GRAND CANYON UNIVERSITY™

EID-500 Needs Assessment

Perform a needs assessment on your selected target audience by completing the prompts below. Use your textbook and other readings to assist in the completion of this template.

Stage 1: Identify and Describe a Performance Problem

Define the Performance Problem
Write a performance problem statement that you will aim to improve with an instructional solution. *Example Problem Statement: New homeowners do not know how to replace a kitchen faucet. (See the course syllabus for additional example performance problem statements.)*
Teachers currently perceive that benchmarks and assessments do not align with state assessment results. This misalignment can lead to confusion about student performance levels and hinder the effectiveness of instructional strategies.

Describe Performance	
Write a description of what the target audience is currently doing, what should be happening, and the difference between the two. You can use similar language to the performance problem statement. Describe any gaps in performance that the instructional solution should address.	
Current Performance:	Educators currently demonstrate a gap in their understanding of the grade-level expectations and how these expectations connect with both state and district assessments. This lack of knowledge can hinder their ability to effectively prepare students for state testing and ensure that instructional practices align with required standards.
Desired Performance:	Benchmarks and assessments would accurately reflect state assessment results, providing a clear and consistent measure of student learning. For instance, if students score well on benchmark assessments, they should also perform well on state assessments, indicating that the benchmarks are aligned with state standards. This alignment would enable teachers to confidently use assessment data to inform instruction, tailor interventions, and support student learning effectively.

Performance Gap:	1. **Lack of Alignment:** The benchmarks do not cover the same content or skills assessed by state assessments, leading to students being unprepared for state tests. 2. **Clarity in Assessment Standards:** Teachers may not fully understand the state standards, resulting in the creation of assessments that do not accurately measure student proficiency. 3. **Data Utilization:** Teachers may not be effectively using assessment data to inform instruction, leading to missed opportunities for student growth.

Describe who Identified the Problem and Expectations

Write a brief description of the parties who identified this as a problem and how they determined this problem exists (e.g., feedback, performance data, industry trends). List the expectations for the new instructional solution.

Educators observed difficulties within their classrooms. Students often demonstrated low performance on evaluations, prompting teachers to collect input from quizzes, assignments, and classroom discussions. School administrators reviewed performance metrics from standardized testing, benchmark assessments, and progress tracking. Feedback from parent surveys and communications uncovered worries about the curriculum or the support available at home.

Stage 2: Plan and Conduct Data Collection

Data Collection Plan

Create a plan detailing a variety of diverse data sources and data collection methods that will inform your needs assessment. Explain how each data source and data collection method will support your investigation. Aim to include at least three human and/or non-human data sources.

Following the creation of your plan, collect the data.

Analysis Purpose	Data Source (n-count)	Data Collection Method	Rationale

What are their current knowledge levels or competencies related to the topic? List their ©2025. Grand Canyon University. All Rights Reserved.

☒ Learner ☐ Content ☐ Environment	*Example:* *Local homeowners* *(n = 11)*	*Electronic survey*	*A survey emailed to my neighbors will help establish their current level of knowledge for installing a new kitchen faucet. I will also learn about their comfort level working with technology.*
☐ Learner ☒ Content ☐ Environment	*Example:* *Manual for a new kitchen faucet (n = 1)*	*Document analysis*	*Reviewing a manufacturer's manual for installing a new kitchen faucet will serve as a generic outline for the key steps of this process. The manual will be the foundation for the procedural steps of the content.*
☐ Learner ☐ Content ☐ Environment	K-5 Teachers	Electronic Survey	The survey will provide valuable data on teachers' perceptions, allowing for targeted improvements in assessment practices. By understanding where misalignments exist, schools can offer support to help teachers develop assessments that truly reflect student understanding. The survey encourages dialogue among teachers about best practices and challenges they encounter, fostering a collaborative environment focused on student success.
☐ Learner ☐ Content ☐ Environment	State and district Assessment Result reports	Data Analysis	Examining state and district assessments in connection with state standards is vital for confirming that educational goals are being achieved successfully. By comprehending and evaluating how well state and district assessments align with these standards, students and educators can collaborate to enhance the educational experience, catering to the diverse needs of all learners.
☐ Learner ☐ Content ☐ Environment	Classroom Observations	Data Collection	Collecting data from classroom observations is an essential practice for ensuring that teaching aligns with standards and curricula. It provides actionable insights that can lead to

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			improved teaching strategies and better student outcomes.

