

Making Collaboration Work

Module VII: Assessment and Grading



South Georgia GLRS
Lenox Georgia

Essential Question

- How do we think differently about assessment and grading in the co-taught classroom?
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Do word problems in a math class assess mathematical understanding?



- Word problems assess reading comprehension.
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Guiding questions for determining appropriate assessments:

1. What are your essential and enduring skills and content you are trying to assess?
2. How does the assessment allow students to demonstrate mastery?
3. Is every component of that objective accounted for in the assessment?
4. Can students respond another way and still satisfy the requirements of the assessment task?
5. Is this assessment more a test of process or content? Is that what you're after?

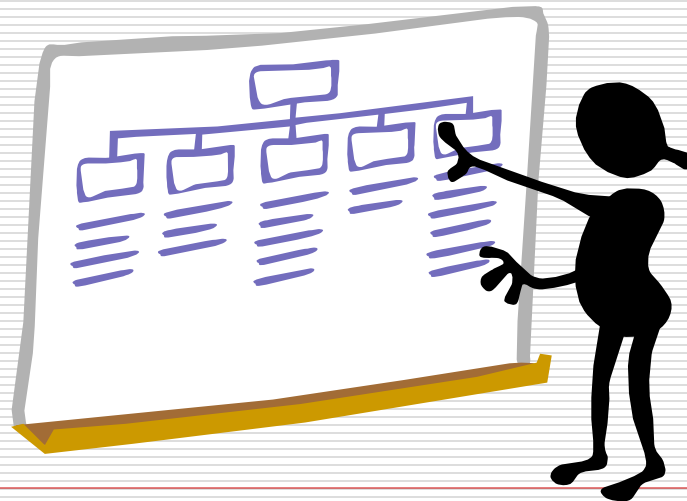
So, what is effective assessment?



1. Clearly identify learning goals.
2. Identify prerequisite skills.
3. Pre-assess students' existing knowledge base, understanding, and skills.
4. Identify students' interests.
5. Identify students' preferred ways of learning.
6. Use ongoing/formative assessment.

Victoria Bernhardt, 1998

“Data help us to understand where we are right now, where we want to go in the future, and what it is going to take to get there.”



Learning by Doing

DuFour, DuFour, and Eaker, 2006

“Frequent monitoring of each student’s learning is an essential element of effective teaching; no teacher should be absolved from that task or allowed to assign responsibility for it to state test makers, central office coordinators, or textbook publishers.”



What is ongoing assessment?

Of

Summative Assessments

- Assessment to capture learning at one point in time
- Norm-referenced standardized tests, chapter tests, etc.

Outcome:

- Improve the instrument
- Understand the extent to which students met the intended targets
- Addressing curricular changes, instructional strategies and materials

For

Formative Assessments

Assessment to increase student learning

- Clear information for students on their progress towards the learning target

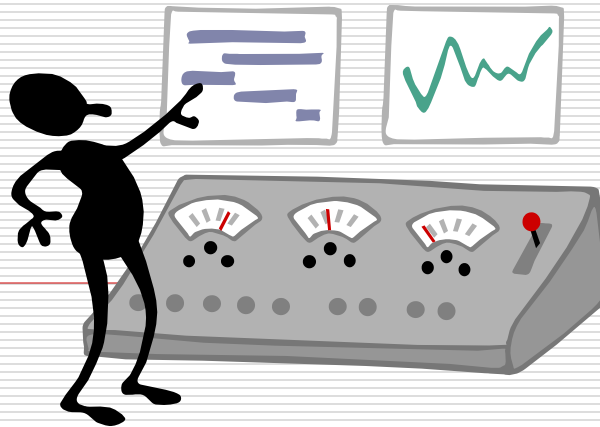
Outcome:

- Clear feedback to offer students about their learning
- Immediate instructional changes based on students' progress towards the target

Ongoing formative assessment

Feedback

- Questioning
- Conversations with student
- Quizzes/pre-tests
- Weekly letters
- Checklists
- Clipboard notes

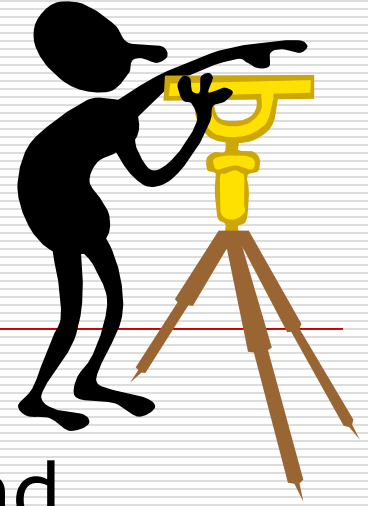


Effective formative assessment:

- Students should be able to answer three basic questions:
 - Where am I going?
 - Where am I now?
 - How can I close the gap?
 - Sadler (1989)



Where am I going?



