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Rubric 4.0

Criteria	Complete Understanding	Partial Understanding	No Understanding
Consistent Language	Language used is consistent with what is spoken in the school and community.	Language used is partially connected to the community, and mostly the school.	Language used has no connection with the community.
Awareness and Self-Monitoring	Assessment makes students figure out which specific skills are needed to complete the task.	A mix of having enough information for students to figure out what to use as well as parts where the information is vague. This makes it difficult for students to figure out the skills needed.	There is not enough information on the assessment for students to figure out what skills to use and when on their own. Students are just told which ones they need.
Creating tasks that show understanding of learning not just a collection of information	Assessment has tasks that show meaning of facts and understanding of when to use certain types of knowledge.	Assessment asks for some fact and knowledge recall, but also has parts where meaning of facts is needed.	Assessments asks for facts or recall of information.
Making sure different assessment tools/types are being used	This is the first or second time that these assessment tools/types have been used.	This is the third time this assessment type/tools have been used.	This assessment type/tools have been used more than three times.

Clearly stated goals or objectives	Goals of the assessment are clearly stated and easy for students to find and explain.	Goals are somewhat clearly stated on the assessment. Not all students are sure what they are.	No clearly stated goals. Unsure of what the actual goal is.
Using prior knowledge	Assessment allows students use their prior knowledge to help solve the problem or complete the task.	Assessment allows for partial bits of prior knowledge to be used.	Assessment does not allow for prior knowledge to be used.
Use of learning progressions to shape assessment	Lessons build off of one another leading up to an assessment that use previously learned skills.	Assessment uses some progression of lessons using a select few.	There is no progression of lesson build up for the assessment.
Providing Effective Feedback	Assessment allows for feedback with explanation on why students got something right or wrong.	Assessment allows for feedback that sometimes has explanations on why answers were correct or incorrect.	Assessment only allows for marks that say what is correct or incorrect, no explanations.
Connection to the real world and use of critical thinking	Assessment makes students think critically and has a connection to the real world.	Assessment has limited connection to the real world and there is little critical thinking taking place.	Assessment has no connection to the real world and no critical thinking necessary.

Use of digital tools to support assessment	Use of at least one digital tool on the assessment.	Use of digital tools on the assessment is optional.	No use of digital tools on the assessment.

Criteria 1: Consistent language

When creating different assessments throughout a school year, something that needs to take place is having consistent language. What this means is that the language for all the assessments needs to be in a language that students see in and outside of the classroom. In fact, “a commitment to equal opportunity for diverse learners means providing genuine opportunities for high-quality instruction and "ways into” academic curricula that are consistent with language” (Shepard, 2000, p. 7). Every school has diverse learners, and it is important to be able to reach all of them, especially on assessments. Another issue is when non-target knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) are used on an assessment. By having unwanted KSAs, there can be inconsistent language put into the assessment. A problem that can arise is that “non-target KSAs are most commonly introduced unwittingly by unnecessarily complex language and/or by content or processes unfamiliar to students from particular cultural backgrounds” (Trumball & Lash, 2013, p. 9).

The importance of consistent language is that it allows for students to be comfortable with what they are doing. If the language that is being used on assessments has no reflection of the students’ real world, the assessment just became much more difficult than it needed to be. You don’t want to have a bunch of academic language being used when the students in your classroom don’t speak that way. By using consistent language, it allows for students to

understand assessments better and truly be able to show what they know because they are not tricked by language they are not used to seeing. In terms of the consistency aspect, that will have to be graded by me internally. The reason is that all schools and student body are different. The language spoken in the school I teach at will be different than others, so it will be up to me to decide if the language I am using in my assessments are consistent with what students see outside the classroom or not.

Complete Understanding: Language to be consistent with the community and school alike. Ideally, there would be an influence by the community in the language used in the classroom and that should be reflected on assessments.

Partial Understanding: There will be some language that is from the community and school, but there will be much more academic language.

No Understanding: Only having academic language and none from within the community.