Data Collection Summary
Write a summary of your data collection experience. Include challenges that arose, how they were addressed, and what you will do differently in the future when collecting learner data.
During the data gathering process, I employed a variety of methods, including surveys, classroom observations, and direct assessments of student performance. While each tool offered valuable insights, they also came with their own set of challenges. A notable obstacle was the limited participation from staff in the critical needs survey. I understood that their input is vital for a well-rounded view of these needs. To boost participation in future initiatives, I will look into providing additional incentives and improving communication about the importance of the survey. Furthermore, organizing the student data collection was essential for maintaining accuracy. I tackled this challenge by developing a structured approach to promptly record and analyze the data. In upcoming data collection efforts, I intend to introduce more interactive components in surveys to enhance participant engagement. I will also dedicate more time to classroom observations to obtain thorough feedback and insights. These modifications are aimed at improving the quality of the data collected and facilitating a more effective analysis of student outcomes.

Stage 3: Determine Learner Needs Using an Empathetic Process

Conduct Analyses with Data
Analyze Learner Characteristics
Write a brief description of the target audience and the implications for design using evidence from the data you collected in Stage 2.

Who is the target audience? (e.g., demographics, total number of individuals)	The target audience consists of 35 certified teachers.
What motivates these individuals?	Our K-5 teachers are driven by a combination of factors that foster a positive culture, enhance student success, and ensure robust administrative support. 1. **Positive Culture**: A supportive and encouraging environment inspires teachers to collaborate and innovate, fostering a sense of belonging and motivating them to contribute positively.

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	2. **Student Success**: A commitment to student achievement serves as a powerful motivator. Seeing students thrive and reach their potential provides a sense of fulfillment and purpose for educators and staff alike. 3. **Administrative Support**: Strong backing from administration empowers teachers, providing the resources and guidance necessary to implement effective strategies that benefit both educators and students. This support is crucial in creating an atmosphere where everyone can succeed.
What are their current knowledge levels or competencies related to the topic? List their specific skills or knowledge areas.	A significant majority, approximately 85% of K-5 teachers, demonstrate a limited understanding of the academic standards relevant to their specific grade level, as well as the standards that apply to adjacent grade levels.
What are their learning preferences or formats? (e.g., (asynchronous, synchronous, self-paced, instructor-led, online, face-to-face, hybrid)	Teachers tend to favor in-person learning sessions that are brief in duration.
What is their familiarity with and access to different forms of technology? (e.g., Wi-Fi, smartphones, LMS)	Familiarity with technology differs among teachers; some are quite at ease with it, while others may feel intimidated by it.
What are potential implications the target audience's unique characteristics may have for the design of the instructional solution?	1. **Diverse Learning Styles**: Teachers have different preferred learning styles (visual, auditory, kinesthetic). 2. **Range of Experience**: The teachers have different levels of experience with technology and teaching methods. 3. **Subject Area Expertise**: The Teachers specialize in different subjects and grade levels. 4. **Cultural Backgrounds**: Cultural diversity can influence teaching styles and interactions. Instructional designs should respect and reflect these backgrounds. 5. **Motivation and Goals**: Different teachers have varying motivations for attending training (e.g., improving student outcomes, professional development).
Analyze the Content	

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Describe the essential content. Identify what information is need-to-know and nice-to-know.	
What are the foundational components of the topic or skill being addressed? For any procedural skills, list all steps for completing the task. Reach out to subject matter experts if necessary.	Steps for Completing the Task of Assessment Alignment

Curriculum Standards: Understanding local, state, and national standards that outline what students should learn at each grade level.

