

**Assessment Commentary Directions:** Respond to the prompts below (**no more than 10 single-spaced pages, including prompts**) by typing your responses within the brackets following each prompt. Do not delete or alter the prompts; both the prompts and your responses are included in the total page count allowed. Refer to the evidence chart in the handbook to ensure that this document complies with all format specifications. Pages exceeding the maximum will not be scored.

**1. Analyzing Student Learning**

- a. Identify the specific standards/objectives measured by the assessment you chose for analysis.

[The specific standards addressed in the assessment are as follows:

- 3.2.a.iii: Select and use appropriate rhetorical techniques (such as asking questions, using humor, etc.) for a variety of purposes.
- 3.1.a.ix: Use mentor text/authors to help craft appropriate technique.
- 2.2.b.ii: Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept. (CCSS: RI.8.5)]

- b. Provide the evaluation criteria you used to analyze student learning.

Category	Mastery	Solid	Emerging
Rhetorical Appeal/LBJ Quote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) Student perceptively and effectively incorporates all three appeals (and quote from LBJ) into his/her writing piece.</li> <li>2.) It is clear that the student has a foundational, yet complex understanding of each appeal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) Student efficiently incorporates all three appeals (and quote) into his/her writing.</li> <li>2.) Student displays basic knowledge of each appeal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) Student does not incorporate all three appeals into his/her writing.</li> <li>2.) Or, Student attempts to utilize appeals, but incorrectly utilizes each appeal.</li> </ul>
Writing choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) Student utilizes specific writing format to authentically explore how chosen topic is an injustice.</li> <li>2.) Student charismatically adheres to his/her chosen format</li> <li>3.) Grammar and conventions do not prevent interpretation of meaning from text.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) Student appropriately utilizes chosen writing piece to stand up against injustice</li> <li>2.) Student mostly adheres to specific writing style of chosen format.</li> <li>3.) Grammar and conventions rarely detract from message.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) Student does not attempt to use specific writing format in order to explore how chosen topic is an injustice.</li> <li>2.) Student compromises writing style of specific writing piece.</li> <li>3.) Grammar and conventions prevent interpretation of meaning from text.</li> </ul>

- \*Write in a format that will best help you respond to the person (poetry, a song, a rap, script for a speech, short narrative, memoir entry, blog entry, letter, etc.)
- \*Incorporate ETHOS, LOGOS, and PATHOS rhetorical appeals into your response (refer to LBJ excerpt for guidance)
- \*Weave your central quote from LBJ into your written product.
- \*Have your statistic about your topic and information about the question you asked on your desk to inform your writing
- \*Have your “NoteCatcher” out as well!

Evidence of in-class writing/LBJ copy: \_\_\_\_/20

Analysis of LBJ excerpt: \_\_\_\_/30

Written Product: \_\_\_\_/50

- c. Provide a graphic (table or chart) or narrative that summarizes student learning for your whole class. Be sure to summarize student learning for all evaluation criteria described above.

[Of the sixteen students that are in the class, both students who are on the spectrum required extended, out-of-class time to complete the assessment, and are accordingly not represented in the whole class data. Another student was absent throughout the entire unit, as he was visiting family in Mexico. Thus, for the purposes of this commentary, the whole class will comprise of thirteen students. ]

In regards to both students on the spectrum though, one of the students produced a writing product that exemplified “Solid” evidence of learning in each evaluated area as he effectively (and on a basic level) incorporated ethos, pathos, and logos rhetorical appeals into his writing, as well as his central quote from LBJ. The other student on the spectrum produced a writing product that likewise exemplifies “Solid” learning in both his ability to weave logos and pathos appeals, but he did not incorporate any ethos appeals or his central quote from LBJ. He also did not analyze the excerpt from LBJ. Thus, this student is still emerging in relation to the evaluation criteria. Both students utilized specific writing formats, and because both students chose to type so that grammar and conventions would not impede my ability to read their writing.

In terms of the whole class, focusing first on the core task of the assessment (utilizing ethos, logos, and pathos rhetorical appeals in order to write about how each student’s self-chosen topic is an injustice), as a whole class, students performed admirably. Purely in terms of numbers in regards to how well students incorporated the rhetorical appeals into their writing, four students achieved “Mastery”, eight students demonstrated “Solid” learning, and one student is still “Emerging” in relation to his ability to incorporate ethos appeals. In terms of logos, three students exemplified “Mastery” level learning; nine students achieved “Solid;” one student is still “Emerging”. In terms of pathos, five students achieved “Mastery” and eight students achieved “solid”. No students are still emerging in relation to pathos.

