# TASK 1: PLANNING COMMENTARY

Respond to the prompts below (**no more than 9 single-spaced pages, including prompts**) by typing your responses within the brackets. Do not delete or alter the prompts. Pages exceeding the maximum will not be scored.

## 1. Central Focus

a. Describe the central focus and purpose of the content you will teach in the learning segment.

[ The central focus of the learning segment is to help students develop control, consistency, teamwork, and positive sportsmanship in pickleball through a series of progressively challenging activities.

The purpose of the content is to teach students not only how to perform fundamental pickleball skills, like forehand and backhand strokes, upward swinging, and rallying, but also how to apply them in real game situations while demonstrating respect, communication, and teamwork. Students work on both physical execution (skills) and social behavior (sportsmanship) to prepare them for successful and enjoyable gameplay experiences. ]

b. Given the central focus, describe how the standards and learning objectives within your learning segment address the development of student competencies in the psychomotor domain and at least one other learning domain (cognitive and/or affective) related to

* movement patterns,
* performance concepts, and/or
* health-enhancing physical fitness.

[The standards and learning objectives within the learning segment develop student competencies primarily in the psychomotor domain by focusing on proper movement patterns and performance concepts related to pickleball.  
Students work on upward swinging, forehand and backhand strokes, and maintaining rallies, which improve their control, coordination, and overall gameplay technique. The psychomotor objectives, such as "successfully complete a rally of 5 or more volleys" and "consistently use an upward paddle swing," specifically target the skills needed to perform effective, controlled movements during pickleball.

In addition, the segment addresses the affective domain by setting objectives that promote positive communication, teamwork, and sportsmanship. Through activities like Rally Quest, Doubles Rally Tally, and the Royal Court Tournament, students are expected to demonstrate respect, fair play, and encouragement toward partners and opponents. These activities build social skills and help create a supportive environment that enhances participation and enjoyment, both of which are important parts of health-enhancing physical fitness by encouraging lifelong activity habits]

c. Explain how your plans build on each other and include tasks that develop the student competencies described above while making connections between the psychomotor domain and at least one other learning domain (cognitive and/or affective).

[ The lesson plans build on each other by gradually increasing the level of skill, game understanding, and social interaction required. The first lesson focuses on skill development, where students work individually and with partners on controlling the ball using forehand and backhand strokes. This lays the foundation for proper movement patterns and performance concepts in the psychomotor domain.

The second lesson introduces more structured rally games like Rally Quest, which require students not only to perform the physical skills but also to apply rules like the double bounce and strategic movement to the non-volley zone. These tasks connect the psychomotor domain with the cognitive domain, because students must think critically about their shot choices and game strategies while physically executing them.

The third lesson moves into competitive match play with Doubles Rally Tally and the Royal Court Tournament. Students are challenged to maintain control during gameplay while also showing positive sportsmanship and communication, strengthening both the psychomotor and affective domains. Throughout the learning segment, tasks build in complexity and pressure, helping students grow in both skill execution and teamwork, while reinforcing the connections between movement, game concepts, and respectful behavior. ]

d. Explain how you will structure the learning environment to be **both emotionally and physically safe**.

[ I will structure the learning environment to be both emotionally and physically safe by setting clear expectations, using consistent routines, and actively monitoring student behavior and movement throughout the lesson. Physically, I will make sure students are spaced out properly during activities to avoid collisions and remind them to keep their paddles low and under control. We will also review safety rules, such as calling out "ball on court" if a ball rolls into another game area and stopping immediately if unsafe situations occur.

Emotionally, I will emphasize positive communication and teamwork from the start. I will model respectful behavior and reinforce it by praising students who encourage and support each other. Group discussions, like those at the end of Rally Quest and the Royal Court Tournament, will focus on celebrating effort, teamwork, and growth rather than just winning. This structure helps create a learning space where students feel comfortable participating, taking risks, and improving their skills without fear of judgment. ]

## 2. Knowledge of Students to Inform Teaching

For each of the prompts below (2a–b), describe what you know about **your** students **with respect to the central focus** of the learning segment.

