Questions:

1. How many questions should the pre and post assessment have?
2. Do I have to create my own pre and post assessment?
3. Should the pre and post assessment be identical?
4. If the majority of the students do poorly on the pre-assessment, should I give a second, different pre-assessment?
5. If the majority of the students do extremely well on the pre-assessment, should I give a second, different pre-assessment?
6. Do I list the school name with the demographic information?
7. For how many days should I teach the unit?
8. Do I select the topic or the subject for the unit, or will someone else select it for me?
9. Do I teach a unit for my Teacher Work Sample in one subject or in multiple subjects?
10. Is there a specific lesson plan format that I should follow?
11. Am I allowed to develop my unit with another intern?
12. What style of graph should I use?
13. What happens if some students are pulled out of my class for special services or programs while I’m teaching my unit?
**Answers:**

1. **How many questions should the pre and post assessment have?**

   Actually, that depends. You will want to design a pre and post assessment that can measure each of your learning goals completely enough to show student growth on each goal. For example, if you only have one question (or one gradable item) for learning goal 2, then your students can only get 0% or 100% on that learning goal. That would make it pretty hard to measure student growth. On the other hand, too many questions would defeat the purpose, too. Students don’t need to take a 90 minute pre-assessment administered in two sessions.

   For your TWS, it would be best to have at least five points available for each learning goal, but you may not get enough information if you keep to that minimum. It might be helpful to think about what kind of final assessment seems most appropriate for the grade level and subject area involved. An assessment in an Algebra II class would be a bit more involved than one in a fourth grade math class. You probably want your pre and post assessment to be about as long as other assessments that the students in your class are accustomed to taking. It may be best to discuss this question with your supervising teacher and clinical coordinator.

2. **Do I have to create my own pre and post assessment?**

   Yes. The expectation of the School of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership is that you design your own assessments. This is not just the requirement of your academic program, but a great skill to practice for your future as a teacher. Many times, the tests that come with the textbook or your curriculum materials don’t fit your students’ needs as naturally as you would like. It is often helpful to look at the resources provided and tweak them to fit your needs, or use them to get ideas for items that you create. For the TWS, though, you won’t be able to photocopy tests out of the teacher’s manual.

3. **Should the pre and post assessment be identical?**

   They can be. In order to meet all of the indicators at the Proficient level, your pre and post assessment must “measure the same learning outcomes at the same level of difficulty using similar assessment items and/or methods, and produce scores that can be compared to one another to show growth.” In simple terms, that means that you need to assess the same things, in the same way, both before and after you teach. Using an identical assessment is one way to meet this indicator relatively easily.

   You might want to modify your assessments to have one version that you give before instruction, and one version that you give after instruction. Using an identical test can cause what is sometimes called the *testing effect* and can cause your assessment to measure familiarity instead of learning. Imagine that a
student sits down to take the post-assessment, recognizes it from a week ago, and puts down the same answers as before. “I remember this,” he says to himself, “The answers made that funny word CABBADAC!” The student shows no growth if he does that. Now imagine another student who remembered the questions from the pre-assessment and looked them all up when she got home and memorized the right answers in order. She shows a remarkable amount of growth, but that doesn’t mean she learned it all.

In order to meet one of the indicators at the Exemplary level, your pre and post assessment must be “designed in such a way that any change in students’ scores seen on the post-assessment can be reasonably attributed to student learning and not to memory of the pre-assessment.” You can meet this indicator by making some relatively small and subtle changes to your assessment. If you present the items on your assessment in a different order, or if you use essays or performance tasks, the changes in your students’ scores can be reasonably attributed to learning.

Just be careful not to modify your assessment too much, or you run the risk of no longer meeting the indicators at the Proficient level. If you use a short assessment with ten simple, factual, multiple-choice questions as your pre-assessment, but assign a five page paper as your post-assessment, then your assessments are no longer equivalent. The paper measures student learning in a completely different way that the pre-assessment, is probably more challenging, and probably generates a very different kind of score. If you have a hard time keeping your pre and post assessment similar enough to be comparable, then you are better off using an identical assessment so that you can meet all of the indicators at the Proficient level.

4. **If the majority of the students do poorly on the pre-assessment, should I give a second, different pre-assessment?**

That depends. Don’t be too surprised if most of your students fail your pre-assessment. It makes sense for them to do poorly; you haven’t taught them the content that your assessment measures yet. If the majority of your students get a zero on the pre-assessment, though, that could be cause for concern.

You want to be able to show student growth on your pre and post assessment. When students get zeros on your test, you might not be able to measure that growth. Imagine that you do a really fabulous job teaching your unit and your students really do learn a lot. It might be possible for these students that learned so much to still get a zero on the post-assessment. Your assessment might be too difficult and, even though they learned a lot, they still don’t earn any of the available points. The majority of your students need to land on your scale for that scale to measure their growth properly.

The other concern is that, if your pre and post assessment accurately measure your learning goals, too many zeros might indicate that your goals are set a bit too high for your students. I would discuss your
results with your supervising teacher and clinical coordinator to figure out how you should modify your unit’s learning goals and/or your pre and post assessment to address this problem.