Because students were utilizing both the skills they learned while analyzing LBJ as well as content from LBJ, it was important that students incorporated (at least) one quote from LBJ that connects to their topic into their writing product. One student masterfully weaved MLK’s writing from LBJ into her own writing product; six students effectively incorporated MLK’s writing; five students did not incorporate a quote from LBJ at all into their own writing product.

Because students were utilizing ethos, logos, and pathos rhetorical skills in order to respond to a hypothetical person about how their topic is an injustice, it was important that

students likewise were assessed on their abilities to accurately analyze how MLK weaves ethos, logos, and pathos appeals into an excerpt of LBJ. Only one student demonstrated any knowledge of what ethos, logos, or pathos appeals are in the pre-assessment. With that in mind, it is encouraging that eleven students correctly identified both logos and ethos appeals (one student did not complete this aspect of the assessment, and another student's analysis was unreadable).

Finally, every single student wrote within a self-identified writing format, and only one student's grammar and conventions prevented authentic interpretation of his writing.]

- d. Use evidence found in the **3 student work samples and the whole class summary** to analyze the patterns of learning for the whole class and differences for groups or individual learners relative to
- comprehending and making meaning from complex text
  - interpreting and/or responding to complex text

Consider what students understand and do well, and where they continue to struggle (e.g., common errors, confusions, need for greater challenge).

[Each student sample captures individual learning in relation to the central focus, and yet together, they offer a synthesis of the learning that occurred for the whole class. Student 1 is a gifted student who yearns for opportunities to authentically and critically connect her learning to real world situations. Student 2 is an underperforming student. He is Latino. He is bilingual, and reads and writes well in English, but for some reason he is not performing to the academic level that he is capable of. My belief is that an assessment that empowers student 2 to apply his learning to meaningful and authentic situations will naturally encourage him to perform to his capacity. Student 3 is a struggling (emerging) reader. My hope was that the many learning tasks that provided reading access into LBJ equipped student 3 to perform well on the assessment.

Considering that only one student had any knowledge of ethos, logos, and pathos rhetorical appeals (this student is not represented in one of the samples) it seems apparent that extensive learning occurred in relation to students' abilities to analyze (on a basic level) rhetorical strategies in LBJ. Especially in relation to ethos and logos appeals, 90% of students correctly identified these appeals. In fact, both student 1 and student 2 adeptly zoomed into specific examples of each appeal. It seems evident then, that students undoubtedly met standard 2.2.b.ii (analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text). However, it is important to note that 40% of students did not correctly identify how MLK utilized pathos appeals in his writing, This is especially strange as every single student effectively incorporated pathos appeals into their own writing product, with 40% of students perceptively and intuitively weaving pathos appeals into their writing. I attribute this skew in data to how I structured the assessment. The analysis of the LBJ excerpt asked students to circle one instance of an ethos appeal, box one instance of a pathos appeal, and underline one instance of a logos appeal. Not only does this structure allow for confusion between what a "box" around a sentence is and what a "circle" around a sentence is, it also forces students to separate where MLK utilizes rhetoric, when in truth, he often weaves multiple appeals into a single sentence. In short, the structure for this part of the assessment was too vague, and invited too much confusion. This is especially evident in student 3's sample. It is impossible to discern what this student underlined, boxed, and circled. Yes, he was not precise and clear in his markings, but the fact remains that I did not create this portion of the assessment in a way that enabled students to adequately demonstrate their knowledge of

how MLK utilizes rhetorical appeals. In fact, student 1's sample hosts a clear mistake. She "boxed" an example of an ethos appeal when she should have circled it, and she circled a clear example of a pathos appeal when she should have "boxed" it. Because I did not scaffold this passage well, this segment of the assessment was too vague in order to trust findings that 90% of students effectively analyzed the passage. I do not mean to say that students actually did not learn as much as the 90% suggests. Rather, this portion of the assessment invited too much interpretation, and thus, it was a precarious task determining which students effectively analyzed the expert and which students did not. As a result, students like student 3 and student 1 who did not adequately analyze the passage according to the assessment, appear as though they did not learn, when in fact, the opposite might hold true.

