Class Assessment
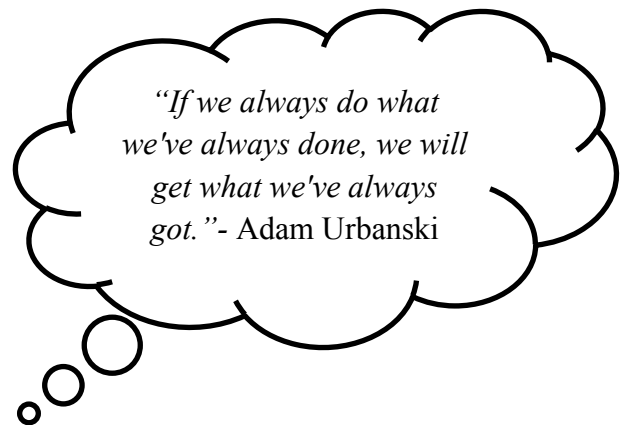# Best Practices for Monitoring and Evaluating Your Classroom

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Introduction

In this lecture we will discuss the basic concepts of assessment in the classroom, specific strategies for classroom assessment, and practice critically evaluating assessment strategies. While we will be examining some specific assessment strategies there are many other strategies and approaches to assessment that I strongly advise you to learn and master. Additionally, it is pertinent that you discuss curriculum, classroom methods, lessons, and assessment with your school, as you will be teaching in a new classroom environment with an unfamiliar or completely new culture. Finally, this lecture will try to accommodate participants at all levels but will focus mainly on participants new to teaching.

The Need For And Purpose Of Assessment

Traditionally classroom assessment has relied heavily on assessing what students know (exams, quizzes, homework, etc.). Contemporary assessment has shifted from just only evaluating students to including assessment of teachers, classroom practices, and being an integral part of the learning process (critical thinking). Assessment is an ongoing process of planning, practice, and reflection that is constantly occurring in the classroom. Assessment is born out of a need for both student and teacher to be able to *monitor* and *evaluate* learning. From this evolution of classroom assessment we come to the modern purpose of assessment. **The purpose of classroom assessment is to improve how and what students learn and what methods teachers use.** Classroom assessment fulfills this need by allowing students and teachers to respond to information obtained from monitoring and evaluating student learning. This differs from grading because grading individually evaluates a student's learning and can incorporate criteria such as attendance, participation, or other means that may not directly measure learning. **Table 1.1** displays what classroom assessment can do for the student and the teacher.

"If we always do what we've always done, we will get what we've always got."- Adam Urbanski

Table 1.1

| Classroom assessment can…	
Student	**Teacher**
• identify prior knowledge • identify strengths and weaknesses • help in setting learning goals • show how to motivate • can help in understanding themselves as learners • can help in understanding the learning process	• identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching • help in setting goals and objectives • tell how and what to assess • show fairness and objectivity of assessment • inform and guide teaching and learning • assign grades

| • measure learning progress and attainment | • monitor student progress and attainment |
| | • be used to develop oneself as a teacher |

Types of Assessment

Students do not all learn in the same way therefore we should not evaluate them all the same way. Contemporary classroom assessment has evolved towards assessment that ***monitors*** and ***evaluates*** the learning process for varying types of learners. Classroom assessment has grown beyond summative and formative assessments and now includes a third kind of assessment that is used as part of the learning process. These types of assessment in their modern form are essential for creating good lessons as well as a classroom conducive to learning. There are numerous classroom assessment strategies but all are classified under the three types; **assessment as learning**, **assessment for learning** *(formative assessment)*, and **assessment of learning** *(summative assessment)* (**Table 1.2**).