Criteria 2: Awareness and Self-Monitoring

For assessments to be successful, students have to use skills they have learned in the class and subject area. Once students learn how to use different skills, it is important to actually know when to use them. The reason behind this is that “intelligent thought involves self-monitoring and awareness about when and how to use skills, and that "expertise" develops in a field of study as a principled and coherent way of thinking and representing problems, not just as an accumulation of information” (Shepard, 2000, p. 6). By being able to determine when to use certain skills on an assessment, it will help lead to more expertise in that subject. Additionally, using these skills at the right time shows that a student understands what they are doing and how to do it according to the problem they are being asked. It is not just about learning information. It is learning how to use that information and doing it correctly which is

determined by the task at hand. I think that it is important to know what skills to use, but also be able to self-monitor. By being able to do so, it helps students take ownership of their learning and reflect on what needs to be done. I find that if students are able to take ownership of their learning, they can be prosperous. For an assessment to be successful, students need to be able to monitor what they are doing, how they are doing it, and if they are doing it correctly. If they are able to do this, along with thinking about which skills to use and when, then it can help lead to a very successful assessment because students show they understand what to do and how to do it with the information they have learned.

An important thing for teachers to make sure students understand is how to actually self-monitor. That is not a skill that everyone just automatically has. What needs to happen is that “teachers need to create more structured opportunities for self-monitoring and the judging of progression to goals” (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006, p. 207). When students are able to figure out how close they are to reaching goals, that can help with their awareness. Also, by having opportunities where students get better at self-monitoring, then it will help when it is time for the assessment because students would then be prepared to do it. That also helps the teacher assess their own assessment on awareness and self-monitoring because they know what has been taught in their classroom. When determining how to assess whether I created an assessment that uses awareness and self-monitoring, I need to think about the skills being used. Students were taught skills in the classroom and it is my job to create an assessment using these specific skills. If students have an assessment, then it needs to involves the specific skills they had just learned. So when doing the assessing, If I look and notice only one or no skill is being used that is new, then it is not enough. If there are multiple skills that were learned being used in the assessment, then I know that I have created an assessment that is good for this criteria. The reason is that it allows me to see which skills they are doing well with and the

ones that still need more practice. A skill that is helpful in students monitoring their own learning is to “develop evaluative expertise in students so they could become proficient at monitoring their own learning” (Shepard, 2005, p. 67). This is important when creating an assessment. Students are able to evaluate and understand what they are good at in this particular subject and evaluate what skills to use and when.

Complete Understanding: Students are not explicitly told which skills need to be used, but are given enough information that they can figure out what to use and when.
Partial Understanding: A mix of having enough information for students to figure out what to use as well as parts where the information is vague. This makes it difficult for students to figure out the skills needed.
No Understanding: There is not enough information on the assessment for students to figure out what skills to use and when on their own. Students are just told which ones they need.

Criteria 3: Creating tasks that show understanding of learning not just a collection of information

For the different assessments created, students need to be able to show an understanding of the learning that has taken place. It is important to note that “understanding is a mental construct, an abstraction made by the human mind to make sense of many distinct pieces of knowledge. The standard further suggests that if students understand, then they can provide evidence of that understanding by showing that they know and can do certain specific skills” (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005, p. 37). An assessment has to make sense to what the purpose of the learning is and have a connection to events that have led up to the assessment. It also has to be able to shows one's evolution of thinking. In fact, “tasks have to be justified in terms of the learning aims that they serve, and they can work well only if opportunities for pupils

to communicate their evolving understanding are built into the planning" (Black & Wiliam, 1998, p. 143).

An example of why this is important has to do with being able to show learning. Maybe students are learning about maps. Instead of having them just answer multiple choice questions, there could be a project created where they had to create a map and have specific things on it. In addition to doing that, they have to write a paper that explains the choices they made on the map and why. By doing an assessment like this, it gives students a chance to show what they know, but also give the teacher an insight into how they came up with what they did and why. It connects perfectly to their learning and can be built up over the course of several lessons or even an entire unit. A reason for this is that it can show what students know without having possible answers right in front of them. By having multiple choice questions, students can see the answer or at least take a guess to what it might be even if they are not sure. By doing this map and paper instead of multiple choice, it makes them show what they know with just some guidelines. They know what they have to include, but making them include and say why they did shows a true understanding of concepts. I have done this assignment with students in the past in my classroom and after doing it, I felt that students came away with a better understanding of the material rather than when I have created a multiple choice test for them. In terms of assessing this particular criteria, that goes with what I put on the assessment. In order to properly assess this, the assessment can't just be a recall for information. If it just asks for definitions of terms, then it is not a very good assessment. Essentially, the assessment created needs to be much less about memorizing information and more about being able to apply it to different situations.