Consider the variety of learners in your class who may require different strategies/support (e.g., students with IEPs or 504 plans, English language learners, students with higher/lower proficiency levels, underperforming students or those with gaps in content knowledge, or students needing greater support or challenge).

a. Prior academic learning and prerequisite skills related to the central focus—**Cite evidence of what students know, what they can do, and what they are still learning to do.**

[Prior academic learning and prerequisite skills related to the central focus include students' understanding of basic forehand and backhand strokes, their ability to maintain a basic rally, and their knowledge of pickleball court layout and game rules. In earlier classes, students demonstrated that they know how to grip the paddle correctly, move to the ball, and use an upward swinging motion to control their shots. They are able to engage in basic rallies, such as in Pickleball 4-Square, and can participate in modified games that emphasize ball control.

However, students are still learning to maintain longer rallies with consistent control, apply strategic shot placement, and follow game rules like the double bounce rule automatically. They are also developing their ability to work cooperatively with partners and show positive sportsmanship during competitive activities, which are key elements of both the cognitive and affective domains connected to this unit.]

b. Personal, cultural, and community assets related to the central focus—**What do you know about your students’ everyday experiences, cultural and language backgrounds and practices, and interests?**

[My students are highly motivated by competition and gameplay. They enjoy activities that have a clear purpose, such as winning a rally, earning points, or advancing to a higher court, rather than just working on isolated skill drills. They tend to stay more engaged when tasks feel meaningful and when they can see progress or success through competition. Culturally, the group is primarily English-speaking, though there are a few potential English language learners, which is why I make sure to use demonstrations alongside verbal instructions.

From a community perspective, many students participate in local sports leagues or after-school activities, so they are familiar with teamwork, fair play, and the idea of striving for improvement through games. Structuring lessons around competitive, game-like experiences taps into their interests and background knowledge, helping them stay focused and excited about improving their pickleball skills while still developing teamwork and positive communication.]

## 3. Supporting Students’ Physical Education Learning

Respond to prompts 3a–c below. To support your justifications, refer to the instructional materials and lesson plans you have included as part of Planning Task 1. **In addition,** **use principles from research and/or theory to support your justifications.**

a. Justify how your understanding of your students’ prior academic learning and personal, cultural, and community assets (from prompts 2a–b above) guided your choice or adaptation of learning tasks and materials/equipment. Be explicit about the connections between the learning tasks and students’ prior academic learning, their assets, and research/theory.

[My understanding of my students' prior academic learning and their personal, cultural, and community assets directly shaped how I designed the learning tasks and selected materials for this unit. I knew from previous classes that students had basic skills like forehand and backhand strokes and understood general game rules, but needed more work on rally consistency, control, and applying strategy during play. Because they already had these foundational skills, I designed activities that moved quickly beyond simple drills and into more engaging, competitive formats like Rally Quest, Rally Royale, Doubles Rally Tally, and the Royal Court Tournament.

Knowing that my students enjoy competition and need a clear purpose for their activities, I made sure that every task included goals they could work toward, such as earning points, completing rallies, or moving up courts. These structures kept students motivated and connected to the lesson’s objectives. I also made sure to use visual demonstrations and repeated cues throughout the lessons, understanding that a few students were potential English language learners and would benefit from both verbal and visual instruction.

This approach ties into Bandura’s Social Learning Theory, which supports the idea that students learn best through modeling, observation, and active participation. By connecting tasks to what students already knew, their interests, and best practice research, I was able to create lessons that challenged them, kept them engaged, and supported continued growth in both their physical skills and their social development.]

b. Describe and justify why your instructional strategies and planned supports are appropriate for **the whole class, individuals, and/or groups of students with specific learning needs**.

[The instructional strategies and planned supports in my lessons are appropriate because they meet the needs of the whole class while allowing for individual and group adjustments. For the whole class, activities are structured around competitive, game-like tasks because students are more motivated when they have a clear purpose and can work toward a goal. Using Rally Quest, Doubles Rally Tally, and the Royal Court Tournament keeps all students actively participating while practicing key skills like upward swinging and consistent rallying.