Table 1.2
Types of Assessment and Hierarchy
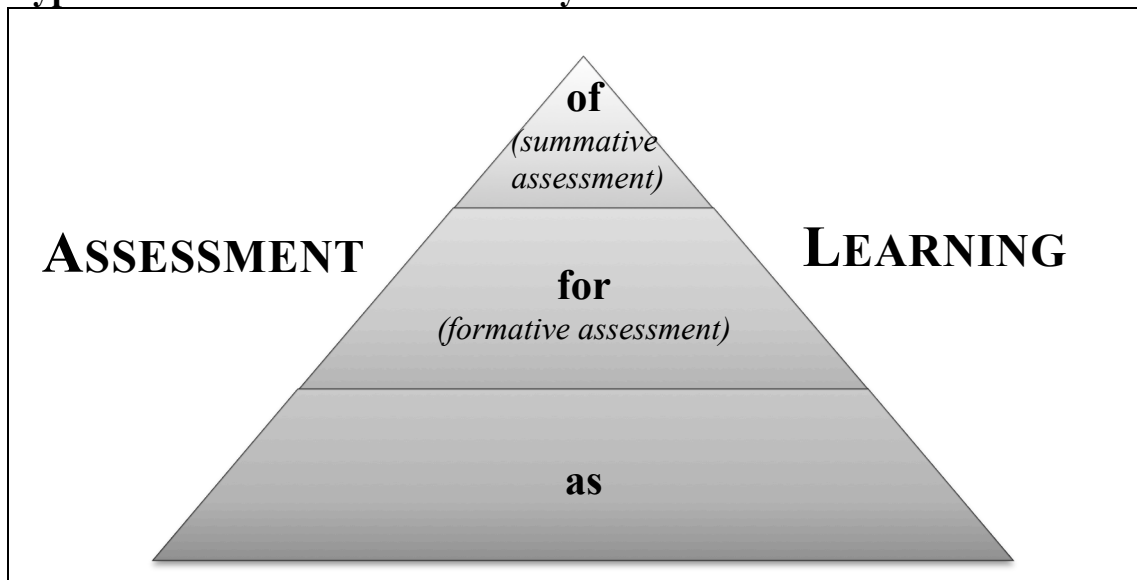
1. **Assessment as learning** *(self assessment)* **develops students' awareness of learning and the thinking process (metacognition).** This type of assessment is crucial for developing life long learners and should be were students are learning how to self assess. Students are taught how to assess themselves and how to think about learning. This assessment type is one of the most time consuming but rewarding types of assessment to implement in the classroom. Assessment as learning should be developed in your classroom methods and lesson planning.

   Examples of assessment as learning include but are not limited to, discussions, critiquing, peer feedback, journals, portfolios, projects, and student created assessment.

2. **Assessment for learning** *(formative assessment)* **is an ongoing process and should be done day-to-day allowing teachers and students to modify or adjust teaching and learning by way of descriptive feedback.** Typically this type of assessment is not part of a student's grade and is based on the student's personal achievement. Additionally assessment for learning is an invaluable means of professional development for the

teacher. Using assessment for learning strategies will help you in understanding your own teaching performance and what you need to work on to become a better teacher.

Examples of assessment for learning include but are not limited to, focused observations, questioning, informal/formal conversations, learning logs, and checklists.

3. **Assessment of learning** *(summative assessment)* **is the most traditional type of assessment in the classroom and provides evidence that students know and can do what was taught to them (accomplishing learner objectives).** Assessment of learning usually reflects but has little to do with the learning process. You should check with your on your school as you may or may not have do this type of assessment as a TaLK scholar.

Examples of assessment of learning include but are not limited to exams, national tests, quizzes, final projects, report cards, and transcripts.

Note: Although assessment for learning and assessment of learning have been associated with formative and summative assessment they can be mutually inclusive of each other. Some types of formative assessment (i.e. questioning or checklists) can be used as summative assessment and vice versa.

It is crucial that you become familiar with the types of assessment as well as the differences between them. **Table 1.3** compares two of the most common types of assessment that you will encounter in the classroom, assessment for learning and assessment of learning.