Complete Understanding: Have students show the meaning of facts and show they know when to utilize learned skills.

Partial Understanding: When an assessment asks for some facts and recall as well as meaning of the information they have learned.

No Understanding: Having students tell facts and not asking them to go deeper or explain what they know.

Criteria 4: Making sure different assessment tools/types are being used

When creating assessments, it is important to have a variety of them. There should not be the same type of assessment being used over and over. The reason is that this only develops certain types of skills, “therefore, a broader range of assessment tools is needed to capture important learning goals and processes and to more directly connect assessment to ongoing instruction” (Shepard, 2000, p. 8).

Additionally, using different assessment types allows for different types of learners to be successful while sharpening the tools of other students. To assess this, it will be based off other assessments I have created. If I am having students do a multiple choice assessment and it is the fourth time in a row for that, then it would get a low mark for this criteria. However, if I am doing something for the first or second time, then it will get a high mark for this specific criteria. An issue with doing the same type of assessment over and over comes from the fact that it does not reach all students. By doing the same or similar types of assessments constantly, teachers have “created significant barriers for students in the margins, for whom the print-based environment simply did not work as the single means to access and express knowledge” (Meyer & Gordon, 2014, p. 2). This means the students who are above or below the average learner needs to have more options to show what they truly know. They need to have their assessments varied so that they can show their true understanding of the material. Depending on the type of assessment, some students may know a lot, but be unable to show all they know

based on what they are asked to do. That is why it is important to use different types and tools on assessments to make sure that all students are being reached.

Complete Understanding: This is the first or second time that these assessment tools/types have been used.
Partial Understanding: This is the third time this assessment type/tools have been used.
No Understanding: This assessment type/tools have been used more than three times.

Criteria 5: Clearly stated goals or objectives

When creating an assessment, it is important to have clearly stated goals. If there are no goals it can be very confusing for the students on what is expected of them or what the outcome should be. Goals need to be more than just a list of basic material. A reason is that “when goals are conceived only as lists of facts and skills, design and instruction end up as inert bits and pieces out of context” (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005, p. 80). If the goal is just facts and not understanding of knowledge, the process to get to the assessment might not be clear and it can feel disjointed and broken up.

There are many reasons why it is important to have clearly stated goals or objectives. One of them involves feedback. In fact, “feedback helps students clarify the goals of learning, their progress toward such goals, and what they need to do to reach the goals” (Trumbull & Lash, 2013, p. 3). By having clearly stated goals, when giving students feedback it is easy to be precise and let the students know what they did well and not so well in relation to the specifically stated goals of the assessment. That way there is a clear understanding of what could be improved on it. Also, “students’ feedback to each other during peer assessment is another source of information about their level of understanding (Black & Wiliam, 2009). For students to adopt such roles requires that they have a clear understanding of learning goals and

performance criteria" (Trumbull & Lash, 2013, p. 6). When students understand the goals of the assessment because they are clearly stated, it can help with students helping one another. From some past experiences, I have had students peer evaluate each other's work to see if there is anything missing or something more could be added. The only way students are able to do something like that is if they understand the goals. The reason that students are used in the assessing of assessments is that they are the ones actually taking it. In order for there to be clearly stated goals, the students should be able to say what they are and do so in their own words. If they cannot do this, then there needs to be a change on the assessment to allow this to happen. Goals need to be more clearly stated and easy for students to understand.

Complete Understanding: Assessment needs to have goals that are clearly stated and students be able to explain what the goals are in their own words. This does not mean that students would be assessed on doing this. Instead, it means that if all or most students can explain the goal of the assessment in their own words, then the assessment has them clearly stated and easy to understand.

Partial Understanding: Students are able to understand and explain some, but not all of the goals.

No Understanding: Students cannot explain what they mean and have no understanding of what the goals are because there are none that are clearly stated.

