEC 1 & 2).
- Apply developmentally appropriate modifications, accommodations, and differentiated lesson plans for the student (InTASC 7, 8; CAEP R1.3; CEC 3).
- Creating an action plan to develop student's skill(s) (InTASC 8; CAEP R1.3; CEC 3).

Instructions:

1. Use the rubric for this assignment to identify specific assessment criteria from which you will be evaluated. Criteria are set for teacher candidates to demonstrate 4 levels of proficiency including; distinguished (4), proficient (3), basic (2), and unsatisfactory (1). A category for non-performance is also included. Each category is weighted equally since each portion of the five-step problem solving is of equal importance and each step builds on one another. All teacher candidates must reach the acceptable targets for this assignment, as established by Mayville State University's Teacher Education Program. Acceptable Target=25 points or higher out of a total of 30 points. The target score is explicitly stated within the assignment description, the course syllabus, and within the Teacher Education Handbook. This assignment is required for successful completion of the course; teacher candidates are required to pass the course with a "C" or better. In addition, individual student results of the key assessment are used to make continuance decisions. The EPP can and does review key assessment information when making improvement plan or admission and continuance program decisions.
2. Your job is to read the assigned chapter from the book, *Hanging In* by Jeffery Benson, the chapter you read discusses a student with a disability. The disability discussed in the case study coincides with the extensive study and research completed inside/outside of class about learning disabilities and/or emotional behavioral disorders. As you read it is your responsibility to recognize the assets and needs of the case study student discussed and think through the learner's cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical development and how this influences their learning. It is important to note that each case study student depicted in the chapter(s) is typical of a student that you could have in your classroom (early childhood, elementary, or secondary). The reader is given very specific information about the case study student discussed in the chapter, from this information you will complete the "5 step problem solving process". You will use the details given in the case study in the book *Hanging In*, as well as, the book *Causes and Cures* by Margaret Searle to help identify useful strategies, modifications, and accommodations that allow the case study student to reach their educational goals. It is important to identify various approaches to learning and performance by designing an instructional plan that will promote growth for the case study student. This is to be a very thorough written plan that supports the case study student's ability to achieve academic success.

Following are the directions to complete the five-step problem-solving process.

1. Know the Student:

This step will give you, the teacher candidate, a balanced picture of the case study student to start the process and helps you to identify connections between the case study student's behaviors and academic successes or struggles (Searle, 2013). The teacher candidate needs to know their case study student and recognize the assets and needs of the learner, as well as, exhibit respect, openness, and value diversity. Step one allows the teacher candidate to "know the case study student". As you decipher the case study student's academic and behavior concerns take time to review the case study in the text *Hanging In* so

you are able to comprehend the strengths and needs of the individual learner this will help you to plan instruction, prevention and intervention strategies, and any intervention services that are appropriate for this case study student. When completing step one make sure to have at least four examples of academic concern, behavior concern, and strengths to build on; for each area ensure that they are written in person first language (Snow, 2010).

Strengths and Concerns Chart	
Name:	
Grade:	
Academic Concerns:	Behavior Concerns:
Strengths to build on:	

2. Analyze the Root Causes:

Step 2, analyzing the root cause, is the portion of the five step problem-solving process that delves into the case study student's thinking and motivation concerning the problem(s) outlined in step 1. Step 2 focuses on analyzing the root cause of the case study student's areas of need with a colleague (peer). The colleague (peer) will be the acting coach, asking questions so that the teacher candidate can answer questions and reflect on ideas of how the case study student learns and possible roadblocks. These questions allow you to reflect on the case study student with a colleague (peer) analyzing the root cause(s) of the case study student's behavior and/or academic struggles. When answering the questions, it is important to term things positively and avoids blaming. Remember to keep in mind the "circle of influence", as discussed in the book *Causes & Cures*.

Coach: Why do you think the student does that?
Teacher:
Coach: What would cause the student to think that way?

Teacher:

Coach: What skills do you think the student lacks that other students that same age understand and use?

Teacher:

Coach: What is keeping the student from learning these skills?

Teacher:

Coach: What should we concentrate on first?

Teacher:

3. Set a Clear and Measurable Goal:

For step 3, the teacher candidate will set a clear and measurable goal that aligns with the information gathered in steps one and two. There are two parts to intervention goal setting:

- First, the teacher candidate will create a goal that identifies what new skill will be focused on to solve the academic struggle and what new outcome is expected for the case study student.
- Secondly, a time frame and benchmark are set that will allow the teacher candidate to evaluate if the intervention is effective.
- Review the book *Causes & Cures in the Classroom* for specific examples of goals, time frame, and benchmark development. Reflect on the timeline you have set and decide whether this is a realistic amount of time to change a habit, create a new one, and/or develop and implement a new skill.

Goal: If we can teach...

Time frame and measurement benchmarks: As a result of _____ weeks of training, _____ will be able to...

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4. Decide How to Monitor Growth:

For step 4 the teacher candidate will develop a tool to monitor the case study student’s growth that supports and aligns with the goal set in step 3. The case study student needs a concrete chart, checklist, or other tool to track their growth or area of struggle that aligns with the goal set in step 3. It is imperative that the tracking system allows the student to be self-sufficient in tracking their progress with check-ins by the teacher. Include clear written directions as to how the chart, checklist, or tool will be used by the student and teacher. Review examples of charts, checklists, or other tools to track the case study student in the book *Causes and Cures in the Classroom*.

