

LET ASSESSMENT LEAD THE WAY

EARCOS Tuesday 3 November 2009

11:30-12:30

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Assessment is all the materials and procedures used to:

	Practices

Assessment is fundamentally a FEEDBACK PROCESS.

WHAT IS DRIVING THE CHANGES IN PRACTICE?

- Any assessment is based on three interconnected elements or foundations: the aspects of achievement that are to be assessed (cognition), the tasks used to collect evidence about students' achievement (observation), and the methods used to analyze the evidence resulting from the tasks (interpretation). To understand and improve educational assessment, the principles and beliefs underlying each of these elements, as well as their interrelationships, must be made explicit.
- Recent developments in society and technology are transforming people's ideas about the competencies students should develop. At the same time, education policy makers are attempting to respond to many of the societal changes by redefining what all students should learn. These trends have profound implications for assessment.
- Existing assessments are the product of prior theories of learning and measurement. While adherence to these theories has contributed to the enduring strengths of these assessments, it has also contributed to some of their limitations and impeded progress in assessment design.
- Alternative conceptions of learning and measurement now exist that offer the possibility to establish new foundations for enhanced assessment practices that can better support learning.

Knowing What Students Know: The Science and Design of Educational Assessment (2001)

NEW UNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT HOW PEOPLE LEARN



CATEGORIES OF ASSESSMENT

Locus of control		School groups	Individual teacher	Individual teacher
Best assessment tools			Products and performances	Observation
Primary uses of the data	Autopsy	Analyze consistency and programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Feedback to learners; ▪ Data for periodic reports ▪ unit plan adjustment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Feedback to learners ▪ Formative reports
Frequency				



PRACTICE 1: PROVIDING EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

FEEDBACK IS ESSENTIAL TO ADVANCE LEARNING.

1. Is it timely?
2. Can the learner tell SPECIFICALLY what he has done well and what he could do next time to improve?
3. Is the feedback understandable to the student (e.g. is the rubric or comment in 'kid' language)?
4. Does the learner have the opportunity to act on the feedback?

HOW WOULD THIS LOOK IN PRACTICE?



PRACTICE 2: KNOW HOW RESULTS WILL BE USED

TASK	Evaluate & feedback to learner	Record in a 'record' book	Include as evidence of achievement (report card)	Use data to modify teaching
1. Notes from a planned observation of a student's behavior				
2. A piece of homework				
3. Each student writes one question they have about today's learning.				
4. A teacher's notes made during a classroom discussion on student participation				
5. Teacher observes students working in a team.				
6. Following a lesson, notes taken by each student are collected by the teacher				
7. An oral presentation following a 6 week unit of work.				
8. An end of chapter test.				
9. A role-play in modern language class at the end of a unit				
10. A 'book' made by grade 1 students after a few weeks of beginning reading				
11. An essay test				
12. Portfolios for all students in a grade level, collated around grade-wide criteria.				
13. A set of math tasks given to all 2 nd , 5 th and 10 th grade students each term, set by the K-12 Math department				
14. A running record for reading				
15. A writing assessment given to all students in grade 2-12				
16. A school-designed, annual fitness test given to all students				
17. An Iowa Test of Basic Skills or MAP assessment				
18. An IB exam or AP exam				
19. Results of a national exam				



PRACTICE 3: USE CONTEXTUAL ASSESSMENT

Save Our Earth

Nuclear waste? Not in my backyard! Citizens in many parts of the world are debating whether or not to allow nuclear waste storage sites to be built in their towns. The U.S. government passed a law requiring each state to find a location for these sites and has promised monetary support to communities that agree to put the waste facilities in their town. The money can be used to reduce taxes, pay for some of the education costs and improve roads or other services in the town. Some citizens are opposed and others feel that the compensation outweighs the risks and are willing to have the site built in their town.

Your Task

Your task is to write a letter to the editor of the local newspaper to support your position and to present your view at a town meeting.

Position A: We should NOT allow a nuclear waste site in our community.

Position B: We should allow a nuclear waste site in our community.

Your Audience

Citizens in your town and local government officials.

The Purpose of Your Task

The purpose of your task is to study both sides of an issue and come to a personal opinion supported by facts from reliable sources.

Procedure

1. You will be assigned to a group of four. Within that group you will have a partner. You and your partner will be assigned to either position A or B to defend.
2. Work with your partner to create an outline of main ideas and supporting details.
3. Present your position to the other pair in your group. Then listen to their position.
4. Now work together as a group of four to come up with an agreement. You will need to discuss which are set of arguments are stronger, more valid.
5. Each of you should now write an individual letter to the editor expressing your view. Use all the information and concepts you have learned about persuasive writing. As usual, you will do a pre-write, a draft and a final draft.
6. Within your group, decide on the most effective way to present your view at a town meeting. Use our oral presentation rubric to guide your planning. As a group you will have five minutes to present your view and 10 minutes to answer questions. All members of the group must participate.

Standards to be assessed

BIG UNDERSTANDINGS

1. Opinions should be based in fact.
2. Decisions which affect whole communities require complex thinking, which addresses individual and group needs, as well as long and short term expectations.
3. The effects of interactions between human and physical systems encompass changes in meaning, use, distribution, and importance of resources.

CONTENT STANDARDS

1. Explain how nuclear energy works, the nature of nuclear waste,
2. Explain how alternative energy forms compare to nuclear energy

SKILL STANDARDS

- Analyze decisions made in the area of public policy, evaluate alternatives and consequences
- Explain different viewpoints in accounts of controversial events and determine the context in which the statements were made.
- Empathize
- Apply knowledge in a context
- Speak with confidence in public
- Write an editorial



PRACTICE # 4: DEVELOP AN ASSESSMENT MAP

Record some of the standards, tools and targets you may already use in your school.