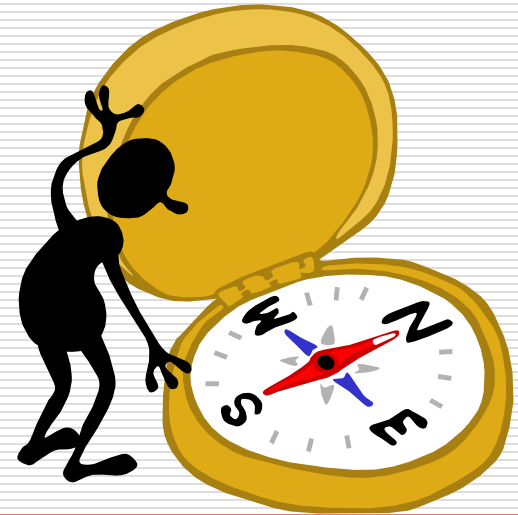
- Strategy 1: Provide a clear and understandable vision of the learning target.

“Students that can identify what they are learning significantly outscore those who cannot.” Marzano, 2005

- Strategy 2: Use examples of strong and weak work.
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Where am I now?

- ❑ Strategy 3: Offer regular descriptive feedback.
- ❑ Strategy 4: Teach students to self-assess and set goals.



How do I close the gap?

- ❑ Strategy 5: Design lessons to focus on one aspect of quality at a time.
- ❑ Strategy 6: Teach students focused revision.
- ❑ Strategy 7: Engage students in self-reflection and let them document and share their learning.



The fact that a range of grades occurs among teachers who grade the same product suggests that:

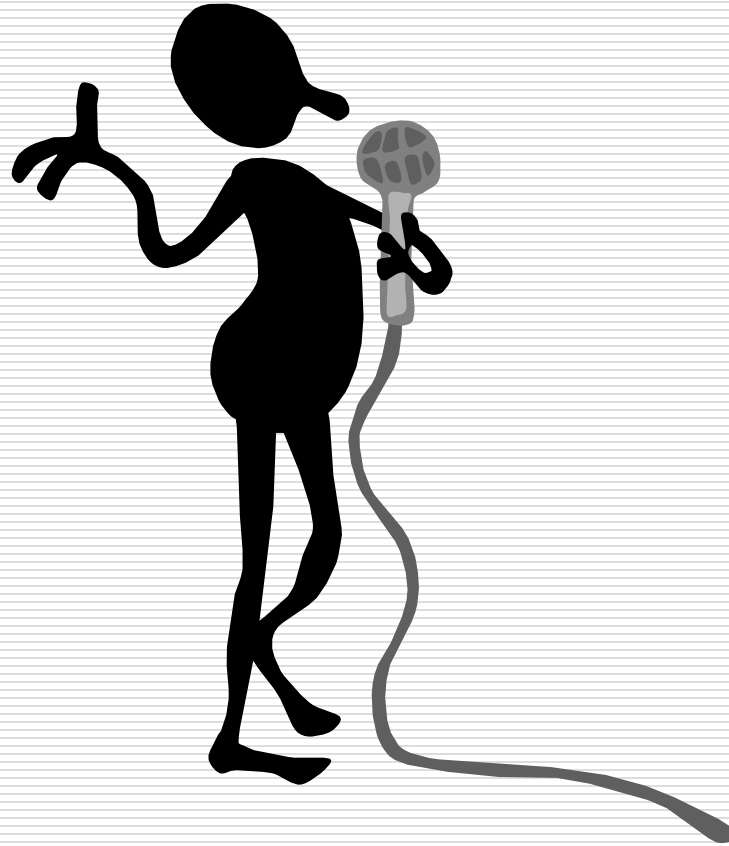
- ❑ Assessment can only be done against commonly accepted and clearly understood criteria.
- ❑ Grades are relative.
- ❑ Teachers have to be knowledgeable in their subject area in order to assess students properly.
- ❑ Grades are subjective and can vary from teacher to teacher.
- ❑ Grades are not always accurate indicators of mastery.

Differentiated assessment is a concept that makes it possible to maximize learning for **ALL** students.

