

Answers to Exercise 4.2

Designing Extended Constructed-Response Tasks and Demonstration Tasks

1. *Mathematics learning goal: Students will be able to make conversions between standard and nonstandard measurement systems.*

A demonstration task seems the most straightforward way of assessing this learning goal. For example, a teacher might place three or four objects around the room and ask the students to measure each object in standard units. He or she would then ask them to sit down and independently convert the standard units to nonstandard units, showing their work. An essay option might be to provide students with a word problem. The problem gives measurements in standard units, and the answer asks for a final measurement in nonstandard units. The students must perform the necessary conversions, explaining their work.

2. *Science learning goal: Students will be able to discuss the water cycle and each of its stages.*

This goal could be assessed with either a demonstration task or an essay task. If a teacher chose to use demonstration, he or she might ask students to create a physical model of the water cycle and explain its component parts. He or she might also ask students to show a portion of the water cycle through a demonstration of something like boiling water. The student would explain what is happening in the demonstration and what will happen next. An essay task might require the students to draw a graphic representation of the water cycle and explain in writing each stage and how the stages work together. The teacher could also ask students to write about real-life examples that illustrate each stage of the water cycle.

3. *Social studies learning goal: Students will be able to describe the events in a key battle from the Civil War and explain why either the Union or the Confederacy was the victor.*

An essay task or a demonstration task would be appropriate for this learning goal. A demonstration might include asking students to create a physical model of a battle scene, use plastic game pieces to demonstrate the events of the battle, and explain how and why it was won by the Union or the Confederacy. An essay task might require students to write about two or three significant events in the battle in chronological order and then use those descriptions to explain the victory.