Benchmark Assessments: Regular evaluations of student performance that measure understanding of specific content areas, providing data to inform instruction.

State Assessments: Standardized tests administered to measure student performance against established state standards.

Data Analysis: Interpreting assessment results to determine student progress and areas needing improvement.

Instructional Adjustments: Using assessment data to modify teaching strategies, interventions, and support mechanisms for students.

Steps for Completing the Task of Assessment Alignment

Identify Standards: Review the relevant curriculum standards that apply to your subject and grade level.

Develop Benchmark Assessments: Create or select assessments that measure the key concepts outlined in the standards.

Administer Assessments: Conduct the benchmark assessments at regular intervals throughout the instructional period.

Analyze Data: Evaluate the results of the assessments to identify trends, strengths, and weaknesses in student learning.

Adjust Instruction: Use the data to inform teaching practices, making necessary adjustments to address student needs.

Evaluate State Assessment Performance: Compare benchmark assessment results with state assessment outcomes to ensure alignment and effectiveness.

Continuous Improvement: Regularly review and refine assessments and instructional strategies based on data analysis and student performance. |
| How long does it take to complete the task? | This initiative is structured to encompass a full academic year, during which we will assess progress by examining student performance metrics derived from state assessments. Comprehensive data analysis will be conducted to evaluate growth and identify areas for improvement throughout the year. |

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Are there additional elements that would be nice for the learner to know, but are not crucial?	

Analyze the Environment

Describe the environment where the audience will be engaging with the learning solution (e.g., work, home) and where they will be applying the new skills and knowledge (if different).

What is the setting for the instruction? What is the setting for the application of the new knowledge and/or skills? Describe the physical layout and space.	Instruction will be conducted in the school library, which features an expansive and open layout. This design fosters collaboration among different grade levels and supports vertical alignment in learning activities. The library's space is well-suited for group interactions and encourages a dynamic exchange of ideas across various grade levels.
Are there any technological requirements or limitations? (e.g., devices, software, internet)	To successfully execute this instruction, the necessary technology includes laptops, a reliable internet connection, and access to Google Drive, as well as either PowerPoint or Canva for presentations. A potential limitation to consider is the stability and speed of the Wi-Fi connection, which could impact performance.
What support systems will be available? (e.g., mentors, tech support)	The available support systems will include a dedicated administrative team, experienced instructional coaches, and reliable tech support. Each of these resources is designed to assist and enhance the overall educational experience. The administrative team will provide guidance and oversight, while instructional coaches will offer tailored strategies for effective teaching. Additionally, tech support will ensure that all technological tools and resources are functioning optimally, contributing to a seamless learning environment.
Are there any compliance or policy requirements for this instruction?	N/A
What goals are the organization working towards with this instruction?	- Benchmarks and assessments should effectively mirror state assessment outcomes, offering a reliable and uniform gauge of student learning. - Educators will learn how to utilize assessment data with assurance, guiding their instruction, customizing interventions, and enhancing overall student learning.

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	● In addition to these objectives, the school is committed to fostering a growth mindset, promoting equity in education, and ensuring that all students have access to the resources they need to succeed. ● By aligning assessments with these goals, the school aims to create a more supportive and effective learning environment.
What are the potential implications the characteristics of the environment may have for the design of the instructional solution?	The open design of the library allows teachers from different grades to interact and collaborate. This fosters a sense of community and helps teachers learn from each other, leading to deeper understanding of the curriculum and standards.

Barriers to Success

Describe any constraints that may hinder the implementation and effectiveness of your instructional solution. Think about any challenges that might arise for the target audience in a learning experience (e.g., language, accessibility, time constraints, technology). Discuss how using an empathetic process when determining learner needs can help mitigate these challenges.