Thankfully, the heart of the assessment was not based in students' analysis of the LBJ excerpt, but in their own writing about their self-chosen topic. There is no doubt that we can still authentically analyze students' patterns of learning based in the three student samples. Student 1 represents a student who masterfully wove ethos and logos rhetorical appeals into her letter responding to Jan (hypothetical person) who informed student 3 that denying same-sex couples the legal right to get married is not an injustice. Student 3 was able to leverage her learning in authentic and meaningful writing that both extended and deepened her critical thinking. Student 3's sample represents the twelve cases where students demonstrated applying their knowledge of rhetorical appeals perceptively and effectively. On page two of student 3's letter, she leverages MLK's writing linking that just as "any law that degrades human personality is unjust," laws that prevent same-sex marriage "degrade the human personality, and thus are unjust." In this one instance student 3 demonstrated authentic learning in multiple areas. She clearly analyzed and comprehended MLK's own writing, but then she did the higher-level task of actually applying what she learned to a topic of importance in her own life, exposing, using a layered ethical and logical rhetorical appeal, that laws against same-sex marriage are illegal. The twelve other areas of "Mastery" level work showcase similar comprehension-then-authentic-application learning.

Student 2's sample serves as a model for the majority of students (60-70%) who demonstrated mostly "solid" learning in relation to the core task of the assessment, which standards 3.2.a.iii (select and use appropriate rhetorical techniques) and 3.1.a.ix (use mentor text/authors to help craft appropriate technique) measured. For the majority of the class, because they were able to authentically apply their newly acquired knowledge of rhetorical skills to a self-chosen topic, they mostly demonstrated foundational learning. In his writing product, student 2 effectively bombards Peter with facts (victims of bullying "are 2 to 9 times more likely to consider suicide than non-victims") and logic paired with questions, forcing Peter to consider who he is in relation to bullying ("Do you think the use of force, threat, or coercion to abuse is okay?"). In short, student 2 illustrates that he authentically embodied how writers utilize specific rhetorical techniques in order to persuade their audience, as he applied ethos and logos rhetorical appeals in his response to Peter. However, student 2, like many of the students, though they illustrated "solid" learning, did not reach "Mastery" as they did not incorporate specifics in their use of rhetoric. For instance, student 2 mentions in his letter that Peter "should know how bad [bullying] feels." Student 2 stops there, though. He does not force Peter to see how bad bullying is. Other students perhaps mentioned a lone statistic or said that people should understand that their topic is an injustice without providing specifics. This lets me know that the majority of students, though they effectively incorporated a basic understanding of rhetoric into their writing, the specificity of LBJ's rhetoric, their mentor text, did not translate into their application of their learning. In fact, both student 2 and 3 did not weave the central quote they chose the day before (that they believed spoke to their particular injustice) into their

writing. This informs me that even though students effectively learned and authentically applied basic knowledge of rhetorical skills learned from LBJ into their own writing, students had still not effectively learned how to apply specific tactics, “moves”, and passages from MLK’s letter into their own writing.

Student 3’s sample represents students who are dancing on the border between “solid” and “emerging” in their learning and application of rhetorical techniques learned from LBJ. As I have gotten to know student 3, I have come to realize that he prefers illustrating his knowledge orally, rather than through writing. This assessment though, did not allow space for student 3 to apply what he learned regarding rhetorical strategies in an oral setting. Further, as a struggling reader, student 3 was required to read over 600 words in order to complete the assessment. For mainly a writing assessment, it makes sense why student 3’s written product is the shortest in the class. He spent a lot of the assessment time reading the dense text. In short, due to the reading load and inability to share ideas orally, student 3 did not have equitable access into authentically completing the assessment. Even still, student 3’s short piece seeks to weave in elements of pathos, logos, and ethos rhetorical appeals. And he even attempts an intuitive analogy, suggesting that just as people who dislike animals should not be allowed to be in animal control, so too should racist people not be allowed to become cops. However, Student 3 is still “Emerging” in his ability to effectively apply rhetorical appeals, as he does not clearly explain his analogy. Nor does he explain how his analogy exposes that certain people use the law to hurt people. In short, student 3’s attempt at a logos appeal is not effective because it is not evident exactly what he hopes to illustrate through his analogy. What is more, student 3 does not connect his writing to examples from LBJ. And though he represents the lone student who is mostly in the “Emerging” category in relation to rhetoric, student 3’s sample captures the fact that 40% of the class did not weave MLK’s letter into their own writing. 40% of students are still “Emerging” in relation to utilizing specific passage from LBJ in order to inform their own writing. I wrote extensively in the previous paragraph why I believe this occurred. Finally, I must note that even though student 3 falls mostly into the “Emerging” category on the rubric, and his grammar and conventions do in fact prevent occasional interpretation, student 3’s authentic writing and attempt at such an intuitive analogy, dips ever so slightly into “solid.” Student 3’s writing serves as a beautiful reminder that even while student learning is “emerging”, students are capable of and do briefly dip into moments of poignant and effective application of their learning.

