

Why Is It Important to Assess?

Indiana Department of Education
Office of Student Assessment

Why Is It Important to Assess: Overview

- Assessment Objectives
- Utilizing Formative Assessment
- Utilizing Summative Assessment
- Designing Effective Classroom Assessments
- Resources & Contact
- Accessibility and Accommodations

Assessment Objectives

What is assessment?

Assessment is defined as a process of collecting evidence to make informed decisions. Statewide assessments are used to collect data about what a student knows and use that data to make appropriate decisions for students.

Assessment can be:

- Formal or informal; or
- Summative or formative.

What is assessment literacy?

Assessment literacy is what someone knows about assessment, what someone believes about assessment, and what someone does with assessment.

An assessment-literate individual:

- Understands the types and purposes of assessment;
- Believes that assessment is an essential part of teaching and learning; and
- Utilizes data to drive informed decision making for the success of every child.

Summative vs. Formative Assessment

| | Summative Assessment | Formative Assessment |
|---|--|--|
| What is the purpose of the assessment? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Document individual/group achievement or mastery of standards at one point in time.➤ Provide large-scale data regarding program successes and challenges. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Provide students with feedback on their progress; Identify specific student misconceptions.➤ Target instruction to student needs; Target standards to reteach; Create individual goals for student achievement. |
| What is the content focus? | Academic standards (statewide summative); Academic standards and learning goals (classroom summative). | Learning targets that support academic standards; Academic standards; Flexible with classroom use. |
| When does the assessment occur? | An event at the end of learning (i.e., unit test, end of the year, etc.) | Occurs continuously during instruction to support instruction. |

Summative vs. Formative Assessment

| | Summative Assessment | Formative Assessment |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| Who typically uses the data? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Administrators, curriculum leaders, teachers, etc. about students.➤ Administrators, curriculum leaders, teachers, etc. about instruction and educational programming.➤ Policy-makers (i.e., school board) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Students about themselves to monitor progress and set goals.➤ Teachers about students, standards, and instruction. |
| How are data typically used? | To certify mastery of a set of academic standards or learning goals; To identify areas of strength and weakness in overall instruction or educational programming; To evaluate or provide a grade. | To advise teachers and students of student progress and inform next steps in instruction; To help parents support student learning throughout the school year; To create goals and target misconceptions in learning. |

Assessment helps students...

- **Understand their own strengths and challenges.**
 - Assessment challenges and empowers them to create a plan for improvement.
- **Be motivated to maintain or improve their learning strategies.**
- **Be placed in the appropriate classes and programs.**



Assessment helps teachers...

- Understand what teaching approaches are most effective.
- Identify which topics are well taught or need improvement.
- Develop lesson plans and set achievement goals.
- Identify students' skills, abilities, and needs.
- Define next steps for student growth.
- Select appropriate curricula, teaching materials, and learning activities.
- Group students for instruction to target specific learning needs.



Assessment helps parents...

- **Understand their child's academic progress and learning.**
- **Identify activities that can be used to improve and maintain their child's knowledge and skills.**



Assessment helps policymakers...

- Establish high expectations for educators and students.
- Determine whether students are learning effectively.
- Identify areas of educational need that can be targeted for improvement.
- Effectively allocate resources to benefit students.
- Determine how effectively and to what extent students benefit from current programs and services.



Assessment Helps The wider public...



- **Learn how schools, corporations, and educators are contributing to student learning outcomes.**
- **Understand how Indiana's students are working to be college- and career-ready.**

Utilizing Formative Assessment

What is formative assessment?

Formative assessment is assessment for learning.

It is an opportunity for teachers to...

- Observe student behaviors and student work.
- Make inferences about what students know and can do.
- Use information gathered to inform teaching practices.

It is an opportunity for students to...

- Internalize standards/criteria for high-quality work.
- Refine problem-solving strategies.
- Receive targeted assistance on how to improve their performance.

Effective formative assessment

Assessment should be:

Planned Early

Transparent

Common

Continuous



Productive formative assessment

In what areas have students met or not met learning objectives?

Why did students meet or not meet the objectives?

