

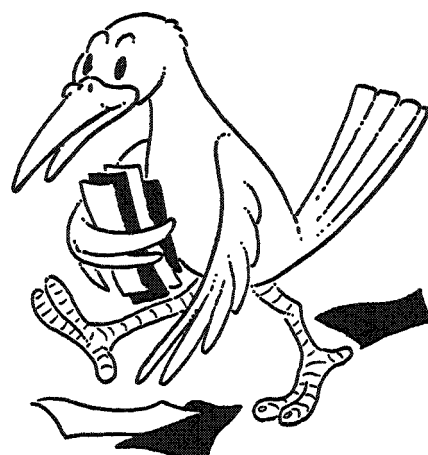
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PREFACE

Over the years, teachers have questioned the importance and appropriateness of using both standardised norm-referenced tests and traditional objective-based tests as the primary tools for measuring student achievement in the classroom. In many instances, the testing program itself has become the driving force behind curricular and instructional processes and has, in effect, limited the teacher's ability to teach and the student's motivation to learn.



Consequently, today's teachers and administrators continue to search for innovative ways to encourage student participation in the learning process and to utilise authentic measures to assess student growth in any given subject area. Authentic assessment is a more flexible and accurate type of evaluation than letter marks and pencil-paper tests because it requires the student to actively engage in the testing process and to provide evidence that genuine learning has taken place.

Authentic assessment tools and techniques have the following common characteristics:

1. An audience is required.
2. Few time constraints exist.
3. Collaboration is strongly encouraged.
4. Students participate in making decisions about the testing process.
5. A multifaceted scoring system is used.
6. Student learning styles, interests and ability levels are considered.
7. A self-assessment dimension is included.
8. Evaluation criteria is clearly presented before the task is assigned.

Teachers have found this to be a meaningful and achievable form of assessment, one especially dedicated to improving the communication that takes place in intermediate and middle years classrooms. However, chief among the problems arising from the use of alternate assessment techniques has been a lack of common understanding among teachers, students and parents of the criteria to be used in the preparation and evaluation stages and of how the activities ultimately relate to the students' long-range goals. While change always demands careful planning as well as a great deal of

time and energy, it is especially important in the assessment process to establish clearly defined objectives so that the process proceeds in an orderly and mutually acceptable manner from its inception to its final form.

Making Portfolios, Projects and Performances Meaningful and Manageable for Students and Teachers has been written to help teachers sort out and make efficient use of these valuable approaches to evaluation. It provides both teachers and students with a wide variety of practical, effective options for enhancing the regular classroom routine and established instructional goals. The focus of the book is threefold: to provide activities that reveal the 'how-to' aspects of

- using portfolios to measure student growth
- using projects as potential artefacts in the portfolio
- using performances to share portfolio contents.

Filled with high-interest pupil activities and easy-to-use record-keeping forms, each section also includes informative overviews and feedback forms for parents or guardians. Essentially, this research-based resource was developed to unite the home and school as collaborators in assessing student outcomes and making necessary instructional decisions.

Portfolios, projects and performances are the most widely recognised forms of authentic assessment in use today. Students enjoy the responsibility of selecting, preparing and evaluating work to be included in their portfolios; developing projects that are in keeping with specific evaluation criteria; and organising performances that afford them a profound sense of ownership and a tremendous feeling of accomplishment.

How to use the PULL-OUT GRAPHIC ORGANISER

PURPOSE

The pull-out graphic organiser (in the front of this book) was developed to show the user how five major curricular and instructional models or concepts can interface with one another for designing high-quality lesson plans, interdisciplinary units and assessment programs. Specifically, the user will find references made in each of the following categories: Gardner's multiple intelligences, Bloom's taxonomy of action verbs and student behaviours, Suggested student project and performance ideas, Optional assessment formats and Sample curriculum outcomes.

HOW TO USE

The first section of the graphic organiser lists the eight multiple intelligences identified by Dr Howard Gardner. These intelligences provide the teacher with eight different methods or pathways for designing curricular objectives and instructional strategies. This theory serves as the foundation of the graphic organiser.

The second section presents a comprehensive collection of action verbs and student behaviours suggested by Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive development. All six levels of Bloom's taxonomy (remembering, understanding, applying, analysing, creating and evaluating) have been linked with the most appropriate intelligence. These verbs and behaviours can be used by the teacher in developing a sequential set of learning objectives for each of the intelligences.

Section three offers a set of suggested student projects and performances that can provide students with opportunities to demonstrate knowledge of learned concepts and application of learned skills in a variety of contexts according to each of the intelligence modes. These ideas also provide the teacher with evidence of whether the teaching and learning process has been successful.

In section four, a variety of optional assessment formats that can be used in the evaluation of student work are linked with Gardner's eight intelligences. The information in this section also provides the teacher with some ideas for artefacts that could become part of the student portfolio and that could represent one or more of the identified multiple intelligences.

A sample set of curricular outcomes that summarise the types of tasks that teachers can incorporate into a given unit of study or discipline area is provided in the final section. Again, these outcomes are designed to create a link among the intelligences, the levels of thinking skills, the student assignments and the assessment formats.