

Video Notes for Component 3c: *Engaging Students in Learning* (*Effective: Proficient*)

Materials:

- **Video link:** <https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/real-world-geometry-lesson?fd=1>
- **Video transcript:** Found [here](#) under *Supporting Materials* headline on bottom right side of page

Overview:

Student engagement is centerpiece to the framework for learning and teaching. When students are engaged, they are intellectually active in learning important and challenging content that will prepare them to be college and career ready. The critical distinction between a classroom in which students are busy and one in which they are engaged, is that in the latter, students are developing a deeper conceptual understanding through what they do.

In order to meet the rigorous Common Core standards, teachers must engage students in high-level thinking through well-designed learning tasks that are fully aligned with the instructional outcomes of the lesson. Component 3c: *Engaging Students in Learning* in the [Louisiana Compass Teacher Rubric](#) describes the key indicators of this practice, which include:

- Virtually all students are intellectually engaged in challenging content, through well-designed learning tasks, and suitable scaffolding by the teacher, and fully aligned with the instructional outcomes;
- There is evidence of some student initiation of inquiry, and student contributions to the exploration of important content;
- The pacing of the lesson provides students the time needed to intellectually engage with and reflect upon their learning, and to consolidate their understanding; and
- Students may have some choice in how they complete tasks and may serve as resources for one another.

The teacher in this Teaching Channel © video demonstrates *Effective: Proficient*, Common Core-aligned instruction under this component. Examples of key evidence from the video, aligned to language in the Compass Teacher Rubric, are provided below to substantiate this rating.

Common Core Connection:

This lesson is a strong example of conceptual and application based practice of a standard. Students are required to know what perimeter and area are, how to find both, and what those things tell us about shapes so that they can meaningfully use a shape. In this example students are not simply identifying the definition of perimeter and area and applying a memorized formula to find a technical answer.

The content of this lesson, however, is more aligned to the third grade Common Core standard on area than the sixth grade standard on this topic. It appears that the teacher intended to align this lesson to standard 6.G.1, which calls for a much more sophisticated use of geometric shapes and measurement than simply understanding and applying perimeter and area. To fully align to this standard the lesson would have needed to incorporate more complex geometric shapes, dimensions, and comparison/application between those shapes and dimensions.

The content of the lesson actually seems to be more aligned to standard 3.MD.8. This 3rd grade standard calls for students to solve real world problems by finding the area of different rectangles with similar perimeters and comparing them. This is exactly what the students were asked to do in this lesson when they were tasked with finding the perfect table for a group that needs to fit around the same perimeter but have the most spacious area.

It's possible that this lesson was leading up to more rigorous content associated with irregular shapes, but we do not see that content addressed in this video.

Rubric Indicators and Rationale Used to Determine Ratings:

Please note that while there is evidence in this video that is relevant to other components of the Compass Teacher Rubric, the indicators and rationale below are solely focused on 3c.

