



Planning with the End in Mind

Dimension #2: Planning for Assessment and Instruction

Effective assessment practice is evident when teachers...

select methods for gathering evidence of student learning that are consistent with the learning outcome. The outcomes also guide the selection of appropriate instructional strategies and teaching/learning resources.

▶ Assessing Projects and Performance Tasks

<https://aac.ab.ca/video/assessing-projects-and-performance-tasks-2/>

Video Summary

A teacher discusses some of the planning that goes into designing an effective project. Although this video is set in a junior high school mathematics classroom, the assessment principles from this video are applicable to other grades and subjects.

Key Points

- When using projects and tasks, it is essential to focus on the outcomes the project is going to assess, rather than on peripheral factors.
- Once the learning destination is clear, appropriate choices for student products become apparent.
- When opportunities for ongoing feedback are built into the project plan, students have the opportunity to do their best work.

Discussion Question

- While projects are often a way to engage students, how can we be sure a project is aligned to high priority outcomes and therefore worth doing?

Connection to TQS Assessment Indicators

- accurately reflect the learner outcomes within the programs of study
- provide a variety of methods through which students can demonstrate their achievement of the learning outcomes



Connections to LQS Instructional Leadership Indicators

6 (c) ensuring that student instruction addresses learning outcomes outlined in programs of study

6 (e) demonstrating a strong understanding of effective pedagogy and curriculum

6 (g) ensuring that student assessment and evaluation practices are fair, appropriate, and evidence informed

Using the Video to Support Your Own Professional Learning

1. **Review the video:** [Assessing Projects and Performance Tasks](#).
 - Use the *Key Points* and *Discussion Question* to guide your reflection.
 - What connections can you make to your past/current classroom practice?
2. **Engage in background reading and study.**
 - *Assessment Conversations: Engaging with Colleagues to Support Student Learning* (pp. 19 – 27).*
3. **Anticipate challenges.**



Potential Challenge	Potential Response
<i>"We do projects all the time but I find the students focus on the wrong things. I'm not really sure if they've learned what I wanted them to learn from the project."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step back and look at the project rubric. It should be focused on the knowledge and skills students are to demonstrate, rather than the peripherals such as construction and appearance. • Consider paring down the project so that the work is done at school. This helps 'level the playing field' for students and allows you to see what students are able to do independently.
<i>"I'm worried that projects might not help prepare students to succeed on large scale assessments."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is essential that we teach the full curriculum and not just the outcomes that can be assessed using selected response formats.

As a school leader, provide time at a staff meeting for teachers to examine AAC performance tasks, rubrics, and publications for examples of how to cluster outcomes and develop rubrics that are focused on the 'big ideas' of the curriculum.

Using the Video to Support Professional Conversations (Assessment Team and/or Staff/Department Meeting)

1. Encourage assessment team/staff members to focus on the **Key Points** and the **Discussion Question** as they design assessment experiences for students.
2. Encourage team members to be prepared to share their experiences (successes and challenges) at the next assessment team meeting and/or the next staff/department meeting.



Remember the value of working towards building a culture of formative assessment within your school, beginning with your leadership role. See Section 2 (p. 11) for more information.

* *Assessment Conversations: Engaging with Colleagues to Support Student Learning* is an additional recommended resource published by AAC. It was not funded by this project, and is available for purchase from AAC.