

Application of the Classroom Assessment Standards

The Who, What, How of Application

Congratulations! You have completed the ITEMS course and have engaged with each of the 16 *Classroom Assessment Standards* grouped by Foundation, Quality and Use. We hope that this is not the last time that you think about these standards. So, what's next?

We hope that the why of applying these standards is clear. Assessment literacy is rarely a focus in either pre-service education or in-service professional learning and so many teachers never had the opportunity to think about assessment design or assessment use. The ITEMS module was a good first step, but the second step is to apply that knowledge to your own assessments, and we know that it is much easier to do that in collaboration with colleagues rather than on your own.

In this section we suggest five ways that you might apply the standards to your classroom assessment work and provide some worksheets to help you with that process. Note that we do not recommend you try to apply *all* the standards to *all* your assessments at once. A narrower focus on a subset of standards or on one or two assessments will make the process less overwhelming and more effective.

Before we get to the *how to* we first make a recommendation of *who* should be involved in this process and *what* you might focus on.

Who should use the Classroom Assessment Standards?

The standards focus on classroom assessment, that is, the collection of evidence about students' progress toward intended learning outcomes and may be "conducted as part of instruction (formative), at a designated checkpoint during a unit or grading period (interim), or at the conclusion of a unit of study or grading period (summative)" (Introduction to the Standards, 2015).

Therefore, it makes sense that the application of the standards should be done by the primary users of the assessment: teachers. A grade-level or department team of teachers can form a learning community to engage in this work. Forming a small working group can help with the review process by creating a community who can work together, bringing different ideas and perspectives, and share the workload for revisions.

A department chair or district curriculum specialist may also provide content expertise, teachers from another grade level might provide a helpful perspective, and other school-based specialists can provide insights in terms of reviewing an assessment from the perspective of English Learners or students with disabilities. A parent-representative can also provide useful insights for some of the standards that focus on communicating results to family members.

This group might meet during designated department meetings, as part of a professional development day, or find other ways to carve out time for this work such as a weekly professional learning team that meets regularly for 30 to 60 minutes each week. Setting up a series of meetings can help hold the group accountable for completing some independent work and returning together to discuss observations and findings.

What to Review

As noted above the goal is not to try to review all classroom assessments at one time, but to identify a key area on which to initially work.

- You might initially choose to review each of the Classroom Assessment Standards week by week and apply it to whatever assessments you were using in that week, as an extended book study. This could be done in conjunction with the specific section of the ITEMS module to introduce the new standard.
- You might choose to go deep on a single assessment (e.g., the end of year summative assessment used by all 5th grade ELA teachers in a school) and apply all or most standards to that assessment.
- You might review across a series of assessments (e.g., all the math assessments used within a single unit of study) applying only a subset of the most relevant standards.
 - We have provided two worksheets: one to apply only the design/development-focused standards to set of assessments, and one to apply the implementation-focused standards to a set of assessments.
- Alternatively, from reviewing the standards through the ITEMS module you might have already identified a specific standard that you want to apply across some assessments because you think it is a potential area for improvement. In this instance you might start by creating an action plan that describes what you want to change rather than engaging in a review of existing assessments.

In short, the good news is that there is no single right way to use and apply these standards and we have provided a couple of different worksheets that you can use to structure reviews in the pages that follow:

- Worksheet A for reviewing and applying each Classroom Assessment Standard in sequence. You will need one copy of this worksheet for each standard.
- Worksheet B for applying most standards to a single assessment
- Worksheet C for applying the design-focused standards to a collection of assessment tasks and questions
- Worksheet D for applying the implementation-focused standards to a collection of assessment tasks and questions
- Worksheet E for developing an action plan that is focused on applying a single standard across multiple assessments.

Each worksheet begins with a few context questions and ends with a reflection/action steps section.

These worksheets are suggestions that you can use or modify to better meet your department needs.

How to Review

As we noted earlier, we recommend that you do this work with a small group or team that might include teachers, specialists, school or district leaders, coaches and parents.

We suggest that you review the relevant Classroom Assessment Standards if you are using a subset of them in your review or engage in a discussion about which ones should be the focus.

Initially each team member should review the assessment(s) and standard(s) independently and make some notes about the evidence that is observed that relates to the standard(s). You can return to the specific section of the ITEMS module for a refresher but you should also read the full text for the specific Standard.

Depending on the size of the group you might want to have pairs or threes share out their evidence in smaller groups and then share consensus comments with the larger group or engage the whole group in a discussion directly if it is not too large. Ensure that each participant has an opportunity to participate and share their learning from the review.

Areas of disagreement can be illuminating. For example, one teacher might not have noted any potential language difficulties that a student might face, but an English Learner specialist might identify ways in which an assessment would be difficult both for ELs and other struggling readers. Talking about ways to support these students can lead to improvements both in the specific assessment being reviewed, but also generate ideas for improvements that could be made more broadly across other assessments.