Some teachers may possess fixed mindsets, thinking that their teaching methods are the only effective ways to facilitate learning. When a teacher is resistant to embracing new technologies or teaching approaches, it can impede the overall development of the school's culture. This resistance can stifle innovation and collaboration. A negative or stagnant school environment can create obstacles to progress. If teachers feel unsupported or unappreciated, they may be less inclined to engage in collaborative efforts or innovative practices. Furthermore, a lack of acknowledgment for teachers' contributions can lead to burnout and disengagement. Many teachers also encounter time constraints due to heavy workloads. The demands of lesson planning, grading, and administrative responsibilities can leave minimal opportunities for collaboration or professional growth. Teacher's who feel overwhelmed may find it challenging to carve out time to connect with colleagues to share best practices. Additionally, not all teachers have equal access to technology, which can restrict their ability to implement contemporary instructional strategies.

Stage 4: Synthesize Findings and Determine Training Decisions

Synthesize Findings and Make Decisions

Contextualize the Training Needs

Based on all the analyses you have done, determine the training needs. Think about any specific needs of the audience. Describe elements of a learning experience that would best support the audience. Keep in mind that these decisions can be iterative and may change as your project progresses.

Compare the essential content with the target audience's current skills and knowledge of the topic. Note any missing skills or knowledge that are required to achieve the desired performance. What information and content should the instruction cover?	**Comparison of Essential Content with Current Skills** **Essential Content Needed:** 1. **Detailed Understanding of Academic Standards:** Educators need comprehensive training on both their grade level standards and those of adjacent grades to ensure continuity in learning. 2. **Curriculum Mapping:** Instruction should include how to align curriculum with standards effectively, ensuring that teaching strategies and materials support student achievement. 3. **Assessment Strategies:** Educators should learn how to design assessments that are aligned with academic standards, enabling them to measure student understanding accurately. **Missing Skills:** ● Familiarity with state and national standards. ● Ability to conduct curriculum mapping and adjustments. ● Skills in designing formative and summative assessments that reflect standards. To address these gaps, the instruction should cover: ● **Workshops on Academic Standards:** Focus on the importance of understanding both grade-specific and adjacent grade standards. ● **Curriculum Alignment Sessions:** Provide strategies for mapping existing curricula to ensure alignment with standards. ● **Assessment Design Training:** Equip teachers with tools and techniques for creating effective assessments that measure student learning in accordance with standards. Addressing the gaps in teachers' knowledge of academic standards, curriculum alignment, and assessment alignment is crucial for enhancing educational outcomes. By focusing on targeted training that aligns with their current competencies and required skills, we can empower our teachers to create meaningful learning experiences for their students.
What should the setting be for the instruction? (e.g., (a)synchronous, self-paced, instructor-led, online, face-to-face, hybrid)	An effective setting for teachers would be in-person interactions, as this environment fosters collaboration, encourages open dialogue, and facilitates constructive feedback. This engagement would allow educators to connect more deeply, share ideas freely, and provide immediate responses, enhancing the overall learning experience.
What other needs of the target audience should	To better address the varied needs of the teachers, the instructional approach should include features like differentiated learning options,