Criteria 6: Using prior knowledge

When creating an assessment, it needs to take into account prior knowledge that students have. Similar in thinking to the consistent language criteria, depending on your background, that will influence the way you think and the knowledge you have before learning about a specific subject. In order to actually use this specific criteria, students need to be able to

use what they already know. Using prior knowledge begins with the task the teacher has created. It needs to be one that students can use prior knowledge on. This is because "engagement with the task requires that the student draw on prior knowledge and motivational beliefs, and construct a personal interpretation of the meaning of the task and its requirements" (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006, p. 202). Some of what students already know may lend an insight into their mind and the way they think. It can allow teachers to assess students based on what they know, and using prior knowledge can help students make connections about the material they are learning with their background. This may be something that is not the easiest to judge because not everyone has the same prior knowledge. However, there is one area that can definitely be focused on when using prior knowledge and that is what has been previously taught in your own classroom. That way you can guarantee that all students have the same prior knowledge that is needed for the assessment. So what needs to happen is that the assessment needs to include something that has already been covered earlier in the year that will help with the current assessment. This will make students use prior knowledge.

When judging this specific criteria, it will be based on the allowance of prior knowledge to help complete the assessment. Prior knowledge can be a great help with answering or doing assessments. In fact, "teachers should not think of prior knowledge assessment as a discrete pre-test to use from time to time. Rather, it should be common classroom practice. We should routinely ask ourselves what we already know that will help us solve a problem" (Shepard, 2005, p. 68). I look at this as a great way for students to be able to actually apply what they are learning into their real world. Having prior knowledge and understanding how to use it can go a long way in allowing for higher achievement on assessments because it can also show a mastery of knowledge.

Complete Understanding: Needs to allow students the opportunity to use prior knowledge to solve the task or questions at hand.

Partial Understanding: There might just be one or two small parts where prior knowledge could be used, but it does not do much to help with the assessment.

No Understanding: There are no parts that allow for prior knowledge to be used.

Criteria 7: Use of learning progressions to shape assessment

For the seventh criteria, assessments need to use learning progressions to shape them. The reason is that "learning progressions help teachers decide where to take instruction next, based on what they have observed students being able to do independently and with support" (Trumbull & Lash, 2013, p. 6). This is essentially the learning sequence and building up to the next subject with previous material. It also calls for more support on topics when teachers find it necessary. An area where this comes into play is the zone of proximal development. This is the "joint activity in which the adult simultaneously keeps an eye on the goal of fully proficient performance and on what the learner, with assistance, is currently able to do" (Shepard, 2005, p. 66). This takes into account the progressions that are made in the classroom. The teacher is able to see what students can and cannot do on their own. By having this, they can shape the learning so that students are able to do more on their own the further they get into the learning progressions.

When creating a formative assessment, it is important to use this to know what has been built upon and include this specific material in the assessment. This way the teacher knows exactly what skills and knowledge the students should have and how it could be used on the assessment. When using the backwards design template, it is about having the end goal in mind. This means that the teacher knows what the assessment should be and the skills necessary to complete is. By doing it this way, a teacher can use a learning progression to get

their students to that point where they can complete the assessment. Additionally, “the hypothesized progressions may guide teachers’ explorations of student learning through formative assessment” (Trumbull & Lash, 2013, p. 7).

Complete Understanding: There needs to be a progression of learning and use of lessons built upon and used for the assessment.
Partial Understanding: There needs to be some lessons that progress toward the assessment while some lessons have no place in the assessment or progression.
No Understanding: There are disjointed lessons and none of them build upon one another toward the assessment.

Criteria 8: Providing Effective Feedback

An important part of assessments is giving students feedback. Providing effective feedback can assist students in understanding what they did well, and what they did not do well. It can show them areas for improvement. There are many types of feedback and there can be different results based on what type of feedback is given. The reason that feedback is so important is that “feedback from classroom assessments should give students a clear picture of their progress on learning goals and how they might improve” (Marzano, 2009, p. 3). Providing good feedback should make students want to improve on their original work. Additionally, studies show the importance of feedback. There are studies that show that the “highest effect sizes involved students receiving information feedback about a task and how to do it more effectively. Lower effect sizes were related to praise, rewards, and punishment” (Hattie & Timperley, 2007, p. 84). Depending on the type of feedback provided, it can positively or negatively affect the student and the assessment.