## 2. Feedback to Guide Further Learning

Refer to specific evidence of submitted feedback to support your explanations.

- a. In what form did you submit your evidence of feedback for the 3 focus students? (**Delete choices that do not apply.**)
  - Written directly on work samples or in a separate document
- b. Explain how feedback provided to the 3 focus students addresses their individual strengths and needs relative to the standards/objectives measured.

[For each of the three focal students my written feedback addresses their strengths and weaknesses relative to standards 3.2.a.ii and 3.1.a.ix. As students’ work in relation to standard 2.2.b.ii does not host any writing, and allows for confusion in interpretation of student learning (as I discussed in the previous question), I chose to focus the bulk of my written feedback on their written product, and thus the other two standards.

With that in mind, my written feedback on student 1’s letter addressed to “Jan” highlights key strengths and weaknesses in her leveraging of rhetorical appeals (standard 3.2.a.ii). In any of my feedback for students, I make sure to highlight specific areas where they perceptively and

authentically incorporate ethos, logos, and pathos rhetorical techniques. Thus, I wrote on student 1's assessment that her choice to begin her letter with the fact that her "sister is a lesbian" is a powerful pathos appeal that sets the stage and helps Jan feel the stakes of student 1's topic. Further, student 1 convincingly leverages MLK's own words, and uses them to deliver a poignant ethos appeal, suggesting that laws preventing gay marriage degrade human personality. Student 1 nails the vision and purpose of the assessment here, authentically utilizing content from LBJ in order to argue why/how her topic is an injustice. She embodies both standards here, infusing MLK's words with her own, using his technique in order to write why preventing gay marriage is unjust. It is essential that I celebrate this moment with student 1 in my feedback (evident in #4 on her assessment).

However, though student 1 embodied the heart of the assessment, like all writers, we are always improving. Thus, I likewise make space in my written feedback in order to let student 1 know that though she framed her pathos rhetorical strategy well, she never returns to her sister's story. She never zooms into the specifics of people's lives. In my written feedback I suggest that she re-reads paragraph twelve in MLK's own letter, where he specifically zooms into moments from people's lives in order to draw readers in emotionally (addressing standard 3.1.a.ix). I purposefully point her back to our mentor text so that she can tangibly examine *how* authors specifically weave in rhetorical techniques. Models are essential throughout the learning process. And finally, I end my written feedback letting her know that good writing, in any format or situation, always finds itself in the moment, in specifics. My hope is that as student 1 re-examines her use of her pathos appeal, she will gain needed insight into the craft of writing.

As I continue to reflect on my written feedback in relation to student 2 and 3's assessments, I recognize that I did not provide as much written feedback for either of their assessments as I did for student 1. This is two-fold. On one hand, both student 2 and 3's writing is significantly shorter than student 1's, and my shorter feedback is purely a result of less writing to provide feedback on. Further, I intentionally provided more focused comments that provide specific opportunities for both student 2 and 3 to apply my feedback. For instance, I commend student 2 for introducing his pathos appeal well, letting Peter know that he needs to know how bad bullying feels. I then point student 2 towards future application, writing that in order for his pathos appeal to be effective it is important that he "gives Peter specifics of what bullying feels like." That way, Peter will feel bad, and then I make sure to let him know that being specific in writing is an essential skill. I likewise do the same with student 3. Though student 3's grammar and conventions are below grade-level, because this assessment was not meant to assess his grammar use, I made sure to not use written feedback to inform student 3 that his grammar needs to improve. Rather, I focus my feedback in relation to the two standards. Student 3 does some authentic and valid writing in his piece. Again, I recognize that it is not polished, but that does not mean it is not well thought out. Thus, I make sure to honor his attempt to utilize an analogy in order to effectively appeal to readers logically. I then make sure to summarize his analogy attempt so that he can see his own work reflected clearly and in a straightforward manner. Simply through gently inserting my clear summary of his own writing will guide him on *how* to more clearly write his thoughts in the future. I then encourage him to make sure that he is "CHRISTAL CLEAR about what he means" in his writing, just as I was in my summary of his analogy. Overall, in both student 2 and 3's writing in relation to standard 3.2.a.ii, I highlight where they demonstrated use of rhetorical techniques on a basic (as well as authentic) level, and then provided them with concrete next-steps that will allow them to grow as writers and illustrate that growth in future writing opportunities.