At the end of the review, identify concrete next steps:

- Are revisions needed?
 - To the assessment design? To analysis? To reporting/communication?
- Who will make revisions? In what time frame?
- Who will review revisions?
- Do other assessments need similar reviews or revisions?
- When shall you meet again? For what purpose?

Worksheet A: Apply-As-You-Learn

Complete one worksheet for each Standard

We recommend meeting weekly in a group for 30-60 minutes. Over the course of four to six months you can discuss each Standard and apply it to your current assessment practice. There are two parts to this worksheet. The first table allows you to capture some notes as your learning community first reviews and reflects on a selected standard. The second part is for you to use after spending a week noticing how the standard might relate to your current practice and sharing out with your team.

Review the Standard	Your Response
Which standard is your professional learning group focusing on? What is the big idea of this standard? Are there other standards that this standard connects to? How? What is the most challenging aspect of this standard to implement? What is the easiest aspect of this standard to implement?	

Apply the Standard	Your Response
What did you notice this week in terms of the selected standard and your assessment practice? What surprised you?	
What insights from team members were similar to your observations?	
What insights from team members were different from your observations?	
What additional support might you and your team need to continue to work on this standard? In your school? In another school nearby? In your district? Other?	
Other notes:	

Worksheet B: Focus on One Assessment

What is the assessment that you are focusing on: (e.g., end-of-year summative assessment for grade 5 ELA).	
Describe the students who completed the assessment? Does the class include struggling readers? English Learners? Students with disabilities?	

For each Classroom Assessment Standard that you are including in the review, consider the prompts in the second column and make notes in the third column. You should review the assessment on your own and then compare with one or more peers to consolidate ideas and then identify areas for future improvement.

Review Focus (✓)	Consideration	Notes
	F 1 Assessment Purpose: What is the assessment purpose?	
	F 2 Learning Expectations: What standards or learning expectations are the focus of this assessment? Did students have opportunities to engage with appropriate instruction and learning for these standards?	
	F 3 Assessment Design: How does the type and items used map to the type of learning expectations?	
	F 4 Student Engagement in Assessment: Students should be meaningfully engaged in the assessment process and use of the assessment evidence to enhance their learning.	
	F 5 Assessment Preparation: What information did students have about this assessment ahead of time? (use of the assessment, timing, opportunities to learn?)	
	F 6 Informed Students and Parents/Guardians: How is information about the purpose and use of this assessment communicated to students and, when appropriate, parents/guardians.	
	U 1 Analysis of Student Performance: How did you analyze evidence of student learning from this assessment?	
	U 2 Effective Feedback: Was feedback provided to students to improve student learning? If so, how?	
	U 3 Instructional Follow-Up: Did the analysis of student performance inform instructional planning and next steps to support ongoing student learning? If so, how?	
	U 4 Grades and Summary Comments: Did students receive summative grades and comments? Do they clearly reflect student achievement of the learning expectations only? Are other factors included in the grade?	

Review Focus (✓)	Consideration	Notes
	U 5 Reporting: Was this assessment information part of a report to summarize student learning? If so, how?	
	Q 1 Cultural and Linguistic Diversity: How was this assessment responsive to and respectful of the cultural and linguistic diversity of students and their communities?	
	Q 2 Exceptionality and Special Education: How was this assessment differentiated to meet the specific educational needs of all students?	
	Q 3 Unbiased and Fair Assessment: Does the assessment and subsequent decisions appear unbiased, fair and free from all factors unrelated to the intended purposes of the assessment?	
	Q 4 Reliability and Validity: Does the assessment provide consistent and dependable information about students in terms of each student's knowledge and skills? Does the assessment adequately reflect the learning expectations?	
	Q 5 Reflection: How could the assessment be revised to improve overall quality?	

Action Plan

Are revisions needed?
To the assessment design? To analysis? To reporting/communication?
Who will make revisions? In what time frame?
Who will review revisions?
Do other assessments need similar reviews or revisions?
When shall you meet again? For what purpose?

Worksheet C: Focus on Design Standards

What is the set of assessment tools and resources that you are focusing on: (e.g., initial problem-of-the-day, assessment tasks and exit tickets for Ratio and Proportions Unit)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • •
Describe the students who completed the assessment questions and tasks? Does the class include struggling readers? English Learners? Students with disabilities?	

About half of the Classroom Assessment Standards relate to aspects of **planning or designing** classroom assessment. Some types of assessment such as an end-of-unit assessment that you create require time to identify or develop questions that reflect the breadth and depth of the assessment targets. Other kinds of formative assessment tasks such as an opening question at the start of a lesson to probe on the understanding of a key idea from the previous lesson might take less time to develop although still requires planning in terms of anticipating possible student responses and instructional next steps that depend on student responses.

