

ASSESSMENT: TIDY OR TOSS

<https://www.assessmentnetwork.net/2021/10/assessment-tidy-or-toss/>

A few years back, Marie Kondo offered advice on decluttering our homes by regarding each item through a lens of joy. Assessment is typically not a joyful topic. Yet, it can be the elephant in the room that consumes substantial amounts of time and resources. In return, it offers little that wasn't known or expected about students, schools, or communities learning outcomes even before test results are published. As such, now is an excellent time to declutter, freshen up, and include more enJOYment in local assessments.

Emerging guidance on assessment encourages educators to expend less time and money on large-scale testing and instead focus on comparable and balanced local assessments that illuminate learning and provide multidimensional insights. These actions have been shown to effectively guide teaching, support learning, and improve outcomes.

Reliable sources on best practices in assessment consistently illuminate five fundamentals that lead to more effective, informative, coherent, and comprehensible assessments. As you read this summary, consider how they are relevant and applicable in your setting.

Students' Displays of Learning:

Provide insights into student's learning throughout the taxonomy

Include multiple ways for students to show what they know and can do

Extend learning beyond recall into application, analysis, and production

Incorporate multiple methods and processes for varied purposes

Engagement of Learners in Assessment: Do Students;

Design the assessments and select the appraisal gauges

Decide how to best show/demonstrate their learning

Reflect on their learning experiences and outcomes

Have opportunities to modify and improve outcomes. For example, "I used to think____, but now I know____, because ____.

Restorative Assessment Routines

Support and sustain students in their learning; not only measure it

Identify misunderstandings and provide opportunities to modify and extend learning

Emphasize progress and growth rather than final scores

Develop lifelong skills for self-awareness, reflection, and modification

Technically Sound Assessment Practices Are:

Valid: Measures what was intentionally learned for an identified purpose

Reliable: Meaning it is coherent, consistent, and comprehensible

Fair and balanced: in content and methodology for all learners

Seamless and continuous: Embedded throughout teaching and learning

Keep in mind that there are no shortcuts to informative and efficacious assessment, nor does any singular approach hold all the answers. However, resources, from classicist to contemporary, have continuously accentuated and reinforced the best practices in educational assessment. Along the route, educators have learned from:

- *Ancient Greeks who used “assidere”, meaning to “sit beside and guide”*
- *Horace Mann’s development of standardized tests in the mid-1800s*
- *Jean Piaget’s theories of cognitive development in the 1930s*
- *Benjamin Bloom Taxonomy of learning; 1950s*
- *Madeline Hunter’s Mastery Model; 1970s*
- *Howard Gardner’s multiple intelligences; 1980s*
- *Continuously emerging initiatives in all aspects of learning and assessment.*

Questions for your team to consider in their next steps in assessment: Tidy-up or Toss it?

1. What are the pros, cons, strengths, and limitations of standardized tests vs. classroom assessments?
2. Are tests fair for all learners? What can we do to strengthen equity and fairness, as well as equal opportunity for all learners?
3. How well do standardized tests assess and support the skills and knowledge our students need for success?
4. What are the most worthwhile assessment practices and strategies for gaining insights into students’ learning?
5. What other possible opportunities and pathways for assessment of learners should we consider?
6. What questions would you add to this list to better understand the purpose, process, and outcomes of learning?

ADDITIONAL SOURCES FOR EXTENDING LEARNING

From Great Schools Partnership: <https://www.greatschoolspartnership.org/proficiency-based-learning/research-evidence/research-supporting-ten-principles-assessment-practices/>

Best Practices to Use Right Now: <https://blog.futurefocusedlearning.net/7-best-assessment-practices-resources>

Assessment Practices for Effective Learning <https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/seven-practices-for-effective-learning>

The MUST’s of Assessment In “Restorative Assessment” <https://sk.sagepub.com/books/restorative-assessment>

Education is Changing: It’s Time for Assessment to Catch

Up https://ssir.org/articles/entry/education_is_changingits_time_assessment_caught_up