

ASSESSMENT SESSIONS

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| | 4 | Revising Sample Assessments |

Facilitator Guide

Assessment and Authentic Learning





Traditionally, classroom assessments provide educators with a glimpse into what students have learned at one moment in time—whether at the end of the year, midway through a project, or even before beginning a unit. However, specific assessment tasks can do more than provide an isolate snapshot of a student’s current ability or knowledge. When well-designed, they can solidify and build deeper learning. Through personal reflection, analysis of examples, and self-evaluation of current assessment practices, in this session participants will develop an understanding of how authentic assessments can promote enduring learning.

Session Overview

TIME: 50 MIN

 **Reflection and Connection: 15 MIN**
Reflect and discuss






 **Research and Inspiration: 15 MIN**
Introduce research on authentic assessments

 **Interactive Application: 15 MIN**
Analyze an assessment

 **Next Steps: 7 MIN**
Decide on path forward

Learning Objectives:

- Build knowledge about the kinds of assessments that are truly meaningful to students and promote enduring learning
- Reflect on how authentic assessment design can impact student learning

Steps		Materials
 Prep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Select examples of learning experiences for Four Corners in Step 1 or use these: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › interacted with the world outside of school › composed a written assignment › performed for an audience › did well on a test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↗ Four Corners activity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Determine whether or not you would like to chart participants' Step 4 responses in preparation for the Step 7 extension 	
Full Session 50 MIN		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⬇ Slides ⬇ Participant Note Catcher
 15 MIN	1 Reflect on a personal learning experience of an effective assessment	
	2 Use a Four Corners protocol to discuss learning experiences	
 15 MIN	3 Read an ASCD article on authentic assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↗ Assessment Through the Student's Eyes section: "Assessment for Learning"
	4 Introduce characteristics of standardized and authentic assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⬇ Standardized vs. Authentic Assessments EXTENSION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↗ Jigsaw protocol by The Teacher Toolkit ↗ Thinking Like an Assessor by BYU–Idaho ↗ 7 Principles of Student Centered Classroom Assessment by Rick Stiggins
 15 MIN	5 Analyze how existing assessments address characteristics of authentic assessments	
	6 Reflect on implications of participants' learnings for implementation	
 5 MIN	7 Complete exit ticket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⬇ Exit Ticket
	8 Decide on path forward	
Follow-Up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Review participants' exit tickets › Provide additional resources and support as needed › Determine next steps for professional learning 		

⬇ Download materials for this session at <https://eskolta.org/learningcenter/sessions/assessment-and-authentic-learning/>
 ↗ For general facilitation preparation and tips, review School Improvement Methods modules at <https://eskolta.org/learningcenter/>



Reflection and Connection | 15 MIN

This activity asks participants to connect their own learning to best practices in assessment. By asking them to think of enduring learning—instead of asking about assessment specifically—participants will be invited to think more deeply about the qualities of meaningful learning experiences in their own lives.

1. Reflect | 5 MIN




MATERIALS:
Distribute
**Participant
Note Catcher**

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Reflect:

1. Think back to an experience in high school or college when you truly felt like you learned something enduring (that you still think about or use today).
2. Write silently in response to these prompts:
 - a. What did you learn?
 - b. How was your learning measured or evaluated?
 - c. What made this experience so powerful?



3

This prompt primes participants to begin drawing conclusions about the characteristics of authentic assessments by analyzing their own high-impact experiences as learners.

FACILITATOR: Think back in time to an experience you had in high school or college when you truly felt like you learned something enduring (i.e., you learned something that you still think about or use today).

PARTICIPANTS: Write silently in response to these prompts: (a.) What did you learn? (b.) How was your learning measured or evaluated? (c.) What was it that made this experience so powerful?

Participants are likely to bring up tasks that were real-world, relevant, enduring, meaningful, and/or resulted in positive recognition.

2. Discuss | 10 MIN

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Share and discuss:

- Based on your own experiences as both a teacher and a learner, what makes an assessment meaningful and enduring?



4

Providing an opportunity for discussion allows participants to process their reactions, unearth connections between their own and their students' learning experiences, and engage in collaborative inquiry with colleagues while experiencing a technique they can facilitate with their own students.

FACILITATOR: Facilitate a Four Corners activity using the four different learning experiences you prepared. Ask participants to first discuss with their colleagues in the same corner, and then open the discussion up across corners.