For students who need additional support, such as English language learners or those who learn better through visual cues, I provide clear demonstrations, repeat instructions, and use simple, repeated language like “step, scoop, swing upward” to help them connect movement patterns to vocabulary. I also include modifications for different ability levels, like allowing an extra bounce or shorter distances for students who need it, and making challenges harder (like hitting strategic shots) for students who are ready for more.

These strategies are based on Bandura’s theory of observational learning, which emphasizes modeling and active practice. They ensure that all students, regardless of skill level or background, have the chance to experience success, stay engaged, and continue building both their psychomotor and affective skills throughout the unit.]

c. Describe common student errors or misunderstandings within your central focus and how you will address them.

Consider the variety of learners in your class who may require different strategies/support (e.g., students with IEPs or 504 plans, English language learners, students with higher/lower proficiency levels, underperforming students or those with gaps in content knowledge, or students needing greater support or challenge).

[Some common student errors or misunderstandings related to the central focus of this unit include hitting the ball too hard instead of focusing on control, using a flat or downward paddle face instead of swinging upward, and forgetting key game rules like the double bounce rule or movement to the non-volley zone.

To address these errors, I plan to emphasize control over power in every activity. I will constantly remind students to use an upward swing and model what the correct paddle angle should look like during demonstrations. I will also repeat simple cues throughout the lesson ("step, scoop, swing upward") to keep the correct technique fresh in their minds. During gameplay, if students forget rules like the double bounce, I will stop play briefly, review the rule quickly with the group, and restart to reinforce understanding without losing too much momentum. Positive feedback will be given when students show correct form and good decision-making, helping them recognize and repeat successful behaviors.]

## 4. Supporting Physical Education Development Through Language

As you respond to prompts 4a–d, consider the range of students’ language assets and needs—what do students already know, what are they struggling with, and/or what is new to them?

a. **Language Function**. Using information about your students’ language assets and needs, identify **one** language function essential for student learning within your central focus. Listed below are some sample language functions. You may choose one of these or another more appropriate to your learning segment.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Analyze | Compare | Evaluate | Sequence | Signal | Summarize |

[ One language function essential for student learning within my central focus is **Sequence**. Students need to be able to sequence the correct steps for executing a rally — specifically, remembering the cues "step, scoop, swing upward" in the correct order during gameplay. Sequencing helps students connect the physical movements to verbal instructions, which is important for both performing the skills correctly and for communicating effectively with partners during activities like Rally Quest and Doubles Rally Tally.

Because some students are English language learners and others benefit from clear, repeated instructions, focusing on sequencing also helps make the expectations easier to understand and follow for everyone. ]

b. Identify a key learning task from your plans that provides students with opportunities to practice using the language function identified above. Identify the lesson in which the learning task occurs. (Give lesson day/number.)

[ A key learning task that provides students with opportunities to practice using the language function **Sequence** is the **partner rallying activity** during **Lesson 1 (4/8/25)**.

In this task, students rally back and forth with a partner using forehand and backhand strokes while focusing on the proper order of movement: **step, scoop, swing upward**. The teacher models this sequence during the demonstration, and students are reminded of the sequence verbally and visually as they practice. Students use this sequence repeatedly throughout the activity to improve their control and consistency, and are prompted to say or recall the cues during play and peer feedback. This helps reinforce both the physical movement and the language pattern tied to the skill.]

c. **Additional Language Demands.** Given the language function and learning task identified above, describe the following associated language demands (written or oral) students need to understand and/or use to successfully participate in the learning task:

* Vocabulary
* **Plus** at least one of the following:
* Syntax
* Discourse

[ To successfully participate in the partner rallying task, students need to understand and use specific **vocabulary** related to the skill. Key vocabulary terms include **step, scoop, swing upward, paddle face, control, forehand, backhand,** and **rally**. These words are directly tied to both the technique and the instructions students will hear and use during the activity.