Table 1.3

| Comparing Assessment for Learning and Assessment of Learning		
	Assessment *for* Learning (Formative Assessment)	Assessment *of* Learning (Summative Assessment)
Who	Involves the student	Does not always involve the student
When	Is used continually by providing descriptive feedback	Is presented in a periodic report
Reporting	Is not reported as part of an achievement grade	Is reported as part of an achievement grade
Design	Is designed to assist educators and students in improving learning	Is designed for those directly and indirectly involved in daily learning and teaching (school administration, parents, teachers, and students)
What it Checks	Checks learning to determine what to do next and then provides suggestions of what to do	Checks what has been learned to date
How it Works	Usually uses detailed, specific and descriptive feedback—in a formal or informal report	Usually compiles data into a single number, score or mark as part of a formal report
Outcomes	Usually focuses on improvement, compared with the student's "previous best" (self-referenced, making learning more personal)	Usually compares the student's learning either with other students' learning (norm-referenced, making learning highly competitive) or the standard for a grade level (criterion-referenced, making learning more collaborative and

		individually focused)

The Classroom Assessment Process

Making sure that your lessons and the classroom is a receptive environment for **second language acquisition (SLA)** will greatly improve what and how your students learn as well as how you develop yourself as an educator. Implementing and reflecting on the assessment process will greatly improve your classroom experience and the quality of your lessons. The following (**Table 1.4**) shows a common classroom assessment process. This process can be modified and adapted for your classroom situation but the basic process should have a planning, assessment, and reflection/ evaluation phase.

Table 1.4
Process of Classroom Assessment
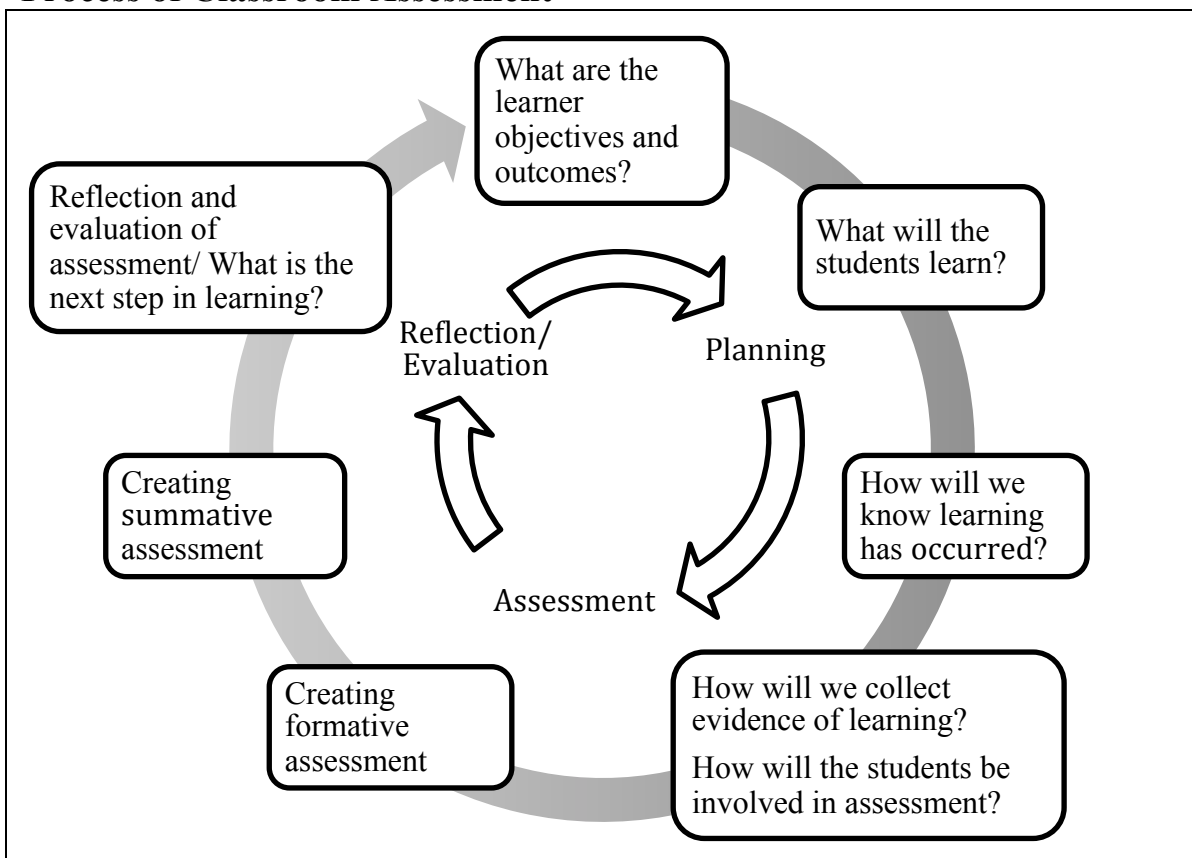
1. The **planning** phase is used to decide what is to be learned based on **learner objectives and outcomes** and what type of assessment will be used. In this phase you will need to make sure that your lesson objectives match your learner outcomes along with what type of assessment will be used. Having this congruency will ensure that students will be able to obtain the learner outcomes based how they will be assessed.