PARTICIPANTS: Based on your own experiences as both a teacher and a learner, what makes an assessment meaningful and enduring?

Participants should demonstrate an emerging understanding that strong assessments are aligned with deep, complex, critical thinking (higher-order thinking); authentic, real-world contexts and audiences; and meaningful feedback that results in enduring learning.



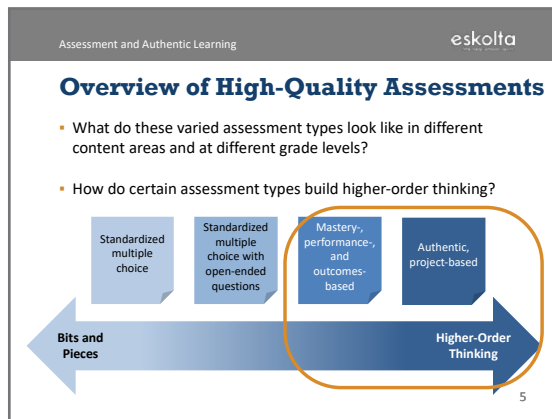
Research and Inspiration | 15 MIN

Having primed participants to think about their own experience, this article and handout introduces research on what makes assessments lead to enduring learning. Many participants will be familiar with some of the ideas, but there are often a few interesting new insights.

3. Overview | 5 MIN



MATERIALS:
Distribute link to [Assessment for Learning](#) reading (online)



Various assessment types serve different purposes for different users. Some build higher-order thinking.

FACILITATOR: Distribute the link to [Assessment Through the Student's Eyes](#) and ask participants to read the section "Assessment for Learning."

PARTICIPANTS: What do the assessments Stiggins describes look like in different subjects and grades? How can assessments build higher-order thinking?

Participants may challenge the idea that multiple-choice assessments do not build higher-order thinking, while project-based assessments do. Reinforce that while there are exceptions, generally the former assess isolated knowledge while the latter require problem solving and synthesis.

Extension | 10 MIN

Have participants review research on authentic assessment and the types of evidence different assessments provide about student learning. Depending on the strengths and needs of your group, you might select one of these texts or use a [jigsaw protocol](#) to incorporate both texts.

4. Authentic Assessments | 10 MIN



MATERIALS:
Distribute **Standardized vs. Authentic Assessments** handout

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The Qualities of Authentic Assessment

Types of Assessment	Think		
	Bits and Pieces	Performance	Authentic
Covers broad content	✓	✓	✓
Ranks students	✓	✓	✓
Enables feedback		✓	✓
Applies skills in combination		✓	✓
Integrates knowledge areas		✓	✓
Connects to real world			✓
Adjusts to different contexts			✓
Is Intrinsically motivational			✓

This chart dives into the right side of the continuum on the previous slide.

FACILITATOR: Distribute **Standardized vs. Authentic Assessments**.

PARTICIPANTS: What do you see, think, and wonder?

Participants may express a sense of being overwhelmed. Reassure them that they have probably included at least some of the qualities of authentic assessments in the tasks they're already using. Encourage them to think about one or two additions they might focus on.

- ▶ [Thinking Like an Assessor](#) by BYU–Idaho (adapted from Wiggins and McTighe)
- ▶ [7 Principles of Student Centered Classroom Assessment](#) by Rick Stiggins



Interactive Application | 15 MIN


With a set of shared ideas about authentic and experiential assessments and their value for generating enduring learning, participants can consider how their own or others' assessments already do, or can, address these characteristics.

5. Evaluate | 10 MIN

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Apply:

1. Consider the assessment you reflected on in Step 1 and then on the assessment(s) for an upcoming unit you are planning to teach.
2. Which characteristics of standard and authentic assessments does each task embody?
3. What tweaks would increase the number of characteristics from the right column?
4. Where would the majority of the assessments that your students take land on this continuum?



7

This activity allows participants to apply the conceptual understandings they have developed to actual assessments they have designed, implemented, and experienced.

FACILITATOR: Invite participants to choose one row of the chart and to focus on the assessment they reflected on in Step 1 and/or their own assessment(s) for an upcoming unit.

PARTICIPANTS: Consider which characteristics of standard and authentic assessments the task embodies. What tweaks would increase the number of characteristics from the right column? Where would the majority of the assessments that your students take land?