It is a collection of instructionally intelligent strategies and assessments based on student-centered best practices that make it possible for teachers to create different pathways that respond to the needs of diverse learners.

□ SDE Training Manual, 2005

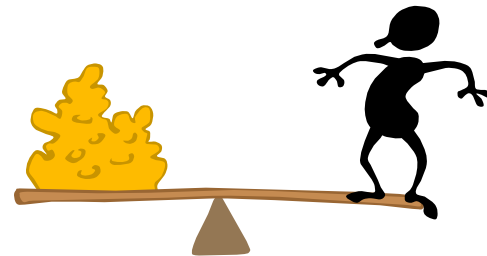
The primary goal of both reporting and grading is . . .



Communication! To students, parents and teachers!

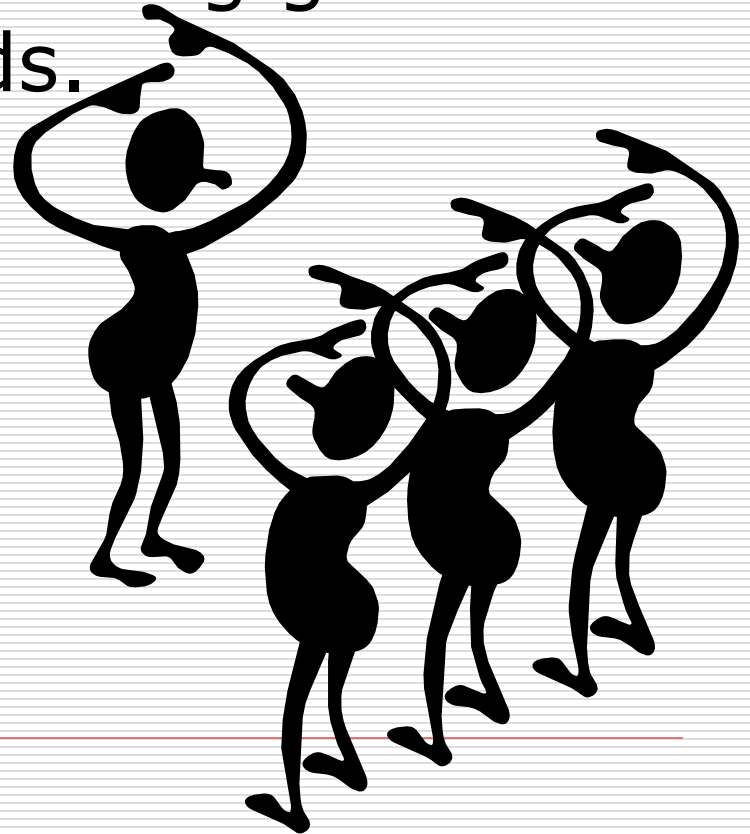
Principles of Effective Grading and Reporting

1. Grades and Reports should be based on clearly specified learning goals and performance standards.
2. Evidence used for grading should be valid.
3. Grading should be based on established criteria.
4. Not everything should be included in grades.
5. Avoid grading based on averages.
6. Focus on achievement and report other factors separately.



Principle 1:

- Grades and Reports should be based on clearly specified learning goals and performance standards.



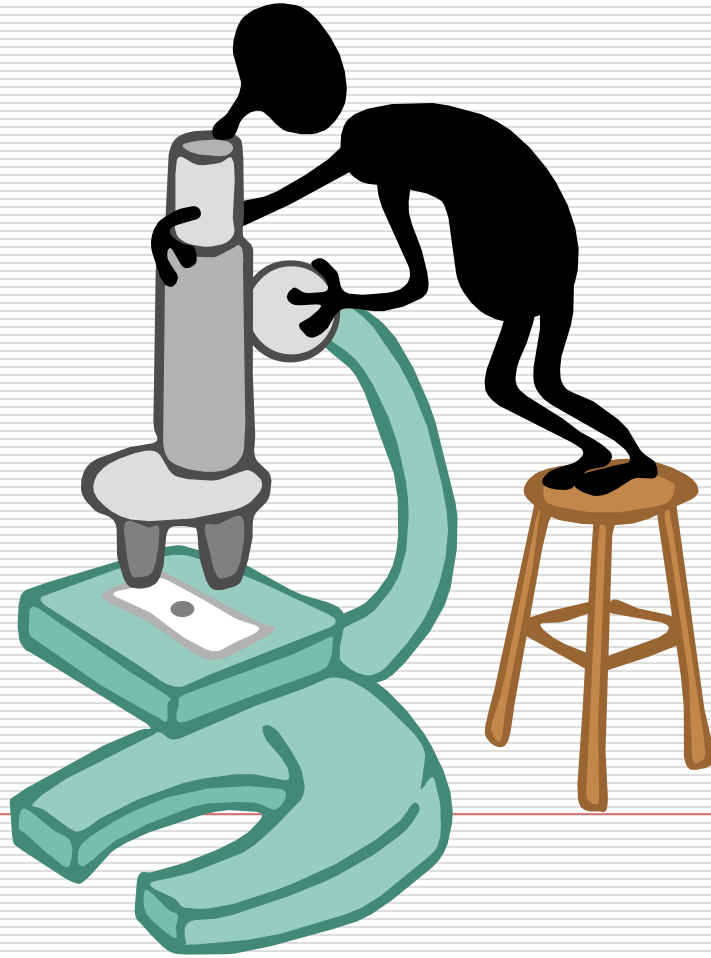
Ken O'Connor, (2002) points out:

“In order for grades to have any real meaning we must have more than a simple letter/number relationship; meaningful performance standards require that there be description of the qualities in student work for each symbol in the grading scale.”



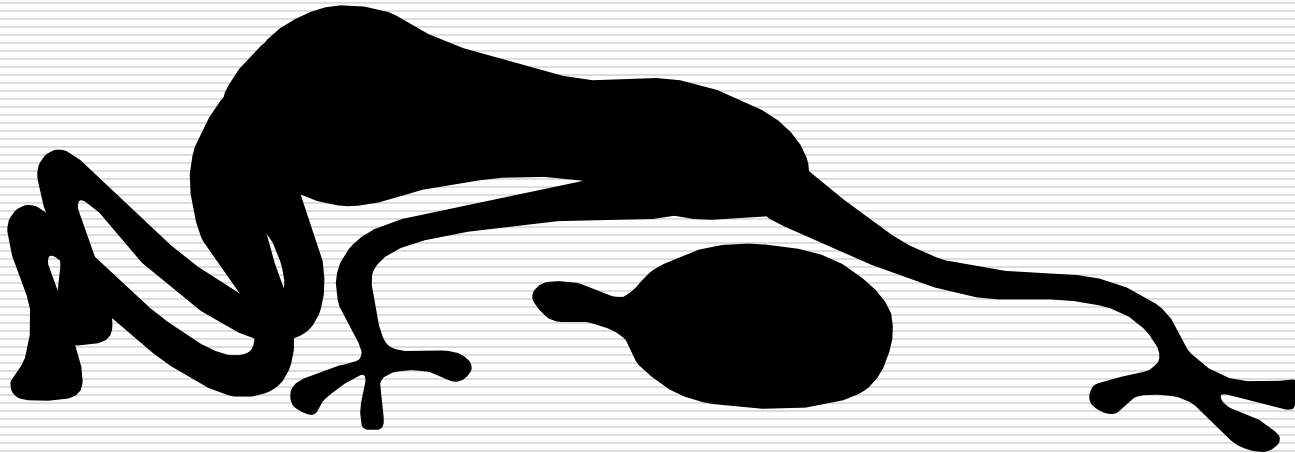
Principle 2:

- ❑ Evidence used for grading should be valid.



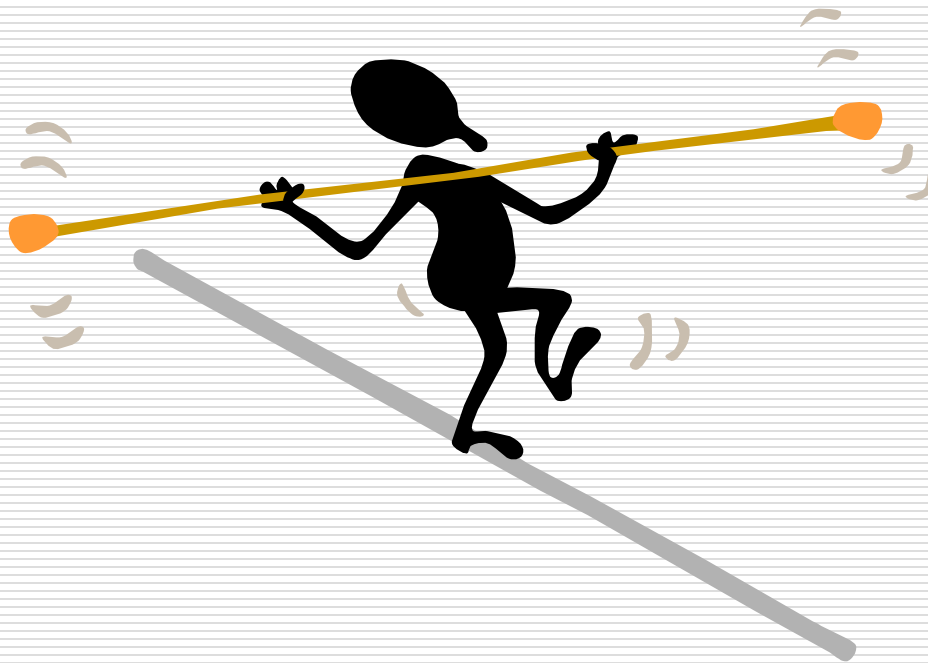
Principle 3:

- Grading should be based on established criteria.



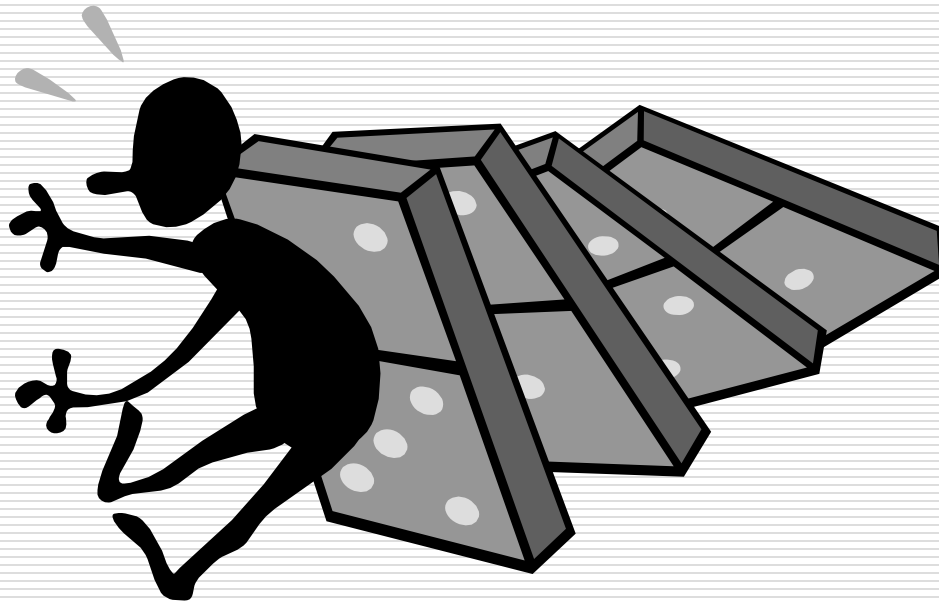
Principle 4:

- ❑ Not everything should be included in grades.



Principle 5:

- ❑ Avoid grading based on (mean) averages.



Consider this scenario:

- Students were asked to keep a record of temperatures in Valdosta for five days and determine the average temperature for the school week.

Monday -	70
Tuesday -	68
Wednesday -	72
Thursday -	70
Friday -	<u>0</u> (Father threw newspaper out)

Average - 56

Principle 6:

- Focus on achievement, and report other factors separately.



Why?

- ❑ The clarity of communication is present.
- ❑ The impact of student motivation is protected.

Success breeds success!



Reporting Systems

- Rather than **only** report cards
 - Include multiple methods for communication
 - Report cards
 - Checklists
 - Developmental continua for reporting progress
 - Rubrics for work habits
 - Narratives
 - Portfolios
 - Student-led conferences
 - Parent meetings
-

Assessment and Grading

Can it be balanced, fair **AND**
differentiated?



Resources

- South Georgia GLRS: Phone: 229-546-4367
- *Integrating Differentiated Instruction and Understanding by Design*; ISBN 1-4166-0284-4
- *Handbook on Differentiated Instruction for Middle and High Schools*; ISBN 1-930556-93-4
- *Assessing Student Outcomes*; ISBN 0-87120-225-5
- *Differentiated Assessment and Grading*; www.SDE.com
- *Differentiated Instruction Guide for Inclusive Teaching*; ISBN 1-8879-4364-1
- *Brain Compatible Classrooms*; ISBN 1-57517-044-2
- http://www.gu.edu.au/centre/gihe/aboutus/aboutus_rsadler.htm
- *How to Meet Standards, Motivate Students, and Still Enjoy Teaching!* ISBN: 0-7619-4615-2
- *The Mindful School: How To Assess Thoughtful Outcomes*; ISBN 0-932935-58-3