

## KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL USE OF CLASSROOM ASSESSMENTS

First: Remember that curriculum, instruction, and assessment are inextricably linked. As you choose assessment activities for your class, ask yourself these important questions.

- Does the activity match my learning targets?
- Does the activity adequately reflect the content and skills I expect my students to learn?
- Does the activity enable my students to demonstrate both their abilities and progress?
- Is the activity meaningful and engaging to students so they will be motivated to show their capabilities?

The Learning Standards and Performance Descriptors that are identified in procedure number one are the learning targets for the assessment.

Second: Students will require practice and coaching to complete particular kinds of activities if they have not experienced them during the school year. Be sure your instruction and resources also match the learning targets.

Third: Teachers will also need to practice using the rubric, particularly if they are using new teaching strategies and assessment techniques. It is helpful to get a group of teachers who have used the same assessment to come together and use the rubric to score several of the items. Discussing and comparing each others scoring is a way to learn the rubric and to develop inter-rater reliability for the assessments.

Fourth: The sample activities are intended to be flexible. Because the activities were created, reviewed, and field tested by other teachers, they may require some modification to meet the needs of your students. Therefore, do not feel restricted by the directions on any given activity if you will learn more about your students' abilities and skills by altering it.

Fifth: The classroom assessment activities lend themselves to integrated learning and interdisciplinary teaching techniques. Adapting the activities by incorporating concepts, skills and knowledge from more than one learning area can contribute to an interdisciplinary assessment. A simple example, would be using a writing sample taken from a social science activity and score it with the Social Science RUBRIC and also score the same sample with a writing rubric in Language Arts.

Adapted from Alternative Assessment in the Social Sciences:

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