Participants may find that their own classroom tasks lack characteristics of authentic assessments. Reassure them that these characteristics can provide immediate goals and next steps. Additionally, remind participants to embrace a growth mindset wherein feedback is a tool for further learning.

6. Connect | 5 MIN

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Connect:

- What successes or challenges have you and your students experienced in implementing authentic, mastery-, performance-, or project-based tasks?
- What are the implications of today's learning for assessment design at our school?



8

This reflective discussion provides participants with an opportunity to synthesize their individual takeaways from the previous activity with broader school-wide trends to better understand students' overall learning experiences.

FACILITATOR: Open the discussion by inviting participants to share what they discovered by using the **Standardized vs. Authentic Assessments** tool to analyze specific assessments.

PARTICIPANTS: What successes or challenges have you and your students experienced in implementing authentic mastery-, performance-, or project-based tasks? What are the implications of today's learning for assessment design at our school?

Participants may express a desire to expand their comfort zones. Be prepared to offer resources and support to assist them, such as planning time, and opportunities for peer feedback.



Next Steps | 7 MIN

Based on where the group lands, invite participants to commit to completing follow-up steps before the next meeting.

7. Wrap-Up | 5 MIN



MATERIALS:
Distribute
Exit Ticket

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Learning Wrap-Up

- Reflect on what you learned today.
- How do your takeaways compare to the session's learning objectives? How were these objectives addressed today?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Build knowledge about the kinds of assessments that are truly meaningful to students and promote enduring learning
- Reflect on how high-quality assessment design can impact student learning



9

Reflecting on learning promotes closure and consolidation of new knowledge and skills.

FACILITATOR: Distribute the *Exit Ticket*. Invite participants to share how their thinking has shifted.

PARTICIPANTS: How do your takeaways compare to the session's learning objectives? How were these objectives addressed?


Participants may focus on today's learning in terms of ensuring that all assessments are authentic. Remind participants that there may be appropriate uses of assessments that are, for example, composed partly of multiple-choice questions. Emphasize the importance of thoughtfully designing assessments to align with learning goals.

8. Next Steps | 2 MIN

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What's next?

- Learn more about authentic assessment
- Learn more about project-based learning
- Review Assessments Session 3
- Repeat today's activity with additional assessments
- Explore examples of authentic assessment
- Analyze student work



10

Establishing next steps ensures that today's work is carried forward.

FACILITATOR: Offer next steps or follow up with participants based on their *Exit Ticket* responses.

PARTICIPANTS: What's next for your professional growth? What will you take back to your classroom? What resources will you need? How will you impact student learning? What evidence would determine that impact?

Participants may be at different places at this point. Provide specific recommendations based on readiness, such as those in the Next Steps chart on page 7.

Extension | 10 MIN

If you charted participants' contributions for Step 4, you can now return to their responses, inviting them to reflect on their learning by considering which of their "wonderings" they now have answers for. Consolidating learning in this way promotes metacognition and supports participants in analyzing how their thinking has shifted as a result of the session.



Next Steps | CONTINUED

Based on where the group lands, invite participants to commit to completing follow-up steps before the next meeting.

If you would like to...	Then try...
Learn more about authentic assessment	Reading 7 Principles of Student Centered Classroom Assessment by Rick Stiggins or Thinking Like an Assessor by BYU–Idaho (adapted from Wiggins and McTighe).
Learn more about project-based learning	Reading the ASCD Project-Based Learning Research Review .
Obtain more practice with self-assessing the quality of the assessments you’ve designed	Repeating today’s activity with the Standardized vs. Authentic Assessments tool using additional assessments, questions, and tasks.
Revise your classroom assessments to enhance quality	Using the right column of the Standardized vs. Authentic Assessments tool to make 1–3 adjustments to an existing assessment. You might then ask a colleague to share feedback with you.
Explore examples of authentic assessments	Reviewing the Sample Assessments from Assessment Session 3: Create Your Own Assessment Checklist (see Participant Handouts) and using the Standardized vs. Authentic Assessments tool to analyze the strength of each sample assessment.
Analyze evidence of student learning in response to assessment prompts	Bringing student work to the next meeting and engaging in a collaborative protocol to identify and analyze evidence of student learning.