



# **Assessment Before Instruction**

# Assessment Before Instruction

- Learning about your students
- Not the form of a test
- Information gathered about students before school begins, during 1<sup>st</sup> few weeks – and throughout the year

# Before School Begins

- What data are available?
- What data can be collected?
- Assessment should begin before the teacher even meets the students
- Protect against bias

# Developing Student “Profiles”

- Expectancy theory – key
- Every student deserves a “fresh start”
- Information should be of an objective nature
- What are some examples?



**Why is  
assessment  
before instruction  
important?**

## **Some important items to include**

- Student name, gender, race, DOB
- Reading performance, Math performance
- Behavior (individual, social)
- Work Ethic
- Special services/health problems/personal

## Other items to include

- Work samples (different disciplines)
- Student-produced self-analysis (reflection) – grade level appropriate
- Strengths and Weaknesses
- Discipline data
- Attendance data

# Student Profile

- Objective assessments
- FERPA – part of the educational record of the student
- Protect confidentiality
- BBSST, Gifted, Spec. ed., etc?
- Testing Data - etc

# Student self-assessment

- Have student produce a reflective product assessing progress, strengths, weaknesses, interests, hobbies, etc.
- Empower student to assess their own performance & identify their own needs
- This can be done at virtually every level

# Work Samples

- Work samples – span educational history of student
- Provide additional perspective on student performance

# FERPA

- Family Education Rights and Privacy Act
- You should have been thoroughly trained in FERPA
- Deals with confidentiality and what information is “public” or directory & what is private/confidential

# FERPA

- Increasingly more important w/ prevalence of BBSST, spec. ed., divorced parents, etc.
- What are rights of Parents? Custodial? Non-Custodial?

# School Record

- Any information transferred about a child is officially part of the child's "education record" – including email, notes, meeting minutes, etc. – any time the student is discussed or information about a student is shared, transmitted, or communicated

# School Record

- Be careful what all is included
- Educational record can and will be subpoenaed in court
- The “teacher of record” and “administrators” are responsible for content and maintenance of the record

# School Record

- While most schools have a “registrar” – the legal guardian of the educational record is the administration and the “teacher of record”
- Must be accurate

# School Record

- How much do you want to know about your students before you see them?
- What can you learn from standardized test scores?
- What are some potential problems with a records review prior to meeting the students?
- What is your school or system policy on discipline comments passed on in the cumulative file records?
- Are parent comments in file?

# School Record – Standardized Tests

## Norm-Referenced Achievement Test Batteries:

National samples have been used as the norming group and the scores report the student's standing relative to the norming group performance.

# Norm-Referenced Achievement Test

- Scores are usually reported by skill area. Some Norm-referenced tests are designed to report diagnostic information so teachers can make decisions about a student's performance in rather specific areas such as fraction computations

# Norm-Referenced

- Scores such as percentile rank, grade equivalent, and various forms of standard scores are usually reported.

# Percentile Rank

- Reports the percent of the norm group that is at or below the same raw score
- This is significantly different than the percent of items correct
- We are used to looking at norm groups that are national representations – changes if local norms are used

# Grade equivalent

- This is one of the most misinterpreted scores on a normed test.
- Grade equivalents are commonly expressed as a year and a month (assumed 10 months in a school year.)
- A 5.2 GE refers to 5th grade 2nd month

# Grade equivalent

- This simply means that this student's raw score is the same as the median score that would have been obtained by the norming group of students who are in the 5th grade 2nd month

# Grade equivalent

- It is a score that tries to compare the performance to the norming group

# Criterion Referenced

- CRT assessments are developed from much more specific learning targets and instructional objectives
- Testing companies are now producing tailor –made assessments to match state learning criteria

# Criterion Referenced

- Scores are reported as the percent correct, or mastery/non-mastery.

# Cautions for CRT results

- Reports are often from large domain areas, and not too useful for diagnostics
- Disaggregate the scores, even at the classroom level. This can be done by various subgroups

# Cautions for CRT results

- Consider possible sources of error when interpreting.
- Standardized assessments are designed for group analysis, not for individual diagnosis
- The exception may be when there are unusually high or low scores.

# Aptitude Tests

- These are measures of a student's cognitive ability, or potential to learn
- This is determined by in and out of school experiences, so there is little relationship to what is taught in school and performance on such an assessment

# Aptitude Tests

- Aptitude tests are designed to have high predictive validity

# Readiness Tests

- These are specialized aptitude assessments that not only predict future school success, but also serve a diagnostic function
- Results of readiness tests need to be combined with multiple sources of data as decisions are made regarding a student's ability to succeed in K or 1st grade

# Use of Standardized Data

- For identifying the level and range of student ability
- For identifying students strengths and weaknesses
- To provide initial perspective of overall ability & achievement

# Use of Standardized Data

- To identify discrepancies b/t ability and achievement
- For modifying student learning targets
- For initial student grouping
- To identify areas for further investigation

The background of the slide is a close-up, artistic photograph of a stack of books. The books are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth and perspective, with the pages of the top book visible. A light-colored grid is overlaid on the entire image, creating a technical or architectural feel. The color palette is warm, dominated by shades of brown, tan, and orange.

# Once School Begins

What's next?

## **4 Steps of Informal Observ.**

1. Collecting information – This is simple observation of students in situations. How do they interact? What do they wear? How do they speak? Do they participate?

## **4 Steps of Informal Observ.**

2. Interpreting the information – This is a judgement phase. The teacher is trying to assign some level of meaning to the various behaviors. This is a subjective process and is open to the effect of bias

## **4 Steps of Informal Observ.**

3. **Synthesis** – This is the process of pulling several separate observations and interpretations together to form a tentative conclusion about the student or the characteristic being displayed. This step relies on enough data being present to form an accurate conclusion

## **4 Steps of Informal Observ.**

4. Conclusion – This involves naming the trait (motivated, uncooperative, distracted, etc.) This process is cyclical in nature. It never really stops

# Structured Exercises

- These are non graded exercises that have some structure, but are not viewed as actual tests
- They are probably not graded, and are not used for the purpose of comparing students

# Structured Exercises

- The tradition “write about your summer vacation” is an example
- About any assignment you would give that simple allowed you to observe student responses and behavior would meet this definition.

# Pretests

- These are often of questionable value early in the year
- They are rarely specific enough to be diagnostically sound, and during the first weeks of school students are usually not geared to do their best work.

The background of the slide is a close-up, artistic photograph of a stack of books. The books are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth and perspective, with the spines and pages visible. The lighting is warm and golden, creating a soft glow. A white grid pattern is overlaid on the entire image, adding a structured, geometric feel. The text is centered and uses a clean, sans-serif font.

# **Teacher Expectations**

Be careful

# High Quality Pre-instructional Assessments

- As with all assessments, the quality of preinstructional assessments can be judged according to the elements of learning targets, appropriateness, Validity, Reliability, Fairness, potential for positive consequences, and practicality