2. In the **assessment** phase the tools for assessment are developed and implemented, **decisions on how and when assessment will occur**. The focus will be on how evidence of learning will be collected and by what strategies will be used to collect this evidence. Additionally this is when collecting, organizing, and interpreting assessment of learning

(summative assessment) and assessment for learning (formative assessment) occurs. Furthermore this is a invaluable opportunity to have your students become involved in the creation and implementation of assessment.

3. During the **reflection/ evaluation** phase the teacher decides **if the students have and to what extent achieved** the learner outcomes based on information and evidence from the assessment strategies used. The teacher also must decide **if the assessment process was successful**, **if modifications are needed or a revamp** of the assessment strategies will be needed before continuing the learning process.

You not only need to understand the classroom assessment process but also what good classroom assessment needs to have to ensure a good assessment. Good classroom assessment directly affects the quality of your lesson. Below (**Table 1.5**) is a checklist for creating good classroom assessment; this checklist should be used whenever creating classroom assessment.
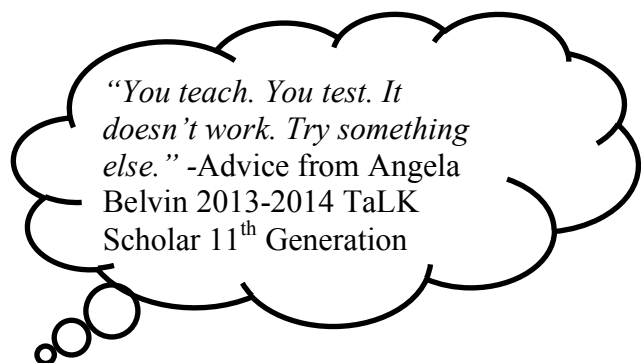
Table 1.5

Checklist for creating good assessment	
Good assessment should…	**Y/N**
address specific learner objectives and outcomes	
help students set learning goals	
inform and guide teaching and learning	
be fair, pragmatic, valid, and reliable	
motivate students	
involve students and teachers	
identify strengths and weaknesses for students and teachers	
be able to provide both descriptive and quantifiable information on the progress that a student is making	
employ a variety of assessment strategies to provide evidence of student learning	
ensure students can describe their progress and achievement and articulate what comes next in their learning	
provide insight that can be used to modify instruction	
provide useful feedback and information about students	
be embedded in the learning process	

Classroom Assessment Strategies

Classroom assessment strategies are numerous and as with any classroom method or technique, **they are best used as a framework.** Rarely does a strategy or technique work without being modified to match to match your situation. Some strategies will need only minor tweaking while some will need major modifications to work in your classroom. I invite you to explore this method of adapting strategies of all types in your classroom. Do not be deterred if something does not work… or many strategies do not work. **Everyone's classroom experience will be different.** If your students' levels are too low for

"You teach. You test. It doesn't work. Try something else." -Advice from Angela Belvin 2013-2014 TaLK Scholar 11th Generation

a strategy, modify it to accommodate them. For example if you have lower level students who cannot write in English and you want to create learning logs, try having them make a happy or sad face next to English from the lesson that they do or do not know. **Our job as EFL teachers (English as a Foreign Language) in South Korea is to modify content and classroom techniques so that our students have the best possible chance for achievement.**

The following examples of classroom assessment strategies are adapted to work for Elementary and Middle school levels and pulled from various resources as well as strategies that I have successfully used in the past. Finally, as we are teaching in an EFL context make sure that the students are performing all assessment activities in English if possible. This means that the students are reading, creating and evaluating in English. This will only aid them second language acquisition (SLA). The tables below (**Table 1.5- 1.7)** have been designed to give specific strategies for each other the three different types of assessment.