Students also need to use **syntax** to correctly sequence their explanations or reminders about the skill. For example, they must be able to say sentences in the correct order like, “First, step to the ball, then scoop under it, and finally swing upward.” This structure helps them logically organize the steps they need to follow during play.  
Additionally, **discourse** comes into play as students talk with their partners, give feedback during group discussions, and respond during teacher check-ins by describing what steps they are using and how they are applying the sequence to their rallies. ]

d. **Language Supports.** Refer to your lesson plans and instructional materials as needed in your response to the prompt below.

* Identify and describe the planned instructional supports (during and/or prior to the learning task) to help students understand, develop, and use the identified language demands (function, vocabulary, syntax, or discourse).

[To help students understand, develop, and use the identified language demands, I planned several instructional supports throughout the lesson. Before the partner rallying task, I model the correct technique while clearly saying each step out loud — "step, scoop, swing upward" — to connect the movement with the vocabulary. I also display the cues visually on the smartboard so students can refer back to them during the activity.

During the task, I walk around the gym and verbally prompt students by asking them to repeat the sequence or use the vocabulary to describe what they are doing. I encourage partners to remind each other of the cues if needed. For syntax support, I give sentence starters like "First I will \_\_\_\_, then I will \_\_\_\_" to help students put the steps in the correct order when explaining the skill. For discourse support, we review and discuss the cues together as a whole class during the closure portion of the lesson to reinforce the vocabulary and correct sequence through conversation and reflection.]

## 5. Monitoring Student Learning

In response to the prompts below, refer to the assessments you will submit as part of the materials for Planning Task 1.

a. Describe how the assessments **throughout** the learning segment will provide direct evidence of students’ development of competencies in the psychomotor domain and at least one other learning domain (cognitive and/or affective).

[ The assessments throughout the learning segment will provide direct evidence of students’ development in both the psychomotor and cognitive domains.

The **Rally Count Test** is a psychomotor assessment that measures students' ability to consistently perform the correct movement patterns during gameplay. It directly assesses whether students can execute controlled, upward swings while rallying with a partner, which shows growth in their skill technique, ball control, and application of movement cues like "step, scoop, swing upward." The number of successful consecutive hits provides a clear, measurable indicator of their physical skill development.

The **Exit Slip** serves as a cognitive assessment. It asks students to recall and explain key vocabulary, sequences, and strategies related to their performance. Through their written responses, students demonstrate their understanding of why certain techniques (like an upward paddle swing) are important and how strategic play contributes to successful rallies. Their ability to describe the sequence of actions and reflect on their performance shows their understanding of movement concepts and their ability to apply them thoughtfully during play.

Together, these assessments give evidence that students are improving both their physical execution of pickleball skills and their cognitive understanding of gameplay strategies and techniques.]

b. Explain how the design or adaptation of your planned assessments allows students with specific needs to demonstrate their learning.

Consider the variety of learners in your class who may require different strategies/support (e.g., students with IEPs or 504 plans, English language learners, students with higher/lower proficiency levels, underperforming students or those with gaps in content knowledge, or students needing greater support or challenge).

[ The design and adaptation of my planned assessments allow students with specific needs to demonstrate their learning by offering flexibility, visual support, and clear, simple structures. For the **Rally Count Test**, students are assessed based on their best rally within a two-minute window, which reduces pressure and gives them multiple chances to succeed. Modifications like allowing an extra bounce or shortening the distance between partners are available for students who may need physical accommodations, such as those with motor delays or limited mobility. This ensures all students have a fair chance to show their rallying ability in a way that matches their skill level.

The **Exit Slip** supports a range of learners by using simple, direct questions that focus on key vocabulary and basic movement sequences. I also provided sentence starters and modeled language during the lesson, which helps English language learners and students with IEPs or 504 plans organize their thoughts and complete the slip successfully. Both assessments focus more on skill growth and understanding rather than perfection, making them accessible to all students while still collecting meaningful evidence of learning.

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