5. Select an Action Plan:

After completing step 3, setting a learning goal, and step 4, monitoring growth, the teacher candidate develops a clear plan of action focusing on the missing skills that will enable the case study student to reach their goal. Remember, this area is dedicated to specific skills a student needs to work on (breaking down tasks, prioritizing, and visualizing plans). While this plan focuses on the missing skills, it also focuses on the teaching strategies, student responsibilities, and suggestions for the parents to strengthen the skill. When planning the action plan, ensure that it supports the goal in step three and the skills focused on in monitoring the growth; each step supports the other. Create a chart that represents the responsibilities of each individual involved in the action plan. See the book *Causes and Cures in the Classroom* for examples.

Action Plan			
Skills Needed	Teaching Strategies	Student Responsibilities	Suggestions for Parents

Five-Step Problem-Solving Process

Rubric

	Distinguished (4)	Proficient (3)	Basic (2)	Unsatisfactory (1)	Non-Performance (0)
Step 1: Academic Concerns InTASC: 6 CAEP: R1.3 CEC: 1	Analyze and choose four or more academic concerns demonstrated by the case study student, written in person first language.	Analyze and choose three academic concerns demonstrated by the case study student, written in person first language.	Analyze and choose two academic concerns demonstrated by the case study student, may or may not be written in person first language.	Analyze and choose one academic concern demonstrated by the case study student, does not use person first language.	Did not complete step one, academic concerns.
Step 1: Behavior Concerns InTASC: 6 CAEP: R1.3 CEC: 1	Analyze and choose four or more behavior concerns demonstrated by the case study student, written in person first language.	Analyze and choose three behavior concerns demonstrated by the case study student, written in person first language.	Analyze and choose two behavior concerns demonstrated by the case study student, may or may not be written in person first language.	Analyze and choose one behavior concern demonstrated by the case study student, does not use person first language.	Did not complete step one, behavior concerns.
Step 1: Strengths InTASC: 6 & 7 CAEP: R1.3 CEC: 1	Analyze and choose four or more strengths demonstrated by the case study student.	Analyze and choose three strengths demonstrated by the case study student.	Analyze and choose two strengths demonstrated by the case study student.	Analyze and choose one strength demonstrated by the case study student.	Did not complete step one strengths.
Step 2: Analyze the Root Causes InTASC: 6 CAEP: R1.3 CEC: 1 & 2	Analyze and answer with 3 or more examples for each question that reflects on the root cause of the case study student's area(s) of need.	Analyze and answer with 2 examples for each question that reflects on the root cause of the case study student's area(s) of need.	Analyze and answer with 1 example for each question that reflects on the root cause of the case study student's area(s) of need.	Analyze and answer with no examples for each question that reflects on the root cause of the case study student's area(s) of need.	Did not complete step two analyze the root causes.
Step 3: Set a Clear and Measurable Goal InTASC: 7 & 8	Write a short-term measurable goal that is specific, attainable, and relevant to the new skill.	Write a short-term measurable goal that is specific and is relevant to the new skill.	Write a short-term goal that may or may/not be specific, measurable, or identifies a new skill.	Write a short-term goal that may or may not be measurable and/or identifies a new skill.	Did not complete step 3, set a clear and measurable goal.

CAEP: R1.3 CEC: 3					
Step 4: Decide how to Monitor Growth InTASC: 8 CAEP: R1.3 CEC: 3	Creates a detailed tool that the case study student and teacher use to monitor growth towards the goal. The tool aligns and supports the goals & skills addressed in the action plan. Written directions explain how to implement the tool.	Creates a tool that the case study student and teacher use to monitor growth towards the goal. The tool aligns with the goals & skills addressed in the action plan. Written directions explain how to implement the tool.	Creates a tool that the case study student and/or teacher use to monitor growth towards the goal. The tool may or may not align with the goals & skills addressed in the action plan. Written directions are unclear in how to implement the tool.	Does not create a tool that the case study student and/or teacher use to monitor growth towards the goal.	Did not complete step 4, Decide how to Monitor Growth
Step 5: Action Plan InTASC: 7 & 8 CAEP: R1.3 CEC: 3	The missing skill(s) chosen clearly align and support the goal. The action plan describes specific teaching strategies, student responsibilities, and suggestions for parents.	The missing skill(s) chosen aligns and supports the goal. The action plan describes teaching strategies, student responsibilities, and suggestions for parents.	The missing skill(s) chosen may or may not align and/or support the goal. The action plan may or may not describe teaching strategies, student responsibilities, and suggestions for parents.	Does not include the missing skill(s) chosen. The action plan does not describe teaching strategies, student responsibilities, and suggestions for parents.	Did not complete step 5, Action Plan
Spelling/Grammar			Few spelling or grammatical errors	Five or more spelling or grammatical errors	
Total Points Possible	/30				

Standards:

InTASC Standards (as referenced in the objectives):

- **Standard #6: Assessment.** The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision-making.

- **Standard #7:** Planning for Instruction. The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.
- **Standard #8:** Instructional Strategies. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.

CAEP Standards (as referenced in the objectives):

- **R1.3 Instructional Practice** The provider ensures that candidates are able to apply their knowledge of InTASC standards relating to instructional practice at the appropriate progression levels. Evidence demonstrates how candidates are able to assess (InTASC Standard 6), plan for instruction (InTASC Standard 7), and utilize a variety of instructional strategies (InTASC Standard 8) to provide equitable and inclusive learning experiences for diverse P-12 students. Providers ensure candidates model and apply national or state approved technology standards to engage and improve learning for all students.

CEC Standards (as referenced in the objectives):

- **CEC 1:** Learner Development and Individual Learning Differences
- **CEC 2:** Learning Environment
- **CEC 3:** Curricular Content Knowledge
- **CEC 4:** Assessment