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be met in the instructional solution? How will the instruction meet these needs?	resources designed for different skill levels, and ongoing professional development strategies. By weaving these components into the instruction, we can foster collaboration and ensure that every educator feels supported and empowered to succeed in their teaching endeavors.
What non-instructional recommendations, if any, would you suggest to support the target audience? How could the instructional and non-instructional solutions complement each other?	To effectively support our K-5 teachers in understanding and implementing academic standards the following recommendations can complement the instructional content provided. These non-instructional solutions include: 1. **Mentorship Programs**: Pairing less experienced educators with seasoned mentors can facilitate knowledge transfer and provide ongoing support. For example, a new teacher might shadow a veteran educator to observe how they align their curriculum with state standards. 2. **Collaborative Learning Communities**: Establishing professional learning communities (PLCs) encourages teachers to collaborate, share resources, and discuss challenges related to curriculum mapping and assessment strategies. For instance, a group of teachers from different grade levels can meet regularly to align their teaching strategies based on the standards. 3. **Access to Resources**: Providing teachers with access to online databases, tools, and templates for curriculum mapping and assessment design can empower them to develop their skills independently. For example, offering subscriptions to educational resource platforms can help teachers stay updated with the latest best practices. 4. **Regular Feedback Mechanisms**: Implementing systems for collecting feedback from teachers about their instructional experiences can inform future professional development offerings. For instance, after a workshop, teachers could fill out a survey to share what they found useful and what additional support they need. Instructional and non-instructional solutions can work together collaboratively. For example, while the workshops on academic standards will provide general knowledge, mentorship programs can help teachers apply that knowledge practically in real classroom situations. Similarly, while assessment design training equips teachers with skills, collaborative learning communities can foster ongoing discussions about best practices, therefore reinforcing and expanding on what was learned during training sessions.
Provide a Rationale	

Defend your early design decisions. Describe how the various contexts and analyses informed the needs you determined. How will this design work to improve the performance problem statement?

In developing an instructional solution for educators, we utilized a variety of contexts and analyses to inform our choices regarding the needs of our K-5 teachers. The main challenge identified was the teachers' limited understanding of academic standards, curriculum alignment, and effective assessment strategies. We assessed the essential knowledge areas—such as understanding academic standards, curriculum mapping, and assessment methodologies—against the current competencies of educators. This analysis highlighted significant gaps, indicating that many educators did not possess the necessary tools to align their teaching with standards or to develop assessments that accurately measure student understanding. Feedback from educators indicated a strong desire for relevant and practical training tailored to their specific teaching needs. This input guided us to emphasize hands-on, collaborative workshops, fostering an environment where educators can learn from one another's experiences. By tackling these identified deficiencies through targeted training, our objective is to empower educators to create effective learning experiences that comply with academic standards, ultimately improving student educational outcomes.

Refine and Translate Needs into Goals

List 2–3 instructional goals (learning objectives) that will help meet the identified need.

HINT: Revisit the performance gap to ensure cohesiveness and alignment.

Instructional Goals (Learning Objectives)

1. **Alignment of Curriculum with State Standards**:

   ○ **Goal**: Ensure that all classroom benchmarks and assessments are explicitly aligned with state assessment standards.
   ○ **Example**: If a state assessment emphasizes critical thinking in reading comprehension, teachers should develop benchmarks that assess similar skills, such as analyzing texts and making inferences.

2. **Regular Professional Development on Assessment Literacy**:

   ○ **Goal**: Provide teachers with ongoing training to understand and utilize assessment data effectively.
   ○ **Example**: Organize workshops where teachers learn how to interpret state assessment results and modify their benchmarks accordingly, ensuring they reflect the same skills and knowledge.

3. **Data-Driven Instructional Strategies**:

   ○ **Goal**: Implement data-driven instructional strategies that adapt to student performance data.
   ○ **Example**: Use formative assessments throughout the year to identify areas where students struggle and adjust teaching methods to address these gaps, ensuring that the instruction is responsive to actual student needs.

What are their current knowledge levels or competencies related to the topic? List their

By focusing on these instructional goals, our K-5 teachers can create a coherent educational experience that improves student understanding and performance, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness of their teaching strategies.

References:

I developed this critical needs assessment by examining the requirements of the school where I am currently working. The information and data presented are derived from surveys and student data that have been collected. I used the following for guidance:

Mansur, E. (2022, 11 3). *How to conduct a needs analysis*. Macmillan Education. Retrieved 4 23, 2025, from https://www.macmillanenglish.com/us/blog-resources/article/how-to-conduct-a-needs-analysis

Stefaniak, J. E. (2021). Conducting Needs Assessments to Inform Instructional Design Practices and Decisions. A Practitioner's Guide to Instructional Design in Higher Education. https://doi.org/10.59668/164.4543