Table 1.5

Assessment As Learning Strategies				
Name	Purpose	How to do it	How it's used	Time
Learning Logs	To have students record and reflect on what they have learned.	In a notebook or journal have the students answer questions such as: *Today I learned…* *Next class I want to learn…* *Today was hard because…* *I didn't understand…*	Use this for every class, or once a week. Questions can be modified for your situation. Additionally have the students read over all of them.	Low-Medium
60-second Think	To have students assess how their learning is progressing.	Ask the students to stop and think for 60 seconds about how their learning is going on right now. Make sure that this is quiet time.	This can be done anytime during class. You can have the students share or just do a easy thumbs up or down survey. The important thing is to give students quiet thinking/ reflection time.	Low
Wall Posters	To have the students self assess themselves and observe their progress	Have the students create posters that reflect what they learned. Have the students answer questions on the poster such as *Today I learned…* *I am good at…* *I need help with…* *I didn't like*	This can be done at the end of a unit as review or a project. Students will be able to see their progress in class and what they need to work on. Instead of answering questions students can put smiley or sad faces next to items on their posters.	High
Stop Light	To have the students list things that they understand, are confused about or do not understand	Using a picture of a stop light have students list things that they "feel good about"/ understand next to the green light, things they are confused/ unsure about next to the yellow light, and things that they don't understand/ feel frustrated about next to the red light.	This can be done weekly or midway through a unit. Afterwards students can list things as a whole class that the need help on. This is a great strategy if you notice your students not grasping a concept or lesson.	Medium-High
WILF the dog	To help students focus on self assessment	Ask the students "What I'm looking for…" (**WILF** the dog) while holding up a picture of Wilf (any dog) during a lesson.	Ask the students this regularly. This reminds students to stay focused on the learning goals and on what they should be	Low

		This question is meant to focus on what they are looking for during a lesson or a problem.	learning.	
TIB the cat	To help students focus on self assessment	Ask the students "This is because…" (**TIB** the cat) while holding up a picture of Tib (any cat) during a lesson. This question is meant to focus on why something is happening during the lesson.	Ask the students this regularly. This question is used to help learners make connection between learner goals, content, and concepts.	Low
Feedback Strips	To learn how to give and receive peer feedback	On a small pre-made feedback sheet, have the students provide peer feedback for another student. Questions might include: *Today, you did well on… I liked your… I saw you… Next time try… One thing you could do better is…*	Have students anonymously provide feedback for another student's observable actions such as a presentation, role-plays, or other oral presentations. Make sure the students are giving constructive feedback and make sure to model this beforehand.	Medium-High

Table 1.6

Assessment For Learning Strategies				
Name	Purpose	How to do it	How it's used	Time
Question and Answer	Instant feedback, develops motivation, shows momentary information	Through out the class ask students questions to assess their learning progress. This goes beyond recalling facts questions. Emphasis on why, and how questions such as, "Why do you think that?" "Can you show me how?" "How are they same or different?"	This is used throughout the class. If you find it difficult to ask individual questions put students in small groups and have them answer the questions together.	Low-Medium
Observations	To record behavior or what students do or do not know	You can either conduct an informal or formal observation, additionally either using written notes or mental notes. Notes can come in the form of: -anecdotal notes -notes on the attendance -labels of sticky notes	Observations can be used for events such as classroom management to behavior to recording grades. Additionally the teacher can take notes on their own teaching habits, strengths and weaknesses.	Low-High
Exit/ Admit Slips	Used for assessing or understanding key concepts	Upon entering or exiting the classroom students will be given a slip of paper with or be asked a question from the classes lesson. Students must write or answer the question correctly to be allowed in or out of the class.	This strategy can also be used as a classroom management technique or used to check that information has been conveyed such as homework, or what materials they need to bring to the next class.	Low
Graphic organizers	To have students organize information that they know. To	Students should record or display what they know from a concept or a lesson by way of using graphic organizers	Graphic organizers can be used to assess what students know and do not know or how they make	Medium-High

