Everything I Needed to Know about Assessment, I learned in Marching Band
This is my dad’s marching band being assessed.
“Major reviews of the research on the effects of classroom assessment indicate that it might be one of the most powerful weapons in a teacher’s arsenal.”

*The Case for Classroom Assessment, Marzano*
Agenda

- Principles of Assessment
- Marching Band Examples
- Using Current Tests
- Reflection
Assessment: exercises and modes of communication used to make judgements about a particular student’s understanding

Evaluation is based on judgement guided by criteria
Key Terms

Reliable
It measures what it measures consistently

Valid
It measures what it says it measures

Assessments are utilized to provide insight they provide in to the learning process.

Assessments become VALUABLE when we use that insight to impact our teaching practices and classroom practices.
Assessments should mirror the conditions of the learning/practice
Would you rather...

Learn the basic fundamentals of soccer in a hands-on (ahem, “feet”…) manner, but have your ability assessed on a paper-pencil test?

or

Learn the history, rules, and theoretical skills of soccer, but have your ability assessed based on your performance in a real soccer game?
Provide students feedback that helps them “close the gap”

Between their current performance and the desired/required performance
What you knew

Um.... a little help here?

What you were supposed to know
A **good** assessment answers at least these questions for students

- What do I **know**?
- What do I **not** know?
- How can I **learn** that?
Students perceive them as logical evaluations of the content/skill
Self-assessment impacts
Promotes and/or furthers student learning
Everything (including assessment!) that we do in school should further our mission

Assessment could provide
◆ Opportunity to learn
◆ Feedback that will improve their learning
◆ Increase motivation for learning
Designed to align with a worthwhile “big idea”
In backward design, an assessment is designed using the answers to these questions:

- What do I want my students to be able to do? What should they fully grasp?
- How could they demonstrate their skills when they’re able to do it?
Provide high quality information about each student’s learning
Determining various levels of understanding

**Floor Effects**

“No one knows anything”

Most students do poorly on the assessment.

Not useful for making judgements about student learning because...

I can’t distinguish the truly lost (needing remediation) from everyone else

**Ceiling Effects**

“Everyone knows everything!”

Most students do very well on the assessment

Not useful for making judgements about student learning because...

I can’t distinguish basic understanding and those with exceptional understanding
“Any student expending the time, energy, and mental resources to complete an assessment activity should be able to gain, in return, a picture or explanation of their relative understanding of the topic.”

“Understanding is a matter of degree... we typically pay too much attention to correctness... and too little attention to the degree of understanding.”
In backward design, an assessment is designed using the answers to these questions:

- What do I want my students to be able to do? What should they fully grasp?
- How could they demonstrate their skills when they’re able to do it?
- What would understanding look like?
- How could I uncover misconceptions?
Requires flexible performance and deep understanding
Results can be used by teachers to make judgements about learning

Clearly, accurately, effectively, and easily
I should look at a test and be able to make judgements about student understanding...

- Clearly
- Accurately
- Effectively
- Easily
Let's review!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessments should mirror the conditions under which related learning took place.</th>
<th>Provide students feedback that helps them “close the gap” between the standard and their performance</th>
<th>Students perceive them as a logical evaluation of the content and/or skill</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promotes and/or furthers student learning in its own right</td>
<td>Designed to align with a worthwhile “big idea” or enduring understanding</td>
<td>Provide high quality information about each student’s learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requires flexible performance and deep understanding</td>
<td>Results can be used to make judgements clearly, accurately, effectively, and easily</td>
<td></td>
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What I Learned from Marching Band
Peer Assessors

➔ Section Leaders
  ◆ Demonstrated relative mastery of basic skills
  ◆ Provided clear road map (drill)

➔ Trained in observation and strategies to support learning
➔ Increases feedback

➔ In what ways are students equipped to respond to the performance of others?
➔ In what ways have students been shown "the drill" - the clear, explicit, end goal and how they’re going to get there?
➔ In what ways have students learned what "acceptable" performance is?
➔ In what ways have students been prepared to accept feedback from both teachers and students?
➔ With or without us, students are constantly evaluating others’ performance. Is there a constructive outlet for what they notice?
Asmt during Instruction

➔ Scaffolding
  ◆ Chosen for best vantage point
➔ Identifies students/section OR tricky moves/musical phrases
➔ Gets off scaffolding only when it will improve delivery

➔ In what ways have you intentionally prioritized gathering information about student performance over other potential uses of time? How would you rank it?
➔ In what ways is the environment constructed to allow for real-time assessment and real-time feedback for students?
➔ Students who are primarily sitting and listening don’t give you much to observe. Are students practicing and producing often enough for you to gather information?
Perform early + often