When looking at this specific criterion and how it would be scored based on an assessment created, the first thing that comes to mind is what type of feedback will it allow it to have. In order for an assessment to be successful for this criteria, it should be “providing students with explanations as to why their responses are correct or incorrect” (Marzano, 2009, p. 6). By having this type of feedback, students are able to have more gains on achievement because they understand what they did right or wrong. Having an assessment that allows for this type of feedback will be crucial to student success down the line. To partially meet this criteria, it has just a few spots where it allows for explanation of feedback and why things were correct or incorrect. To have no understanding of this criteria, it would be that “students receive feedback on a classroom assessment that simply tells them whether their answers are correct or incorrect, learning is negatively influenced” (Marzano, 2009, p. 5). This is because it does nothing to help the students and actually hurts them in the long run. From past experiences, just marking things right or wrong leaves students with many questions. It could be marked wrong, but in the students minds they feel what they did was correct. Having feedback with an explanation allows for students to see the teacher's line of thinking and offers more clarity into the score they got.

Complete Understanding: Assessment allows for feedback with explanation on why students got something right or wrong.
Partial Understanding: There is just a few spots where it allows for explanation of feedback and why things were correct or incorrect.
No Understanding: Assessment only allows for marks that say what is correct or incorrect, no explanations.

Criteria 9: Connection to the real world and use of critical thinking

One thing that is very important when it comes to school is that it needs to connect to the real world. Learning should not just be in a vacuum and only be used on tests. It needs to apply to real world scenarios and be able to be used when called upon during any given day. In fact, “learning should be authentic and connected to the world outside of school not only to make learning more interesting and motivating to students but also to develop the ability to use knowledge in real-world settings” (Shepard, 2000, p. 7). It is important that whatever is learned in school has some connection to what is happening outside of school. It can make the material that much more interesting and students can see a purpose to it. The same goes for assessments. What needs to take place on them should be able to connect to the outside world of schooling.

Additionally, what needs to happen is that “students are able to reason critically, to solve complex problems, and to apply their knowledge in real-world contexts” (Shepard, 2000, p. 8). This is because “the goal of schooling is fluent and effective performance in the world, not mere verbal or physical response to narrow prompts” (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005, p. 78). If the goal is to see if students can use what they know in real world problems, then they have to be given these type of questions on assessments. An assessment needs to be able to show that students can be critical thinkers and problem solvers of issues that relate to the real world. If the assessment is not asking for students to do this, then it needs to be changed to make this happen. That way teachers can see if students can use what they learn in different situations.

Complete Understanding: Assessment makes students think critically and has a connection to the real world.

Partial Understanding: Assessment has limited connection to the real world and there is little critical thinking taking place.

No Understanding: Assessment has no connection to the real world and no critical thinking necessary.

Criteria 10: Use of digital tools to support assessment

When creating an assessment, we have come to a point where they need to include the use of digital tools. Technology is growing rapidly and doesn't seem to be slowing down anytime soon. From an early age, people are immersed in technology. It is used so frequently and because it is all around us, there is no reason that it should not be included in assessments at school. Technology and digital tools can now help and improve assessments. In fact, "technology-based, next-generation assessments are characterized by rich, complex, authentic contexts; interactive, dynamic responses; individualized feedback and coaching" (Quellmalz, 2013, p. 6). By using different digital tools, assessments can be individualized as well as have deeper questions and more authentic connections. All of these things that are mentioned will go a long way in not only helping students truly understand the material, but it gives them tools they are comfortable with showing off their knowledge. This is why it is important for assessments to use at least one digital tool.

Additionally, there are other reasons for the use of technology and digital tools in assessments. By using them in school, we are setting up children to succeed later in life. The reason is that "to be effective in the 21st century, citizens and workers must be able to create, evaluate, and effectively utilize information, media, and technology." (Framework, n.d.). By preparing students to use technology in different ways, it will help them not only in school, but later in life when searching for a job or even when they have a career. Most careers now involve some sort of digital tools and getting children familiar with many of them at a younger age will help prepare them for life after school.

Complete Understanding: Use of at least one digital tool on the assessment.

Partial Understanding: Use of digital tools on the assessment is optional.

No Understanding: No use of digital tools on the assessment.

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