	have the teacher observe what that student knows.	such as: -Venn Diagrams -Mid Maps -Chain of Events -Problem Solution -Cause and Effect	connection between concepts. Graphic organizers should be used when more structure or help is needed in problem solving	
Think Pair Share	To have the student summarize information that they are learning through out class.	This is a 3 stage process: -Stage 1: the teacher asks the students to think about a problem or question. -Stage 2: students are paired together to discuss and agree on their answer. -Stage 3: students share their answer with the class.	This strategy can be used during or after a lesson or class. This strategy works well in any size of class especially in larger classrooms. Teachers can listen to the discussions to create formative assessment as well as give feedback and suggestions.	Medium-High
Journals	To have students create a descriptive log of their learning process	Student will keep journals and can be asked specific questions or allowed to write on their own. Additionally students can use or add journals to a portfolio. Furthermore journal can be used as part of observations as they can be compared to the teacher's observations.	This can be your choice from daily to weekly. Student should turn in their journals so that they can be assessed or used for personal development. Journals can be used as formative and or summative assessment.	Low-Medium
Role-plays	To have students create an environment in which they can show their understanding of concepts	Students will create a scene or skit in which they must use concepts or components of what they have learned in class. Try giving students a "player card" in which the student is a character from the lesson. They cannot say their name or specifically what they do. Other classmates must guess whom and or what they are doing.	This is one of the most used but underutilized assessment strategies. Most teachers use this to memorize contrived language. Using role-plays to help students create what they think is happening or what the language is can be insightful to understanding how they think.	Medium-High
Checklists	To have students check their progress of learning	Teacher or students create a checklist that students must use as they complete tasks or concepts.	This is a very easy way to make sure students are on task as well as having them document and check their learning progress.	Low

Table 1.7

Assessment Of Learning Strategies				
Name	Purpose	How to do it	How it's used	Time
Exams/ Quizzes/ Tests	To assess and assign a grade to students by way of a performance based test	Create a test based on learner objectives and learned concepts. Questions must come from material that has been learned.	Exams are used at the classroom level all the way to state and country level exams. Students are compared to themselves and others to determine a quantifiable score.	Low-High
Projects	To have students	Students are asked top create	Projects can be used to	High

	create a representation of what they know	content that is based on what they have learned. This can vary from day-day topics to summations of topics. Projects can vary from posters, oral presentations, podcasts, or even videos.	create a summary or a synthesis of what students know. Projects are typically used at the end of a lesson or semester, as they can be time intensive.	
Oral Presentations	To have the students recall orally what they know	Students are given a topic or script to speak from in which they must either complete or entirely create based on concepts that they have learned.	Although typically used at the end of a lesson or a term, oral presentations can be done frequently and encourage SLA	Medium
Portfolio	To have students collect and show evidence of what they have learned	Have students create a folder or by other means a history of their work. This usually consists of previous work such as worksheets, tests, and homework. Portfolios might also include journals and projects.	Students should upkeep their portfolio frequently and they should be checked at least once a term. Portfolios can be used as formative and or summative assessment.	High
Rubrics* **Although rubrics are not a form of assessment but rather a component of assessment, they should use these extensively in your classes.*	To create observable and quantifiable measurements to which grades can be assigned	Teachers and or students should create learner outcomes that need to be accomplished for the assessment. Then make a list of criteria that need to present for the assessment. Next prioritize and create a scale from lowest to highest rating for each criteria.	Rubric should be used in creating learner objectives and summative assessment. Students should, if possible, be part of the process. Students need to understand how they will assessed.	Low-High

Rubrics

Rubrics are one of the most important tools a teacher can use for assessment. Rubrics can be used for summative or formative assessment. The ability to make a reliable and fair rubric is an invaluable skill that teachers must have. Rubrics provide teachers with a fair and measurable method for assessment as well as the ability to help students prepare assignments. There are numerous ways to create a rubric. The table below (**Table 1.8)** details an in-depth procedure to create a rubric. Not all rubrics must be as in-depth as this one but these steps are foundational to basic rubric creation. Honing your rubric creation skills and being able to create a fair and measurable rubric will provide not only a way for students to understand how they are being graded but also help you to avoid those uncomfortable situations when students ask, "Why did I get this grade?" or "Why did the other student get a good grade and I didn't?" Finally, have students participate in rubric creation when possible as it shows that you care and value their opinions. Also, including them in the rubric creation process helps students learn to make good decisions that impact their grade and their learning process. Additional rubrics can be found on my blog and at the end of this manuscript.