➔ Early, low-stakes
➔ Rehearsals / Football Games / Competitions (Early to Late Season)
➔ Evolving Success Criteria

➔ How are students being asked to demonstrate their evolving understanding early in their learning?
➔ Are some assessments used merely to provide feedback and support future assessments or goals? Why or why not?
➔ When do students have the opportunity to repeat the same task or concept? Are we hoping they show greater autonomy, fluency, or complexity?
➔ Could students look back and see how they were preparing for the ultimate goal?
Showing Students What They Did

- Every performance is video-taped
- Watched multiple times by parents & students
- They SEE what they did, not just someone TELLING them what they did

- What ways do they have of observing themselves?
- What tools or strategies are used to help students gain meaning from assessments and results? What do they take away from assessments & results?
- How could assessments be used as opportunities to identify errors, misconceptions, or problems? What would need to change to better facilitate that?
Outside Feedback

➔ Third party experts
➔ Scores, ranks, and **comments**
➔ Various categories combine for overall score
➔ Weighted categories

➔ Could students receive feedback about their performance from anyone besides you?
➔ In what ways are students provided specialized or targeted feedback as it relates to a larger skill? In marching band terms, are they given scores for each category, or just an overall rank?
➔ What is the balance between anecdotal, descriptive feedback and numeric scoring?
Goal matters to them
Feedback helps them reach their goal
Accept feedback because they value goal
Work harder

Do they have goals that didn’t come from us?
In what ways do students have a vested interest in the success of the group?
How could feedback be reframed to be more palatable for students?
Is student energy and desire to succeed driving the course?
Assess Individuals

- Costs him instructional time - invests for a reason
- Chair Challenges
- Peer assessors (section leaders)
- More feedback, not less

- In what ways am I ensuring that no student can "hide" and feign understanding?
- Have I established a culture that allows students to receive feedback without feeling defeated?
- What systems, specific to my setting, have been employed to most effectively gather data on my students?
Group Goal

- Personal success alone will not bring the desired result
- You are your brother’s keeper
- I belong! I don’t want to hold us back
- Catalyst to help others or seek help

- What elements of our community would encourage students to collaborate and help one another or seek help?
- What in my course/classroom might be suited to a group goal?
- In what ways might group goals align with systems we already have in place?
Intentional Tech Use

➔ iPads supported peer assessment
➔ Individual asmt take up less instructional time
➔ Less is more. Fewer uses more frequently

➔ What technological resources are already available in our classroom? How might we harness them with a specific focus on performing more assessment?
➔ You have to prune the vine to grow some grapes. What usage of technology is not bearing much fruit in student understanding? How could this be adapted or what might replace that activity/task?
Performance Drives Everything

➔ Every moment of every day is driven by performance
➔ What can they do?
➔ What can they do next?
➔ What’s my goal for today?

➔ In what ways are we adjusting instruction based on performance?
➔ Do I know which skills are the most important?
➔ In general, how might we increase the amount of performance-based decisions we make daily?
➔ How might we utilize two teachers to better monitor student learning so we can adjust deftly?
◆ “Assessment” is absent from their vocabulary
◆ Blanketed in “feedback,” “comments,” “scores,” and “I notice…”
◆ Assessment is complemented by instruction to meet needs
◆ Students get pumped about assessments because they enjoy the activity, like to see their progress, know they’ll get feedback, and see value in their classwork
◆ Assessment is not only more “fun,” but more useful
Using Current Assessments

“Some of us live in the real world, Taylor!”
**ISSUE**

The tests I use are demoralizing.

They’re too hard.

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**CONSIDER:**

Would some of the problem go away if you stopped emphasizing the results?
ISSUE

I’m required to use this test and it sucks.

CONSIDER:

Create “good” asmts to complement those.

Scrapbook approach
ISSUE

I’m required to use this test and it sucks.

CONSIDER:

What can I gain from this about my students?

What can’t I get?
ISSUE
I want to give my students an incentive to improve!

CONSIDER:
Will the incentive encourage them to learn more or score better?
**ISSUE**

My “low” kids just tank no matter what.

**CONSIDER:**

Are there barriers I could remove for them (reading, distraction, etc.)?
ISSUE

These tests make it look like everybody stinks.

CONSIDER:

COOL IT WITH THE PERCENTAGES!
ISSUE

These tests make it look like everybody stinks.

CONSIDER:

How can I better communicate levels of understanding?
SlidesCarnival icons are editable shapes.

This means that you can:

- Resize them without losing quality.
- Change fill color and opacity.
- Change line color, width and style.

Isn’t that nice? :)

Examples:
Now you can use any emoji as an icon!
And of course it resizes without losing quality and you can change the color.

How? Follow Google instructions
https://twitter.com/googledocs/status/730087240156643328

and many more...