- Are misconceptions present?
- Is any background knowledge missing?
- How much time was devoted to each topic?
- How effective was the teaching practice?
- Were there a sufficient quantity and quality of student learning activities?
- Were there a sufficient quantity and quality of resources available to students?
- How motivated to succeed were the students?
- Were there any other external factors that impacted assessment?

formative assessment considerations

- **Is the assessment valid and reliable?**
 - Validity: Does the assessment provide accurate and trustworthy information?
 - Reliability: Does the assessment produce stable and consistent results?
- **Can students perform the task “successfully” without producing the desired outcome?**
- **Is it possible that students will fail to perform the task for reasons other than their skills or abilities?**

formative assessment considerations

- **Do students understand the rubric for the assignment?**
 - Are the criteria clear, description, and distinct?
- **Does the task require understanding of required content, or can it be accomplished solely using outside skills/knowledge?**
- **Is the task realistic?**
 - Does it simulate authentic challenges faced in the adult world?
- **Are the point values in the rubric appropriately spaced?**
- **Is the task worth your students' time and effort?**
 - Is it worth your time and effort?
- **Is the task appropriately challenging?**

Learning Progression Guided by Formative Assessment: Self-Reflective Rubric

Formative Assessment is a planned, continuous process teachers and students use to reveal learning, analyze learning, and adjust both instruction and learning strategies to enhance students' achievement of intended outcomes. This rubric assists educators in reflecting on current practices for the four components of the learning progression process guided by formative assessment and provides ideas to build on those practices.

| Formative Assessment Process Component | Beginning | Developing | Proficient |
|---|---|---|--|
| Clarify the Learning | <i>The task shows little alignment to the academic standard(s) and learning goal(s). Students are not aware of the learning goals.</i> | <i>The task mostly aligns to the academic standard(s) and learning goal(s). Students are aware of the learning goals but are not involved in evaluating their own success.</i> | <i>The task strongly aligns to the academic standard(s) and learning goal(s). Students understand the learning goals and are involved in evaluating their own success.</i> |
| Clarify the Learning: Learning Goals | <p>I do not regularly write learning goals OR I write learning goals that are not based on standards.</p> <p>I share the learning goals with students with isolated references to previous learning, future learning, or generalizable ideas.</p> <p>I share the learning goals with students at the beginning of the lesson.</p> | <p>I write learning goals that are based on standards and focused on what students should know, understand, or be able to do by the end of the lesson.</p> <p>I write learning goals that are appropriate for students and are expressed in student-friendly language.</p> <p>I share the learning goals with students in terms of previous or future learning. I explain how the current lesson fits into a larger sequence of learning.</p> <p>I share the learning goals with students at the beginning of the lesson.</p> <p>I reference the learning goals toward the end of the lesson.</p> | <p>I write learning goals that are based on standards and focused on what students should know, understand, or be able to do by the end of the lesson.</p> <p>I provide students opportunities to rewrite the learning goals in their own language.</p> <p>I share learning goals with students as part of a coherent sequence of learning, with meaningful connections to previous or future learning that facilitate students' understanding of the broader purpose for the learning.</p> <p>I share the learning goals with students at the beginning of the lesson.</p> <p>I reference the learning goals throughout the lesson.</p> <p>I summarize progress toward the learning goals near the end of the lesson in ways that support student learning or invite students to reflect on their own progress.</p> |

Utilizing Summative Assessment

What is summative assessment?

Summative assessment is assessment *of* learning and is used to evaluate learning at the end of an instructional unit by comparing against a standard or benchmark.

- The same standards apply to all students in a given grade and content area.
- Performance can be compared across students, classes, schools, and corporations.
 - Provides useful data for measuring growth and learning gaps between different groups of students.
- Intermittent assessment takes place at predetermined times during the school year.
- Summative assessments are frequently high-stakes (e.g., graduation requirements).

How is assessment data used?

School administrators and teachers:

- Which students are likely to require additional support this year?
- What is the best way to group students of varying proficiency levels?
- What standards were mastered by students? (Suggests that the instruction and curriculum in these areas is strong.)
- What standards were not mastered by many students? (Suggests that the instruction and curriculum in these areas may need to be adjusted.)

How is assessment Data used?

Corporations and school administrators:

- How should students be grouped into classrooms?
- What are appropriate strategies for closing achievement gaps?
- Are existing programs contributing to students' academic growth?
- Are there areas of strength or weakness in the current curriculum and instructional practices?
- What professional development will best prepare teachers for the coming school year?

Questions & resources

To answer these questions, corporations, school administrators, and teachers can look at:

- Last year's overall corporation, school, class performance
- Corporation, school, class performance on each reporting category

Released Items

Teachers can review sample items in the item specifications and in the Released items Repository to better understand how certain standards are assessed, and to find ideas for questions on classroom assessments.

Contact us



Contact Information:

IDOE Office of Student Assessment

- INassessments@doe.in.gov
- (317) 232-9050



Resources:

IDOE Office of Student Assessment

- [Indiana Assessments Policy Manual](#)
- [Indiana Assessment Portal](#)
- [IDOE Formative Assessment Grant webpage](#)
- [IDOE Office of Student Assessment Moodle courses](#)



Thank you!