Table 1.8

Instructions for Creating a Rubric

1. Choose an outcome for which you would like to create a rubric.

2. Determine which criteria are "non-negotiable". List these in a checklist. If you like, you can separate them by "process" and "product."

3. Determine and prioritize the criteria that will be evaluated for the outcome (search the Internet for rubrics that can be adapted).

4. Group any related criteria or determine if any criteria need to be broken down further into indicators.

5. Develop a continuum of levels of performance (with the highest level of performance descriptors farthest to the left).

6. Weight (optional): Determine the relative weight of criteria / indicators (usually 1-4).

7. Descriptors: Write a brief definition for the criteria you identify. Start by describing the best and worst levels of performance. Avoid using positive or negative comments.

8. Calculate the maximum possible score.

Rubric for Assessing Chocolate Chip Cookies

Student name: _____   Project title: _____

Course name and number: _____   Date: _____

Learning outcome: Students will be able to bake a delicious chocolate chip cookie.

The cookies must…
✓ measure between 2 and 4 inches in diameter
✓ have been baked within 2 hours of this competition

Level of Performance

Criteria	Indicator	Delicious (4)	Tasty (3)	Edible (2)	Inedible (1)	Score	Weight	Subtotal (Score x Weight)
Chocolate chips	Quality	Highest quality dark chocolate	Highest quality milk chocolate	Standard commercial milk	Standard commercial dark		X 2	
	Number	Chocolate chip in every bite	Chips in about 75% of bites	Chocolate in 50% of bites	Too few or too many chips		X 2	
Texture		Chewy	Chewy in middle, crisp on edges	Texture either crispy / crunchy or 50% uncooked	Texture resembles a dog biscuit		X 2	
Color		Golden brown	Either light from overcooking or light from being 25% raw	Either dark brown from overcooking or light from undercooking	Burned		X 1	
Taste		Home-baked taste	Quality store-bought taste	Tasteless	Store-bought flavor; stale, hard, chalky; preservative after taste		X 2	
Richness		Rich, creamy, high-fat flavor	Medium fat contents	Low-fat contents	Nonfat contents		X 1	
					Total Score			

Comments:

Level of Performance	Grade Scale	
Exemplary: Delicious	A+	90 - 100%
	A	85 - 89%
	A-	80 - 84%
Proficient: Tasty	B+	76 - 79%
	B	72 - 75%
	B-	68 - 71%
Developing: Edible	C+	64 - 67%
	C	60 - 63%
	C-	56 - 59%
Beginning: Inedible	D	50 - 55%
	F	0 - 49%

Percent (divide total score from above by maximum possible score)

___ / ___ X 100 = ___ %

Check one:
☐ Self assessment
☐ Peer assessment by _____
✓ Instructor assessment by AMK

Adapted from The Assessment Primer: Creating a Flow of Learning Evidence

From: http://www.nwic.edu/assessment/AssessmentResources/rubrics/InstructionRubric.pdf

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http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/assessment/assesslearning/index.html
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Assessment Strategies
https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/teachlearn/student/activity4_4A.pdf
http://wvde.state.wv.us/teach21/ExamplesofFormativeAssessment.html
http://www.scsk12.org/scs/subject-areas/esl/pdfs/hurleys-esl-modifications.pdf

Rubrics
http://www.schrockguide.net/assessment-and-rubrics.html
http://edtechteacher.org/index.php/teaching-technology/assessment-rubrics
http://www.nwic.edu/assessment/AssessmentResources/rubrics/InstructionRubric.pdf

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Daniel Moonasar is a professor of English at Gimcheon University as well as a lecturer for the EPIK (English Program in Korea) and TaLK (Teach and Learn in Korea) programs. He has been teaching EFL in South Korea since 2009 and before that was a certified teacher in the U.S. His professional interests are curriculum development and teacher training while research interests include institutional effectiveness and understanding cultural perceptions of multiculturalism in South Korea. Daniel is currently a MRes candidate studying Educational and Social Research with the University of London. Further information and resources can be found on his blog at: http://danielmoonasar.wordpress.com/