



Classroom Assessment Quality Analysis Activity

QUESTIONS TO ASK OF CLASSROOM ASSESSMENTS

Key 1: Clear Purpose: How and by whom will the results of the assessment be used?

Big Ideas

- Different users have different information needs.
- Students are crucial decision-makers whose information needs must be met during the learning.

Questions to Ask

- Who will use the information—students, instructors, administrators, others?
- How will the information be used—assessment *for* or *of* learning?
- What information, in what detail, is required?
- Do classroom assessment practices meet students' information needs?
- Is there a plan for how assessment *for* and *of* learning fit together over time?

Key 2: Clear Targets: What is to be assessed?

Big Ideas

- Learning targets can be classified into four categories. (knowledge, reasoning, performance skill, product)
- Learning targets must be clear to both instructors and students.
- Learning targets common across instructors must be understood in the same way.
- Success criteria must explain the level of ability needed to be proficient on the learning target.
- Classroom assessments must reflect and be aligned to learning targets and success criteria that are the focus of instruction.

Questions to Ask

- Are learning targets stated and in user-friendly language?
- What kinds of achievement are to be taught and assessed—knowledge, reasoning, performance skills, products?
- Is there alignment between targets, instruction, and assessment?
- Are learning targets embedded in the teaching and learning process?

Key 3: Sound Assessment Design: Are the learning targets translated into high quality assessments that will yield accurate and usable results? Will the results have the level and type of detail to serve the intended purpose?

Big Ideas

- Assessment methods must match learning targets.
- The sample of questions/tasks should be representative of the learning targets.
- Items, tasks, and scoring guides should be high quality.
- Bias should be minimized, so the assessments are fair to all students.

Questions to Ask

- Do the assessment method(s) (selected response, short answer, extended written response, performance assessment, and personal communication/observation) match the kind of learning target(s) to be assessed?
- Do the learning targets represent what was taught? (Or what will be taught?)
- Does the relative importance of each learning target match its relative importance during instruction? In the assessments?

- Is the sample of assessments large enough to inform the decisions intended to be made, or is it part of a larger plan to gather evidence over time?
- Do the assessment items, exercises, scoring procedure, and scoring guides/rubrics adhere to standards of quality?
- Is there anything in the assessment itself or in the conditions under which it is administered that could lead to inaccurate estimates of student learning, by advantaging or disadvantaging some student

Key 4: Effective Communication: Is the assessment information managed and reported in ways that will meet the needs of users?

Big Ideas

- Communication differs based on assessment purpose.
- Communication needs to differ based on the different users and different uses of the information.
- Students should receive descriptive feedback during learning.
- Students can and should track and communicate about their learning.
- Grading practices should accurately communicate about student achievement.

Questions to Ask

Formative assessment

- Does feedback focus on what was taught and describe what was done well as well as what needs to be improved?
- Are formative results communicated so that there is time to act on them?
- Is feedback descriptive and actionable rather than evaluative?
- Are students engaged in tracking, reflecting on, and sharing their progress?

Summative assessment

- Do grades communicate achievement accurately?
- Do grades support, not just report, learning?

Key 5: Student Involvement: Are students involved in the assessment process when appropriate?

Big Ideas

- Students are identified as important users of assessment information.
- Students understand the learning targets and related success criteria.
- Assessments are designed so that students can use the results to self-assess and set goals for further action.
- Students can keep track of and share their achievement.

Questions to Ask

- Do students have a clear vision of the intended learning?
- Is the assessment designed so that students can use the results to self-assess and set goals?
- Do students receive and offer effective descriptive, actionable feedback to one another during the learning?
- Do students have opportunities to engage in further learning before graded events?