Standard	Tool	Target

Standard	Tool	Target

Standard	Tool	Target

Standard	Tool	Target

MIDDLE SCHOOL ASSESSMENT MAP

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENTS	TARGET	COMMON ASSESSMENTS		TARGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ITBS – Math Verbal 	80% at or above Stanine 5	Standards	Tools	80% at or above 3.5 on write traits rubrics
		# 4 writing process skills # 5 variety of written forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Grade-wide writing prompts • 2 Integrated writing process papers per grade level. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ERB Writing 	80% at or above Stanine 5			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OPI Spanish 	80% meet exit standard for the level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Selected common Math tasks for exiting curriculum per grade level? 		80% at or above “B”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pres/Fitness 	50th percentile according to Pres. Award Qualifying Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computation 		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 min. run 		80% at or above age standard
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-science lab. practicals 		80% at or above “B”
UNIT ASSESSMENTS	TARGET	ON-GOING ASSESSMENTS		TARGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum one contextual task per unit 	80% at or above “B”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Running records – reading? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross Curricular standards and other selected standards 	80% at or above “B”			



EXAMPLES OF EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

1. Tag each assessment with the standards it is designed to assess.		
2. Plan assessments before teaching.		
3. Assess each learning standard a sufficient number of times to provide clear evidence of achievement.		
4. Create models of products and performances to help student and teachers to have a clearer idea of what standards look like.		
5. Maintain models of work for major learning standards.		
6. Include self-assessment in every assessment task.		
7. Provide students with a rubric or criteria for each unit assessment.		
8. Use at least one contextual assessment per unit.		
9. Feedback on major assessment is to be given within 3 days of the assessment.		
10. Use common rubrics for key trans-disciplinary skills.		
11. Include results of common assessments in report card data.		

AN ASSESSMENT LITERACY SURVEY

Use this rating scale to reflect upon your current level of assessment literacy.

- 5 Always; have many different examples (5+) of how I do this.
- 4 Frequently; have several examples (4) of how I do this.
- 3 Occasionally; have a few examples (3) of how I do this.
- 2 Rarely; have 1-2 examples of how I do this.
- 1 Never; have no examples of how I do this.

Planning Practices

- ___ 1. I design and organize my subjects/units around standards.
- ___ 2. I plan my assessment tasks before beginning to teach a unit.
- ___ 3. I make my instructional plan based on the standards and matching assessments.
- ___ 4. I maintain a file or database of test items organized by my academic performance standards.

Collecting Evidence: Assessment Task Design

- ___ 5. I design student performance tasks and projects to resemble real life situations
- ___ 6. I challenge my students to analyze and evaluate problems/issues from multiple points of view.
- ___ 7. I carefully align each assessment tool to the standards in is designed to assess.
- ___ 8. I design student assessments to accommodate individual student learning styles.
- ___ 9. I design tools to collect evidence of student thinking and work processes.
- ___ 10. I list the learning standards to be assessed on each assessment task.
- ___ 11. I am careful to ensure that I assess the most ESSENTIAL learning standards, rather than just those that are easiest to assess.

Using my assessment tools

- ___ 12. I assess students only after they have had sufficient practice to be successful
- ___ 13. Unless the task context suggests otherwise, I provide my students with most assessment tasks at the beginning of a unit.
- ___ 14. I differentiate assessment tasks based on student profile.
- ___ 15. I modify my instruction based on the results of assessments
- ___ 16. I share my students' work with colleagues in order to reflect upon my instructional decisions.
- ___ 17. I use external assessors to analyze student work.
- ___ 18. I post my academic standards and constantly focus my students on learning standards.

Evaluation Practices

- ___ 19. I provide my students use either weighted performance criteria or an appropriate narrative rubric to evaluate their work.
- ___ 20. I know when it is best to design a holistic or an analytic rubric.
- ___ 21. I maintain a file or database of leveled performance criteria statements or rubrics.
- ___ 22. I use the agreed upon criteria for school wide skills and dispositions.
- ___ 23. I construct my rubrics after analyzing examples of student work
- ___ 24. I use multiple evaluators when assessing major student performances.
- ___ 25. My rubrics and criteria lists are aligned with the unit standards.
- ___ 26. I use examples of student (or others') work to focus learning on standards.
- ___ 27. I maintain a file or database of model student work.
- ___ 28. I include samples of work from the world beyond school in my exemplars.

Feedback

- ___ 29. I provide specific, timely feedback on all assessments.
- ___ 30. I equip my students to monitor their own learning progress through performance over time

graphs or charts.

- 31. I directly instruct my students on the difference between praise, advice, and feedback.
- 32. I teach my students how to evaluate their own learning through use of models or exemplars and other self assessment tools.
- 33. I directly instruct my students how to seek and use feedback to adjust their performance.
- 34. I seek and use student feedback to adjust my instruction and classroom practices.

Grading and Reporting

- 35. I use multiple methods to assess, monitor, record, and report student progress.
- 36. I use a weighting scale to assign different values to my course standards and/or assessments.
- 37. I maintain a standards-based grade book.
- 38. I maintain and report two separate records of student performance---academic and work habits.
- 39. I do not average grades.
- 40. I use grades only to represent level of achievement of learning standards, never as punishment.
- 41. I do not use zeros in grading.