5. **If the majority of the students do extremely well on the pre-assessment, should I give a second, different pre-assessment?**

Absolutely! You want your TWS to demonstrate how fabulous you are by showing how much your students learned from your unit. If most of your students get full points on your pre-assessment before you’ve taught them a thing, you won’t be able to show that you made a difference for them. Worse yet, if a bunch of students got 100%, they can’t go up, and might just go down. It would be really tough to show how great a teacher you are if the data shows that your students got worse while you taught them. It’s possible that you’ve set your learning goals too low, or that you’ve made your pre and post assessment too easy. If you are in this situation, talk to your supervising teacher and clinical coordinator to figure out what you should change.

6. **Do I list the school name with the demographic information?**

No. You won’t list any names at all in your TWS. Even your own name should only appear on the cover page. Imagine that you took your TWS, ripped off the cover page, and handed it to some random stranger. They shouldn’t be able to use your TWS to figure out what students you taught unless they know you or your students personally.

7. **For how many days should I teach the unit?**

That is a complicated question. Your unit should be the appropriate length for your students, your learning goals, and the content area. As a good general rule, your unit should be about the same length as other units that your students tend to have in that classroom. Keep in mind, though, that different people use the word “unit” to mean different things. Some textbooks, for example, define a unit as a collection of chapters, which may require months to teach to your students. That kind of unit would be far too long for a TWS!

The measurement that you should use has to do with your learning goals. Your TWS must include from three to five learning goals. Each learning goal may be supported by several lesson objectives and require multiple lessons. One week is probably too short for a TWS unit, and one month could be too long, but there are several factors that affect your unit’s ideal duration. You should definitely talk this over with your supervising teacher and clinical coordinator and let them guide you.
8. **Do I select the topic or the subject for the unit, or will someone else select it for me?**

You might be able to select the content of the unit you teach, or you might not; that depends entirely on your unique situation. Some schools follow very specific, daily curriculum calendars, while others provide nothing more specific than the state’s guidance. Some teachers may not be willing to give up too much control of their classroom, while others will want you to take the lead in everything and just act as a consultant for you. You’ll need to talk to your supervising teacher and your clinical coordinator to figure out how this process will work for you.

9. **Do I teach a unit for my Teacher Work Sample in one subject or in multiple subjects?**

Good question. In an elementary classroom, you may decide to develop a thematic unit that ties together content from many different subjects. In the case of a multidisciplinary thematic unit, think about your TWS in terms of your pre and post assessment. Your TWS is required to report and analyze the results of one pre and post assessment.

If you would give one pre and post assessment for all the goals in your unit, then you should report it that way. Chances are, however, that you would assess the goals for each subject separately. You may assess the math goals during the time of day that your students are accustomed to doing math stuff, and assess your science goals during the time of day that they do science stuff. You might assess reading, social studies, and language arts goals separately, too.

If you have multiple sets of pre-assessments and post-assessments, your TWS only needs to report the results of one set. If you wanted to make that decision ahead of time, you could choose to only give a pre-assessment in one of those subject areas and use that subject for your TWS. On the other hand, if you prepare a pre and post assessment for more than one subject area, then you have more data available to you and you can choose which subject to write up in your TWS after you see the results. Talk to your supervising teacher and clinical coordinator to figure out what approach is going to be best for you.

10. **Is there a specific lesson plan format that I should follow?**

I’m sure there is, but any format will work for your TWS. Your clinical coordinator and/or your supervising teacher will probably have a specific lesson plan format that they want you to follow. Any lesson plan format that works for them, though, will be detailed enough for your TWS.

11. **Am I allowed to develop my unit with another intern?**

This is another great question! Good teachers often collaborate with one another to set learning goals, develop lesson plans, develop learning activities, and even design assessments that measure student
learning consistently. The goal during Internship II is to give you as much practical experience as possible to help you be the best professional teacher you can. If you are in an internship placement that allows you to work with another intern the way that many teachers collaborate with one another in the field, you could gain a lot from that experience. The goal, of course, is to make a difference for students and have an impact on their learning, and collaboration is almost always good for students. Each of you will have different students, different pre and post assessment results, and different experiences to reflect on, so you certainly couldn’t co-author the same TWS, but working together can only make your experience richer!

12. What style of graph should I use?

Your graph should be a bar graph or a column graph (where the bars are vertical instead of horizontal). A column graph tends to make the most sense visually, though. The TWS GraphMaker that is available on the TWS web site will automatically generate column graphs for up to 150 students. Of course, you may generate your own graphs using different software, if you like, but you will still need to enter your student data into the TWS GraphMaker and upload it to LiveText with your final TWS. Since you have to turn it in anyway, we tried to make it as useful and as helpful as possible.

13. What happens if some students are pulled out of my class for special services or programs while I’m teaching my unit?

This is great information to track so that you can see how it affects student learning during your unit. When you analyze your pre and post assessment results, you may be able to see the impact of this lost instructional time. You certainly can’t control whether or not students receive additional services outside the classroom. Many such services are required by law. Good data can help you understand what is going on with your students, though. If missing your lessons made a difference in these students’ learning, you’ll want to mention that in your reflection. Then, when you have your own classroom and your own students, you might be able to use pre and post assessment data like this to help you plan when to teach particular topics or subjects so that certain students won’t miss the material, or to request that special services be scheduled in a way that minimizes the impact on student learning.