It is important to note that though it is clear in student 3's attempt at an analogy in his product and student 2's question asking in his writing that they implicitly draw from LBJ in order to craft their own writing (3.1.a.ix), they do not explicitly use specific passages from MLK's letter. I do make sure to provide feedback on their choice not to explicitly weave in our mentor text, a

required element on the assessment, by asking, “Where is MLK’s voice?” Though it is important to address this missing element, I choose to focus the bulk on my feedback on what they did write, rather than addressing what they did not write. That way, I can provide specific feedback that will meet them where they are at, recognizing that learning did occur, and that just because they did not weave in MLK’s voice explicitly, that does not mean they do not demonstrate their learning in the rest of their writing.]

- c. How will you support students to apply the feedback to guide improvement, either within the learning segment or at a later time?

[I honestly wish I could write that “after students once receive their graded assessments, each student will sit down with me and, together, we’d discuss their work and my feedback, and from that conference students could choose one essential area that they’d like to revise and resubmit.” However, even as a teacher who seeks to provide equitable learning opportunities for all students, I recognize that due to our universe’s time constraints, this approach is literally impossible (unless, of course, I blocked out multiple days of instruction to do conferences). Yet, I likewise recognize that the learning process often becomes the most rich when students intentionally reflect on and revise their own original thinking/written products. I get that. Thus, on the day that students receive their assessments back, students will take five minutes reading my written feedback, reflecting on what I wrote. While students are reading independently, I will assist my struggling readers, namely student 3, and read my comments to them aloud. As students reflect, they will write down on an “exit slip” two areas (in relation to the two standards their written portion focused on) that they believe they demonstrated growth and/or excellence in, one area that they’d like to revise, and three steps they can take to revise this area. I will model what this would look like on my own writing I did for the unit. For the rest of class (and then independently), students will complete their three steps, and write two sentences explaining *how* they revised their writing in relation to either their ability to effectively weave rhetorical strategies into their writing (3.2.a.ii) or their ability to leverage LBJ for their own purposes (3.1.a.ix), and *how* their revision might guide future writing opportunities. And finally, because I believe students’ input is of upmost value to my teaching quality, students will write one sentence on how my feedback assisted them in the learning process or prevented them from authentically engaging with the learning process.]

### 3. Evidence of Language Understanding and Use

You may provide evidence of students’ language use from **ONE, TWO OR ALL THREE** of the following sources:

1. Use video clips from Task 2 and provide time-stamp references for language use.
2. Submit an additional video file named “Language Use” of no more than 5 minutes in length and provide time-stamp references for student language use (this can be footage of one or more students’ language use). Submit the clip in Task 3 Part B.
3. Use the student work samples analyzed in Task 3 and cite language use.

When responding to the prompt below, use concrete examples from the clips (using time-stamp references) and/or student work samples as evidence. Evidence from the clips may focus on one or more students.

- Explain and provide evidence for the extent to which your students were able to use or struggled to use language (selected function, vocabulary, and additional identified demands from Task 1) to develop content understandings.

