

This review tool is designed for reviewers/evaluators to review tasks (and classroom activities with aligned rubrics) in order to ensure that they are created with engagement in mind for all students of diverse socioeconomic, cultural, and language backgrounds.

Engaging tasks incorporate **at least three of the engagement dimensions**, with a rating of at least two or higher, and **must include both task features**. [Rating scale: 0/Not At All – 1/Minimally – 2/Fair – 3/Well]

Engagement Dimensions/Task Features (TF)	How Engagement Dimensions are Incorporated into Performance Tasks	Score (0 to 3)
<p><b>1. Clear Purpose (TF):</b> The task is coherent and clearly stated upfront (rather than waiting for the culminating prompt to state the overall task purpose)</p>	<p>The purpose of the performance task is <b>clear to students</b> from its introduction; AND it is clear that <b>each of the items are intended to help students complete the overarching task.</b> (The performance task should have one overarching task, rather than an assortment of items with a common theme, say a variety of math items associated only by a theme or setting.)</p>	
<p><b>Evidence for Score and/or Suggested Modifications:</b></p>		
<p><b>2. Relevance:</b> Answers the question, why does the educational content <i>matter</i> to students? and provides students with a reason for doing the task  (<b>Question the relevance</b> of the task if the context is largely known primarily to upper-income students, because then it would not be a meaningful context to which all students can relate.)</p>	<p><b>Connect</b> the task/topic/context to students’ <b>lived experiences, interests, or prior knowledge;</b>  OR identify the <b>prior knowledge, familiarity, or experience</b> that is expected, implied, assumed, and/or required of the task;  OR <b>personalize</b> the task context to the students;  OR explicate <b>background knowledge with definitions of key terms</b> associated with the context by activating students’ prior knowledge or building background knowledge through the classroom activity or in the task itself. This background knowledge should include introduction to and definition of key terms, especially for students who may be English Language Learners.</p>	
<p><b>Evidence for Score and/or Suggested Modifications:</b></p>		

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<p><b>3. Authenticity:</b> Requires students to solve real-world problems that have value beyond school.</p>	<p>Emphasize <b>real-world connections</b>;</p> <p>OR provide opportunities for students to demonstrate <b>original applications of knowledge</b> and skills used in the real world;</p> <p>OR incorporate a <b>variety of information sources and stimuli</b> that are representative of artifacts used in the world beyond the classroom;</p> <p>OR provide opportunities for students to communicate their knowledge to an <b>audience beyond the teacher, classroom, and school</b> by incorporating simulations or plausible scenarios in which the students assume a <b>role of an actor</b>. The task should explicitly state what is expected of students (e.g., “write a letter to your mother explaining which is the best product and include three reasons with evidence”). Care should be taken to ensure that the role and scenario are age and developmentally appropriate for students.</p>	
<p><b>Evidence for Score and/or Suggested Modifications:</b></p>		
<p><b>4. Autonomy:</b> Invites students to choose or self-initiate an action.</p>	<p>Provide students with opportunities to <b>make procedural decisions and choices</b> such as handling and manipulating instructional materials and ideas;</p> <p>OR require students to <b>justify and explain their answers</b> or compare and contrast competing ideas in order to provide <b>cognitive choices</b> in the task such as choosing which side of an argument they wish to argue for/against.</p>	
<p><b>Evidence for Score and/or Suggested Modifications:</b></p>		

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Engagement Dimensions/Task Features (TF)	How Engagement Dimensions are Incorporated into Performance Tasks	Score (0 to 3)
<p><b>5. Higher Order Thinking Skills:</b> Requires students to employ their higher order thinking skills rather than simple recall.</p>	<p>Invite students to engage with challenging tasks that ask students to <b>analyze and interpret information beyond simple recall</b>;</p> <p>OR offer students the opportunity to interpret, analyze information represented in <b>multiple formats</b>;</p> <p>OR invite students to <b>employ</b> their higher order thinking skills to <b>argue for or against an issue, question, or stance</b>;</p> <p>OR provide students the <b>opportunity to grapple with complex information to choose which side of an issue they would like to argue</b>;</p> <p>OR require students to <b>justify and explain</b> their answers or compare and contrast competing ideas;</p> <p>OR invite students to <b>demonstrate their understanding in multiple ways</b>.</p>	
<p><b>Evidence for Score and/or Suggested Modifications:</b></p>		
<p><b>6. Clear Expectations (TF):</b> The expectations for their work product is described with an explanation for how to do well</p>	<p>The task describes <b>what is expected of students' work products</b>, specifying the audience and format of work product. (e.g., "Write a letter to your school principal with your recommendation");</p> <p>OR the task describes <b>how students will be evaluated</b>;</p> <p>OR the task describes to students <b>how to do well</b> (for example, the task may describe a high-scoring or exemplary work product to communicate clear expectations).</p>	
<p><b>Evidence for Score and/or Suggested Modifications:</b></p>		

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Engagement Dimensions/Task Features (TF)	How Engagement Dimensions are Incorporated into Performance Tasks	Score (0 to 3)
<p><b>7. Collaboration:</b> Invites students to work together in pairs or small groups to share ideas, ask questions, and build on each other's ideas</p>	Explicitly instruct students to <b>"talk with a neighbor"</b> in the classroom activity;	
	OR explicitly instruct students to <b>discuss in their small groups</b> (and provide a structure for such group interaction, e.g. with roles) in the classroom activity;	
	OR uses the <b>task scenarios</b> to situate the students in a plot where they collaborate with another student, a family member, a coach, etc.;	
	OR incorporate the use of <b>technology</b> to allow students to conduct collaborative work online.	
<p><b>Evidence for Score and/or Suggested Modifications:</b></p>		
<p><b>8. Self-Assessment:</b> Permits students to monitor and evaluate their work prior to submission</p>	Remind students throughout the performance task to <b>check their work</b> and to make sure that all items of the performance task work together;	
	OR incorporate ways for students to check for <b>reasonableness</b> .	
	OR use computer-testing technology with the capability to provide <b>auto-feedback</b> to students (e.g., if the answer should be in numeric form and students enter letters, a pop up can inform them of the incorrect format of the response);	
	OR permit students to <b>review and revise their answers</b> as they progress through the task components.	
<p><b>Evidence for Score and/or Suggested Modifications:</b></p>		

Engagement Dimensions/Task Features (TF)	How Engagement Dimensions are Incorporated into Performance Tasks	Score (0 to 3)
<p><b>9. Overarching Engagement Question:</b> After completing the checklist, consider this question: Why would students find this task engaging?</p>	<p>The task must be one that students would want to do. By incorporating various task features outlined in this tool, the task should be able to answer to the question, <b>“Why would students find this task engaging?”</b> The task must also be age appropriate and accessible to the diversity of students who will be completing the performance task.</p> <p><b><i>Overall Review Comments with reference to evidence cited in rows above:</i></b></p>	<p><b>Overall Rating:</b></p> <p>Reject</p> <p>Revise</p> <p>Accept</p>

## References

- Arbuthnot, K. (2011). *Filling in the blanks: Understanding standardized testing and the black-white achievement gap*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.
- Darling-Hammond, L., Barron, B., Pearson, D. P., et al. (2008). *Powerful learning: What we know about teaching for understanding*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Walkington, C. A. (2013). Using adaptive learning technologies to personalize instruction to student interests: The impact of relevant contexts on performance and learning outcomes. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 105(4), 932-945.

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