

Clip 8 - Ontario Education - Developing Assessment Tools

Narration: When teachers reflect on whether their grades are valid and reliable, they consider how they plan learning opportunities for students and assessment up front. In this video, you will see how assessment tools that form the foundation for descriptive feedback that moves learning forward engages students in the practices of assessment.

Narration: When teachers really know their curriculum expectations, and have a deep understanding of the achievement chart, then they can select or develop with their students the most appropriate methods to assess and evaluate students' demonstration of their learning.

Jason: Whenever you assess students you need to have a tool that you're using that actually assesses what you want to assess, right? For many years I would assess students using pen and paper test and what I found out I was assessing was actually their communication skills and not their actual knowledge skills and that's why for many years I've been using conversations, lab practicals things like that because it's more in line with the learner and it also lines up with what I want to measure. What skills, what understanding do I need to measure and I'm measuring that in the proper way. So it's taken a while to develop systems, the questioning techniques and things like that but validity has two parts to it, I believe. Number one it needs to be am I measuring what I want to measure? And closely related to that is am I measuring based on the learning styles of my students, which works hand in hand. Because some students may not have communication skills for a written pen paper test to be effective at measuring what you want to measure cause you're now measuring something else, right? There's a barrier in there that you can't get past. So then you develop techniques that work better for that learner.

Narration: Developing an effective assessment tool involves the use of success criteria that are aligned with achievement chart categories. These criteria will form the foundation for descriptive feedback and grades.

Teacher: They brainstormed in their small groups what they believed to be success criteria for each section we put them up on the board we went through them, we crossed things out we highlighted things. The students suggested moving some of the criteria from one category to another which also showed me they were thinking very critically about the task

They were actively part of it and they came up with things I'm sure I wouldn't have even thought of. Now I will take those very rich criteria incorporate those into the evaluation rubric. And this process really helped so much for the peer assessment part of the process because they knew exactly what they were looking for

I have a rubric that I've used in the past but I'm going to take our success criteria that we made together and or I'll make changes to reflect the new criteria because I think it's really important that they know how I'm measuring their learning how I'm evaluating their learning.

Narration: Teachers can also use a variety of assessment tools to gather evidence while students are in the process of learning.

I've created a tracking sheet where I have the big ideas at the top for each student for a particular unit but I have the essential learning in one column. Then I have a column for their achievement and another column for the evidence I've gathered and the feedback I've given them. The students have access to this tracking sheet. It's in a cloud based folder so day to day or weekly as I gather evidence I go to that folder for each student and I type in their achievement and the feedback that I gave them. And this allows students to see in real time how they're progressing. What I like about my technique now is they can see learning they're struggling with and they can now focus on that and do other activities or have conversations with me to show that they've made improvement there. Now the complete focus of all my classes is on learning and the kids will always see what they know and what they don't know and be given instruction on where they can go to make improvement and that's how I track the students progress.

Narration: The assessment tools that teachers use are valuable for students as they learn the knowledge and skills of the curriculum. When they are provided with descriptive feedback based on those tools, they can act on that feedback to improve their learning. Carefully planned and designed assessment tools provide students with the critical information they need to be successful in their learning.