[Based in evidence garnished from the “language use” video as well as the three student work samples, there is no doubt that students were able to fundamentally analyze LBJ through a rhetorical lens that leveraged their knowledge of key vocabulary and equipped them to more authentically apply ethos, logos, and pathos rhetorical appeals. In task 1 I wrote about how students are struggling to determine the core difference between two language functions: analyze and identify. Through establishing concrete definitions of ethos, logos, and pathos rhetorical appeals, as well as modeling how I analyzed MLK’s use of rhetoric in his introduction, and especially because of my use of probing questions in the “language use” video, students were equipped to analyze how/why, rather than simply identify where, MLK utilized specific rhetorical techniques in his letter. Let’s zoom into student’s analysis at 3:30. I asked students why MLK might sprinkle his mostly “logos” paragraph with little words/moments of pathos. I am able to outright say logos/pathos without fear that students are confused because they taught each other each appeal the day before. In fact, before this clip students demonstrated ample use of these vocabulary words. Immediately after I finish asking why, Joy proposes that weaving multiple rhetorical appeals into our writing makes our writing “even more effective... and stronger.” Leah then adds on that pathos makes our writing more relatable and personal. Before I can ask why MLK still chooses to mostly stick to logos in this section, Jacinto brilliantly chimes in, suggesting that MLK uses the “kind of logos that brings on pathos.” In other words, Jacinto points out that MLK only needs to mention the irrefutable fact that more bombings occurred in Birmingham than any other city in America because MLK knows that the clergymen will feel the emotion of specific events. Though the time constraints of the “language use” video do not allow me to include the rest of the lesson, we go on from Jacinto’s comment to ground his comment in the text, just as I did above. Thus, as illustrated by Joy, Leah, and Jacinto’s comments, it is wonderfully evident that students authentically and accurately analyzed both how and why MLK rhetorically structures LBJ the way he does. And students even analyze the various effects MLK’s rhetorical structure will have on readers, particularly the clergymen. Incredible!

Let’s take a look at 9:55 in the “language use” video. I briefly pause Leah’s reading in order to conjure students’ recent learning surrounding Birmingham’s official city ordinances. With minimal probing questions, students were clamoring to re-unearth their knowledge of Birmingham’s ordinances. This quick moment serves as an example of how truly students leveraged content vocabulary connected to LBJ in order to assist their own navigation of the letter.

Students varied in their abilities to effectively leverage persuasive discourse learned from LBJ. All three writing samples host instances where each student attempted to structure his/her writing in a specific way so as to most effectively communicate how their topics are injustices. Student 1 and student 3 structure their writing around analogies. Student 1 suggests that denying gay couples marriage rights degrades their personality, and thus laws preventing gay couples from marrying are unjust. Student 1 purposefully and perceptively leverages persuasive discourse learned in the unit in order to write about how her topic is an injustice. Student 2 likewise attempts to utilize persuasive discourse, proposing an analogy that just as people who hate animals should not work for animal control, so too should racist people not become police officers. However, because student 3 does not clearly state the purpose of his analogy, he struggles to effectively leverage persuasive discourse in his writing. Student 2 structures his writing product with rhetorical questions, a discourse structure that student 2 gleaned from LBJ. Student 2 specifically asks Peter whether he thinks, “the use of force, threat, or coercion to abuse is okay.” Through this question, student 3 reveals the injustice inherent in bullying. By using a discourse structure of rhetorical questioning (learned from LBJ), student 3 effectively utilizes persuasive discourse in his writing. On the whole, students attempted, and on a basic level, effectively leveraged persuasive discourse learned from their analysis of LBJ.]



#### 4. Using Assessment to Inform Instruction

- a. Based on your analysis of student learning presented in prompts 1c–d, describe next steps for instruction
  - for the whole class
  - for the three focus students and other individuals/groups with specific needs

Consider the variety of learners in your class who may require different strategies/support (e.g., students with IEPs, English language learners, struggling readers, underperforming students or those with gaps in academic knowledge, and/or gifted students).