Indicators	Evidence and Rationale
Most students are intellectually engaged in the lesson.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The area would be 18. This area would be 24. This area would be 28, and this area would be 30. So then we see that this is the largest and this is the smallest.”</i> • <i>“The perimeter can be the same but the area can change.”</i> <p>While all students are engaged in creating the two rectangles, we see evidence through the whole group and small group discussion that most students are intellectually engaged, making connections to other concepts and articulating this knowledge.</p>
Learning tasks have multiple correct responses or approaches and/or demand higher order thinking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“At first we studied the rectangle and the possible ways you could do and so we wrote down all the possible ways and then we found the area of them and we found what was the largest and what was the smallest, and so we made our rectangle based on it.”</i> • <i>“It’s when in the Renaissance time when the king and queen would sit at the dinner table. There was all this room between them and they didn’t talk very much, and that connection was great.”</i> <p>Through the two tasks of creating a plan in small groups and then acting on the plan in a whole group, students arrived at different but correct solutions. The learning activities also helped students make the connection of perimeter and area to real world application.</p>
Students have some choice in how they complete learning tasks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Some groups had decided to go straight away into the diagram and to draw a picture. Another student chose to do the table, the data table, where they had the different values on either side.”</i> • <i>“When I turn around, you’re going to have probably a minute to get yourselves in order.”</i> <p>Through minimal instructions from the teacher, students engage in small group discussion, creating different solutions to the same challenge. Students also had a choice in how they completed the task of creating the rectangles, working together with minimal teacher guidance to arrange themselves.</p>
There is a mix of different types of groupings, suitable to the lesson objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“You’re just going to get into your groups, you’re going to sit down and you’re going to have a discussion for about 5 minutes OK, and then after that we’re actually going to see if it works.”</i> • <i>“When I turn around you’re going to have probably a minute to get yourselves in order.”</i> <p>The lesson starts out with a whole group discussion and then students engage in small group discussion before moving to a student-driven whole group activity.</p>
Materials and resources support the learning goals and require intellectual engagement, as appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“I had the option of using rope and having them just kind of do something with string but I think that them becoming part of the perimeter had a lot of value.”</i> <p>The teacher uses the whiteboard during the whole group discussion to note students’ responses, and students use their notebooks to brainstorm solutions to the challenge. She also uses paper strips to have students engage in the whole group rectangle activity at the end of the lesson.</p>
The pacing of the lesson provides students the time needed to be intellectually engaged.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“What else do we know about a rectangle that’s going to help us brainstorm it?”</i> • <i>“What we’re going to do now is we’re going to actually put your design to the test.”</i> • <i>“Can somebody come up with a statement using the word area and perimeter in it that would describe what we just discovered through this activity?”</i> <p>With a clear beginning, middle and end of the lesson, the teacher allows students time to complete activities and some time to reflect upon their learning throughout the lesson.</p>

Additional Rationale and Development Strategies:

This teacher is rated *Effective: Proficient* and not *Highly Effective* on component 3c: *Engaging Students in Learning* because there was not enough evidence of:

- Student engagement in appropriately challenging content
- Student reflection on learning
- Scaffolding that is differentiated to individual student needs
- Student initiation of inquiry

However, this teacher could easily move to the *Highly Effective* level on 3c using some of the strategies listed below. Please note that these development strategies are not an exhaustive list but are suggestions of focused actions this teacher could take to increase the level of student engagement in the lesson.

<i>Highly Effective</i> Indicators	Evidence and Rationale	Development Strategy
Virtually all students are intellectually engaged in challenging content.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While virtually all students are intellectually engaged in this lesson, the content is not as challenging as it should be, in order to align to the Common Core standard 6.G.1. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After the activity depicted in the video, the teacher could ask students how they might find the area of two or more rectangular tables pushed together, (an irregular shape.)
Students have an opportunity for reflection and closure on the lesson to consolidate their understanding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While the teacher allowed students to reflect during the small group activity, there was little time for all students to reflect at the end on the lesson. While there is a debrief after the students create the rectangles, the teacher leads the conversation instead of having the students generate their own thoughts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students could have a small group discussion with their original groups about what they noticed and learned from each rectangle building activity before engaging in the whole-group discussion. This way, more students could engage in the whole-group debrief, as we only saw two students participate.
Virtually all students are highly engaged in the lesson.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While all students are engaged in creating the two rectangles, we don't have ample evidence that all students are intellectually engaged in deepening their conceptual understanding of area and perimeter. Because of the limitations of this video, we only hear responses from a few students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher could create a Common Core-aligned writing prompt at the end of the lesson where students reflect on the lesson individually. This way, the teacher could understand if all of her students understood the lesson's objective and be able to differentiate instruction in subsequent lessons.
Students take initiative to modify a learning task to make it more meaningful or relevant to their needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While students had the opportunity to create different solutions to the same challenge in the small group discussion and drive the rectangle activity, there was not ample evidence that students were initiating questions to modify the task of creating the rectangles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After the whole group discussion, the teacher could ask the students about what their next steps should be and have two or three students lead a planning discussion about how to create the two rectangles. This way, students would have the opportunity to reflect more on their understanding and modify the task based on this knowledge.