

Diagnostic Assessments

Definition: A variety of assessment tasks that are used to determine students' level of knowledge, skills, and understandings at the beginning of a course, grade level, unit and/or lesson. They test the students on what they already know. These tests allow the instructor to adjust the curriculum to meet the needs of the students.

Applications:

- Build on student strengths
- Clarify misconceptions
- Adjust the curriculum to meet the needs of the students
- Introduce new or unknown concepts

Occurrence:

- Before a course, grade level, unit, and/or lesson

District Tests:

- Classroom Diagnostic Tool (CDT)
- I-Ready Diagnostic Assessment

Classroom Examples:

- Initial writing prompts
- KWL charts
- Running Records
- Informal Reading Assessments
- Pre-tests
- Surveys
- Journals

Evidence of Effective Use:

- Teachers are able to identify individual and class strengths and weaknesses
- Teachers can identify and correct misconceptions
- Teachers can explain how classroom instruction has been adapted to meet the needs of the students

Formative Assessments

Definition: Formal and informal assessments that are used throughout a unit or course of study to monitor student progress so that teachers can adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of their students

Application:

- Monitor student progress
- Adjust instruction to maximize student achievement
- Provide effective and timely feedback
- Reveal students who need remediation
- Predict performance on summative assessments

Occurrence:

- Frequent intervals after small units of instruction; throughout instruction

District Tests:

- CKLA Formative Assessments

Classroom Examples:

- Student self-assessments
- Written Responses
- Exit Tickets
- Questioning
- Conferencing
- Observations
- Rubrics

Evidence of Effective Use:

- Teacher can state the types of formative assessments used regularly to gauge student progress
- Teacher can explain how they have revised instruction based on assessment results
- Teacher provides feedback to students
- Teacher can show examples of revised student work
- Teacher can describe student strengths and next steps

Benchmark Assessments

Definition: Evaluations of student learning progress used to determine whether the students are on track to performing well on future assessments

Application:

- Explains how the student is progressing towards demonstrating proficiency on grade level standards
- Supplies information to adjust instruction
- Indicates if the curriculum is helping students achieve grade level standards
- Predicts future performance

Occurrence:

- Throughout the school year
- Throughout the learning continuum

District/State/National Tests:

- Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)
- i-Ready Standards Mastery

Classroom Examples:

- CKLA Benchmark Assessments

Evidence of Effective Use:

- The teacher can explain how the students are progressing towards grade level standards
- Teacher can describe learning adjustments to instruction towards grade level standards
- Teacher can state which students are on course to being proficient on the state test

Summative Assessments

Definition: Formal assessments used to measure what students have learned at the end of a defined period of instruction

Application:

- Measure student achievement at the end of a unit of study
- Determine learning priorities for the students
- Evaluation of group instruction or curriculum effectiveness
- Could be used to predict future success with other courses or standards

Occurrence:

- After instruction is completed
- At end of a course or at the end of a large amount of instruction
- Infrequently

District/State/National Tests:

- Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)
- Keystone
- WIDA Access for ELLs
- Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT)
- Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)
- American College Test (ACT)
- Advanced Placement Exams (AP)

Classroom Examples:

- End of unit tests
- Final Exams
- Culminating Projects
- Portfolios

Evidence of Effective Use:

- Teacher can state their grade level and classroom areas of focus for meeting student academic needs
- Administrators can state the instructional focus for each grade level and the school
- Administrators and teachers can communicate the strengths and weaknesses identified in assessment data for their school, grade level, and classroom
- Teachers can state which students need additional instruction in specific Core standards