Innovation Lab Network Performance Assessment Project
Quality Criteria for Performance Assessments
The Sunflower: The Possibilities and Limitations of Forgiveness

Quality Criteria	Yes	Yes, with Slight Modifications	No	Rationale/Suggestions
1. Focus on Deeper Learning				
a. Does the task require the demonstration and/or application of complex skills (e.g., Critical Abilities, DOK Levels 3 and 4, 21st century skills, Key Cognitive Strategies)?*	X			Task requires students to demonstrate literary analysis skills, oral and written communication skills (including writing an argument), and the ability to synthesize information from a number of different sources.
b. Can students' responses to this task (what students are asked to produce) provide evidence of important college/career readiness skills and Critical Abilities (e.g., collaboration, research skills, evidence-based communication)?*	X			Students' responses can provide evidence of oral and written communication skills, especially evidence-based communication skills, and analysis of information skills (analyzing information gathered from multiple sources and evaluating that information).
c. Does the task address key concepts and skills in the discipline that are transferable to other contexts?*	X			The ability to analyze information from different sources and to synthesize that information into a written product (e.g., an essay) is a skill that is transferable to other contexts.
2. Alignment to Standards				
a. Does the task measure key skills and major claims emphasized by the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and/or NGSS? *	X			Task measures Claim #1 (students can read closely and analytically), Claim #2 (students can produce well-grounded writing), and Claim #4 (students can engage in research and inquiry to analyze and synthesize information). In addition, the task measures the CCSS 11-12 writing standards listed in the module and loosely measures the gr. 11-12 CCSS reading standards for informational text listed in the module. However, the task seems to more strongly measure RI. 9-10.8, which focuses on evaluating the argument in a text.
b. Can students' responses to this task (what students are asked to produce) be scored using CCSS/NGSS aligned rubrics? *	X			Students' responses (essays) can be scored using a CCSS- aligned rubric.
c. Are the scoring criteria--rubrics, point scoring systems, checklists (if provided)--aligned to key expectations of the CCSS/NGSS?	X			Students' written responses are scored using the "LDC Student Work Rubric—Argumentation," which is aligned to key expectations of the CCSS.
d. Is the rigor of the task appropriately matched to the grade-level standards being assessed?	X			The rigor of the task appropriately matches the grade-level standards being assessed, although, as noted above, the task seems to be measuring RI.9-10.8 more than the 11-12 standards listed.

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3. Student Choice and Agency				
a. Does the task allow for a variety of responses and/or solution pathways? *	X			Task allows for a variety of student responses in terms of which evidence students choose to support their evaluation/position.
b. Does the task offer opportunities for student ownership and student choice (e.g., selecting a research question or topic; selecting sources; etc.)?	X			Task offers students the opportunity to choose the texts (from a symposium of texts at the back of the book by Wiesenthal) and the evidence from the texts that they use to support their evaluation/position.
c. Does the task require student-initiated planning and management of information/data and ideas (e.g., determining strategies for solving a problem; designing an investigation; deciding how to present findings; etc.)?		X		Task requires students to decide how to present their findings, but other than that, there is no student-initiated planning or management of information/data.
4. Relevance and Authenticity				
a. Is task content represented in a way that is appropriately authentic (i.e., not overly hypothetical), relevant (i.e., relatable), and/or meaningful to students and the discipline (e.g., topic connects to students' lives, task simulates authentic purpose and audience)? *	X			Task content is represented in a way that is authentic and meaningful to the discipline (i.e., understanding that different authors can write about the same theme in different ways). Task content is also very relevant and meaningful to students' lives, as all students will most probably be faced with the issue of forgiveness in their lives.
b. Is the task related to real world problems, contexts, and/or purposes?	X			Task is related to real world problems in that forgiveness is a key factor in many areas of world and national politics, as well as in local areas (e.g., gang members learning to forgive rather than to retaliate).
5. Suitable for Diverse Student Populations				
a. Is the task, at its core, free of bias that might disadvantage specific student populations and free of stereotypes in language, content, and design? *	X			At its core, the task is free of bias.
b. Does the task include, or allow for the use of, a variety of stimuli?	X			Task requires students to read a nonfiction book and a variety of short essays exploring the issue addressed in the book. Task also includes the use of two song recordings (which are the basis for a discussion of plagiarism).
c. Does the task provide instructional scaffolds to support student learning and skill development toward successful completion of		X		Task provides instructional scaffolds that support skill development toward successful completion of the task, including the use of the Final World Protocol (FWP), which involves all students working in

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the task?				groups, carefully listening to others and sharing ideas with others. However, there is no scaffolding that helps students address some of the extended parts of the task (i.e., creating MLA citations; using and identifying different sentence structures). Also, although the module states that this task is the students' first introduction to writing a synthesis essay, there is no scaffolding that specifically addresses the elements of a synthesis essay. *Recommendation*: Add scaffolding that addresses the required MLA citations (scaffolding can either introduce MLA citations to students or remind students how to write them) and the different sentence structures (this would most likely be a review). Also, add some scaffolding that specifically explains what a synthesis essay is.
d. Does the task include appropriate recommendations for accommodations and differentiation to provide access for diverse students?			X	There are no specific recommendations for accommodations and differentiation to provide access for diverse students.
6. Design of Student Task				
a. Is the overall task prompt clear (e.g., clear student directions, unambiguous graphics)? *		X		For the most part, the overall task prompt is clear. However, it might be helpful to add a question that helps students focus their evaluation. Also, it would be helpful to indicate where students are supposed to identify the different sentence structures they use. At the end of the essay after the MLA citations? It's not clear. *Recommendation*: Add the following question to the beginning of the prompt: "Do you think Wiesenthal made the right choice?"
b. Is task information presented in an organized way?	X			
7. Curriculum-Embedded				
a. Is the task feasible for most school/classroom environments (e.g., access to necessary resources)?	X			Task is feasible for most school/classroom environments.
b. Does the task include opportunities for independent work as well as interaction/collaboration with peers?	X			Instructional scaffolding activities include opportunities for independent work and interaction/collaboration with peers.

Task Materials	Yes	No	Comments
a. Is the task missing any referenced accompanying materials (resources, handouts, rubrics etc.)? If yes, please indicate which materials are missing.		X	All referenced materials are included or a source of the text is indicated (e.g., the main book by Wiesenthal with the symposium essays is not included, but the copyright date of the book is given to help with location of the text).
b. Does this task contain topics/materials/texts that might be sensitive for some students? If yes, please explain.	X		The topic of forgiveness is likely to be very emotionally charged for those students who have experienced something in their lives that is very difficult to forgive. As the module creators state, " As we discuss forgiveness, please remember that this symposium is not a place to condemn or to preach….," which seems to acknowledge that the topic can be very emotional for some students.

Comments: Task is text-based, appropriate, and authentic for the discipline. Instructional scaffolds are tightly aligned with the task. Focus of the task is central to the discipline. Task topic—forgiveness—is highly relevant to students. Consideration might be given to strengthening the prompt by adding a question such as "Do you think Wiesenthal made the right choice?" at the beginning of the prompt.

Criteria summarized in this document were derived from the following sources:
- *Quality Criteria for Performance Assessments,* SCALE, 2013
- *Criteria for High-Quality Assessment,* SCOPE, CRESST, LSRI, June 2013
- *Quality Performance Assessment: Harnessing the Power of Teacher and Student Learning,* Brown & Mevs, February 2012
- *ThinkReady Task Review Checklist*, 2013