

Knowledge of Candidates

This podcast will help you, the NBCT Reader Coach, to learn more about candidates' knowledge about the National Board process and skills in using the NBPTS documents to make decisions to complete the portfolio. You may observe what they know and can do through conversations, drafts of writing, or emails. As an NBCT Reader Coach, you may identify what candidates do not know and which of the four NBPTS documents will help them. Rather than telling them what to do, you can help them to independently use the document to learn more about their teaching and make decisions to complete their portfolio.

The handout titled, "Beginning Checklist to Know Candidate Knowledge and Skills Using NBPTS Documents" will help you, the NBCT Reader Coach, to think about what it is that you observe about your candidates. The list is just a beginning list and you may add to it as you learn more about your candidate. You can observe if the candidate is having difficulty answering the questions, or showing specific evidence of the rubric from their own practice, or aligning responses throughout the written commentary, or selecting lessons and content that fit the criteria. This checklist is not meant to be used as a public assessment or feedback tool for the candidate nor is it a complete list. You should use this checklist as a reflective tool for yourself to better understand the candidate so you may decide which document and strategies would be appropriate for this candidate.

For example, you may read a candidate's draft and discover the candidate is not responding to the questions or you are unclear about which question the candidate is answering. You can reflect on the responses or probe further to see if the candidate does not understand the words or the questions, cannot locate them, or is only answering part of the question. Rather than just telling them what it means or telling them what to write, you should guide them to the portfolio instructions to reread the questions entirely and discuss what they mean and what details they may add. This can be done in conferences, phone calls, or notes to the candidate. If they still do not understand the meaning or cannot identify details you can refer to the NBPTS standard that may clarify or give explanations or examples. You can help them compare the question to the rubric or other sections of the portfolio instructions that show the criteria. Ultimately the candidate must decide what to revise and write, not the coach.

Likewise, you may identify that the candidate is having difficulty showing evidence of the key concepts in the rubric and needs further clarification from the standards. Once the candidate is answering the questions and attempting to show evidence of the key concepts in the rubric, you may identify that there is no alignment among all the sections of responses to questions. This can be seen when the knowledge of students in instructional context section does not connect to the goals and instruction in planning or the analysis of the videotape or reflection. As you identify these areas of need for the candidate, you can then direct them to the appropriate document. Subsequent podcasts share strategies for NBCT Reader Coaches to support candidates with the portfolio questions, rubrics, standards, and Evaluation of Evidence documents.