This worksheet is designed to focus on a relatively small set of assessment tools that you might use within a one-week time frame, targeting the design-focused standards.

Apply each of the design-focused standards to your set of assessment tools and resources, addressing the questions in the second column, and make notes in the third column. You should review the set of assessments on your own and then compare with one or more peers to consolidate ideas and then identify areas for future improvement.

Review Focus (✓)	Design Considerations	Notes
	F 1 Assessment Purpose: What are the assessment purposes? (Not all the assessments that you are reviewing might serve the same purpose.)	
	F 2 Learning Expectations: What standards or learning expectations are the focus of each assessment? Did students have opportunities to engage with appropriate instruction and learning for these standards?	
	F 3 Assessment Design: How do the assessment types and items used map to the type of learning expectations?	
	Q 1 Cultural and Linguistic Diversity: How are these assessment designed to be responsive to and respectful of the cultural and linguistic diversity of students and their communities?	
	Q 2 Exceptionality and Special Education: How are these assessment differentiated to meet the specific educational needs of all students?	
	Q 3 Unbiased and Fair Assessment: Does the assessment content appear unbiased, fair and accessible for all students?	
	Q 4 Reliability and Validity: Does each assessment provide sufficient information given the purpose? Does each assessment adequately reflect the learning expectations?	
	Q 5 Reflection: How could the assessment be revised to improve overall quality?	

Action Plan

Are revisions needed to the planning processes or assessment design of any of the assessment you considered?

Who will make revisions? In what time frame?

Who will review revisions?

Do other assessments need similar reviews or revisions?

When shall you meet again? For what purpose?

Worksheet D: Focus on Implementation Standards

What is the set of assessment tools and resources that you are focusing on: (e.g., initial problem-of-the-day, assessment tasks and exit tickets for Ratio and Proportions Unit).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • •
Describe the students who completed the assessment questions and tasks? Does the class include struggling readers? English Learners? Students with disabilities?	

About half of the Classroom Assessment Standards relate to aspects of **implementation** of classroom assessment. Some types of assessment such as an end-of-unit assessment that you create require time to score and analyze student responses. Other kinds of formative assessment tasks such as an opening question at the start of a lesson to probe on the understanding of a key idea from the previous lesson might take less time to get a sense of student understanding and proceed with the lesson accordingly.

This worksheet is designed to focus on a relatively small set of assessment tools that you might use within a one-week time frame, targeting the implementation-focused standards.

Apply each of the implementation-focused standards to your set of assessment tools and resources, addressing the questions in the second column, and make notes in the third column. You should review the set of assessments on your own and then compare with one or more peers to consolidate ideas and then identify areas for future improvement.

Review Focus (✓)	Implementation Considerations	Notes
	F 4 Student Engagement in Assessment: How are students engaged in the assessment process and use of the assessment evidence to enhance their learning.	
	F 5 Assessment Preparation: What information did students have about these assessments ahead of time? (use of the assessment, timing, opportunities to learn?)	
	F 6 Informed Students and Parents/Guardians: How is information about the purpose and use of any of these assessments communicated to students and, when appropriate, parents/guardians.	
	U 1 Analysis of Student Performance: How did you analyze evidence of student learning from each assessment?	
	U 2 Effective Feedback: Was feedback provided to students to improve student learning? If so, how?	
	U 3 Instructional Follow-Up: Did the analysis of student performance inform instructional planning and next steps to support ongoing student learning? If so, how?	
	U 4 Grades and Summary Comments: Did students receive summative grades and comments? Do they clearly reflect student achievement of the learning expectations only? Are other factors included in the grade?	

Review Focus (✓)	Implementation Considerations	Notes
	U 5 Reporting: Was any of the assessment information part of a report to summarize student learning? If so, how?	

Action Plan

Are revisions needed to how you use, analyze or report/communicate about these assessments?
What might you change?
Will you meet again to talk about different approaches?
Would these changes impact other assessments?
When shall you meet again? For what purpose?

Worksheet E: Action Plan Focused on a Single Standard

Reflection Question	Your Response
As you reviewed the Classroom Assessment Standards, did any stand out as an area that you could immediately work on to improve?	
What interests you about this standard?	
What aspect of this Standard are you already implementing? What evidence supports this?	
What aspect of this Standard could you improve? What evidence supports this?	
Describe the specific actions you will take to address this standard?	
Will you apply your actions to a specific assessment or form of assessment?	
How long will your initial revision work or implementation changes take?	
Who might you ask for feedback or support? In your school? In another school nearby? In your district? Other?	
Describe the students that you are working with? Does the class include struggling readers? English Learners? Students with disabilities? How do student characteristics influence your action plan?	
Other notes:	