[Next steps for instruction could justifiably proceed in multiple directions. Considering that all students demonstrated substantial growth in their learning and ability to apply their learning in relation to the central focus, there is no need (and in fact it would be detrimental) to re-teach rhetorical skills learned in the unit to the whole class. However, taking into account that the majority of students demonstrated “basic knowledge of rhetorical appeals” and that just under half of the students did not incorporate specific passages from LBJ into their own writing product, it is important that next steps for instruction allow students opportunities to further practice authentically applying their knowledge of rhetorical appeals in meaningful situations, as well as explicitly weave their mentor text (LBJ) into said meaningful applications. Specifically, I envision that students will create a visual depiction (poster) that incorporates both one aphorism from their own writing product (from the assessment) as well as an aphorism from LBJ that exposes their particular injustice topic. While students are independently crafting their own visual depiction, intentionally brainstorming how they will represent both their own words as well as MLK’s voice in a way that will expose their injustice topic, I will have opportunities to do mini-conferences with students. These 2-3 minutes mini-conferences will enable me to support students like student 3 who demonstrated learning, but is still emerging in his ability to effectively apply his learning. Student 3 and I will be able to briefly refer back to LBJ, identify where and how MLK adeptly applies rhetorical tactics, and brainstorm specific moves that student 3 can make in his own writing and visual depiction that will assist him as he seeks to clearly and authentically apply rhetorical strategies. Further, while students are creating their visual depictions, I will be able to check in with students like student 2 who did not infuse his own writing product with MLK’s voice. If, in fact, student 2 never chose a certain passage from LBJ that speaks into his own topic, then he will get to do so with my guidance, allowing him the opportunity to represent and leverages our mentor text (LBJ) in his visual depiction.

Explain how these next steps follow from your analysis of student learning. Support your explanation with principles from research and/or theory.

[Based in principles from both Constructivist Theory (Piaget, 1954) as well as sociocultural learning theory (Vygotsky, 1930-1934/1978), I am a firm believer that what students and I do in an English classroom must incorporate students’ cultures and stories in ways that promote perspective-taking. Thus, after students successfully (as a whole class) completed an in-class writing assessment that empowered them to utilize rhetorical strategies and specific passages from Martin Luther King’s *Letter from the Birmingham Jail* in order to write about how their self-chosen topic is an injustice, it is essential that students have opportunities to share their original writing with each other and their communities in engaging formats that seek to breathe perspective into others. Creating visual depictions utilizing aphorisms from their own writing as well as LBJ that expose their injustice topic is not only a

natural next step in instruction, it is that “next step” in each students’ learning process that encourages him/her to own his/her learning and to authentically share that learning in perspective-shaping ways. As I mentioned in the above question, structuring the next step like this both allows me to attend to student 3’s learning needs in a mini-conference format and support the group of students who did not incorporate MLK’s voice into their written product, while still empowering all students to embody core principals from Constructivist and Sociocultural learning theories as they craft original visual depictions that expose their injustice topic. As Constructivist theory posits that students actively create their lived realities, it is important that our “next step” leverages this aspect. Allowing students the space to visually depict their authentic and original writing about their injustice topic does exactly that. What is more, this “next step” will enable students chances to transition from basic knowledge of rhetorical techniques to “foundational and complex understanding” as they will need to discern *how* they will depict their words in relation to MLK’s in a manner that will provoke a particular response from the viewer. In short, this “next step” will further allow students chances to deepen their knowledge of how to apply rhetorical skills they learned from LBJ within the contexts of their lived realities.

This next step likewise allows opportunities for students to embody sociocultural theory in ways that support students as they deepen their learning in relationship to the central focus. Sociocultural learning suggests that, at its core, learning is an interactive endeavor. Thus, returning for a moment to this unit’s central focus in partnership with students’ writing in the assessment, allowing space for students to create a visual display that allows them to interact with each other’s lived realities, promotes perspective taking and fosters authentic learning. Why? Because posters are meant to be seen. In the culmination of this “next step” students will create a gallery of posters that their fellow students can gaze at and learn from. This unit’s central focus yearns for students to leverage their analysis of LBJ in their writing about a self-chosen topic, and this “next step” cultivates students’ intellectual energies for community learning and growth. Further, throughout the process of creating the posters, students will conference their poster ideas with each other, and will guide each other as they brainstorm how they will expose their injustice topic in their visual display. They will have structured opportunities in class to continually partner with and provide feedback on the effectiveness of the rhetoric in each other’s visual displays. This “next step” embodies sociocultural theory at its core. Through creating visual depictions that utilize both their writing as well as MLK’s writing, students will have opportunities to deepen their learning in relation to the central focus, while leveraging their unique lived realities in order to teach and re-shape perspectives of their middle school community.

Piaget, Jean. *The construction of reality in the child*. New York: Basic Books, 1954.

Vygotsky, L. S. *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*.  
Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1978.

## “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere” MLK

Imagine this scenario:

You are enjoying the best bagel ever at *Moe’s Bagel*. All of a sudden, a person (give your person a name) walks up to your table and sits down. This person tells you: “Hey! Word on the street is that you’re connecting your reading of LBJ to a self-chosen topic that you believe is an injustice. Well, I just don’t think your topic is a big deal. I just don’t see how your topic is *really* an injustice. I just don’t see how your topic is a fundamental wrong in our world.”

You’re startled, and you’re mid-bite. Before you can respond, the person walks off. As you’re sitting there, you realize that you need to write. So, using the rhetorical skills that you’ve both investigated and analyzed while reading LBJ, as well as a central quote from LBJ that speaks to your topic, **create a written product that responds to the person, arguing how your topic is an injustice.**

- \*Write in a format that will best help you respond to the person (poetry, a song, a rap, script for a speech, short narrative, memoir entry, blog entry, letter)
- \*Incorporate ETHOS, LOGOS, and PATHOS rhetorical appeals into your response (refer to LBJ excerpt above for guidance)
- \*Spend five minutes planning your rhetoric and argument before you write!
- \*Weave your central quote from LBJ into your written product
- \*Have your statistic about your topic and information about the question you asked on your desk to inform your writing
- \*Have your “NoteCatcher” out as well!

Good luck! And remember: use ETHOS, LOGOS, and PATHOS appeals in your response to this person about how your topic is an injustice.

Rhetorical Appeal/LBJ Quote	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) Student perceptively and effectively incorporates all three appeals (and quote from LBJ) into his/her writing piece.</li> <li>2.) It is clear that the student has a foundational, yet complex understanding of each appeal</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) Student efficiently incorporates all three appeals (and quote) into his/her writing.</li> <li>2.) Student displays basic knowledge of each appeal.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) Student does not incorporate all three appeals into his/her writing.</li> <li>2.) Or, Student attempts to utilize appeals, but incorrectly utilizes each appeal.</li> </ol>
Writing choice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) Student utilizes specific writing format to authentically explore how chosen topic is an injustice.</li> <li>2.) Student charismatically adheres to his/her chosen format</li> <li>3.) Grammar and conventions do not prevent interpretation of meaning from text.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) Student appropriately utilizes chosen writing piece to stand up against injustice</li> <li>2.) Student mostly adheres to specific writing style of chosen format.</li> <li>3.) Grammar and conventions rarely detract from message.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) Student does not attempt to use specific writing format in order to explore how chosen topic is an injustice.</li> <li>2.) Student compromises writing style of specific writing piece.</li> <li>3.) Grammar and conventions prevent interpretation of meaning from text.</li> </ol>

Evidence of in-class journaling/writing: \_\_\_\_/20

Analysis of LBJ excerpt: \_\_\_\_/30

Written product: \_\_\_\_/50

Total: \_\_\_\_/100

Standards: 3.2.a.iii, 3.1.a.ix, and 2.2.b.ii

## “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere”

## MLK

Read the excerpt from MLK’s “Letter from the Birmingham Jail” and complete the following actions:

**Circle** one instance where MLK utilizes an ETHOS appeal

**Box** one instance where MLK utilizes a PATHOS appeal

**Underline** one instance where MLK utilizes a LOGOS appeal

“I must close now. But before closing I am impelled to mention one other point in your statement that troubled me profoundly. You warmly commended the Birmingham police force for keeping "order" and "preventing violence." I don't believe you would have so warmly commended the police force if you had seen its angry violent dogs literally biting six unarmed, nonviolent Negroes. I don't believe you would so quickly commend the policemen if you would observe their ugly and inhuman treatment of Negroes here in the city jail; if you would watch them push and curse old Negro women and young Negro girls; if you would see them slap and kick old Negro men and young boys, if you would observe them, as they did on two occasions, refusing to give us food because we wanted to sing our grace together. I'm sorry that I can't join you in your praise for the police department. It is true that they have been rather disciplined in their public handling of the demonstrators. In this sense they have been publicly "nonviolent." But for what purpose? To preserve the evil system of segregation. Over the last few years I have consistently preached that nonviolence demands that the means we use must be as pure as the ends we seek. So I have tried to make it clear that it is wrong to use immoral means to attain moral ends. But now I must affirm that it is just as wrong, or even more, to use moral means to preserve immoral ends.”

Total: \_\_\_\_\_/100

Standards: 3.2.a.iii, 3.1.a.ix, and 2.2.b.ii