GOOD TEACHING

Quality Assessment Practices Guiding Learning
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Supporting professional learning

Our Learners First Strategy aims to develop successful, skilled and innovative Tasmanians. Its values include learning and excellence so that Tasmanians are engaged in positive, productive and supported learning experiences, and have high expectations and a strong commitment to the pursuit of excellence.

This resource has been developed specifically for teachers participating in Professional Learning Institute programs but also more generally as a practical support resource for all teachers. In addition it is designed to inform the work of school leaders as they implement school improvement plans and support quality teaching practices.

It is one part of a suite of resources that includes:

- Good Teaching: A Guide for Staff Discussion
- Good Teaching: Differentiated Classroom Practice – Learning for All
- Good Teaching: Curriculum Mapping and Planning – Planning for Learning
- Good Teaching: Quality Assessment Practices – Guiding Learning
- The accompanying videos

It should also be used in conjunction with:

Supporting Literacy and Numeracy Success which provides teachers with strategies for improving literacy and numeracy outcomes as they plan using curriculum documents.

Respectful Schools Respectful Behaviour which highlights the importance of providing safe and supportive environments as a vital part of quality teaching and learning.

Practical examples are provided using the following identifiers:
Supporting school improvement and quality teaching

The Department of Education’s Learners First strategy outlines the department’s Key Drivers and Priorities including a clear focus on quality teaching and learning as it works to build great schools.

This resource supports schools with school improvement as they use the National School Improvement Tool.

While the resource is a useful standalone resource for teachers, its messages will be more powerful if it is incorporated into whole school planning practices. For example, principals may use it to inform Performance and Development Plan (PDP) conversations. It has been written to support the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers – Tasmania (Department of Education 2013) and links to these standards are included.

Video resources have been developed to accompany the print resources and will increasingly incorporate examples of teacher practice. The latest version of this resource is available online at: https://www.education.tas.gov.au/intranet/Pages/home.aspx.

Note to school leaders

Assessment is referred to in several domains of the National School Improvement Tool (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace 2013) including:

- Domain 6 – Systematic curriculum delivery

Assessment processes are aligned with the curriculum and are designed to clarify learning intentions, establish where individual students are in their learning, diagnose details of student learning (e.g. gaps in knowledge and understanding) and monitor learning progress across the years of school.

- Domain 8 – Effective pedagogical practices

Providing regular and timely feedback to students in forms that make clear what actions individuals can take to make further learning progress.

Further details can be found by viewing the National School Improvement Tool at: http://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/improvementtoolv2.pdf.

Professional standards for teachers

The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers – Tasmania outline the importance of assessment in Standard 5 – Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning.

When working towards this standard teachers could:

- Annotate assessment tasks to show how evidence is collected against assessment outcomes.
- Explain how the planned learning activities support students to complete the assessment task.
- Keep copies of feedback they have provided to students.
- Document moderation processes in which they have participated.
- Share copies of student reports they have completed.

There are many valuable resources to support teachers in understanding and using the professional standards on the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) website: http://www.teacherstandardsaitsl.edu.au/
Guiding learning

Our Learners First Strategy commits us to high expectations for our learners. A focus on quality assessment practices has the potential to improve learning outcomes for all students in our system.

The key purpose of assessment is to determine where students are in their learning and to inform the next steps to move the learner forward in the curriculum continuum.

To be effective, assessment processes need to be aligned with the curriculum and designed to make learning intentions explicit.

Ongoing assessment and monitoring enable us to evaluate the effectiveness of our teaching programs and is a part of regular classroom practice.

This resource will support schools in their school improvement agenda by describing processes that will guide leaders and teachers in the use of quality assessment practices. It will support schools in the choice of evidence-based strategies to meet the learning needs of students. When used in conjunction with Differentiated Classroom Practice, it will support teachers to adjust strategies to meet individual needs.

Quality assessment practices

Quality assessment practices do not happen in isolation and are an essential component of focussed teaching for successful learning.

Whole school approach

They are incorporated in a whole-school approach where the responsibility for improving every student’s achievement is shared by the school community. In this context teachers and leaders share data to evaluate individual achievement or groups of student achievement patterns at all levels including:

- whole school
- phase of learning
- year level
- learning area
- class and cohort.

Effective leaders ensure:

- There is a shared understanding of curriculum expectations that provides a basis for ongoing discussion about student achievement.
- There is an alignment of curriculum, assessment, pedagogy and reporting processes.
- That assessment judgements are moderated to ensure consistency of judgement.

Good teachers:

- Work at understanding where students are up to in their learning, including their current knowledge, skills, learning difficulties and misunderstandings, to identify starting points for teaching.
- Closely monitor the progress of individual students and continually adjust their teaching in response to the progress that individuals are making.
- Assess the intended learning in a way that is equitable and accessible for all students.
- Use a variety of assessment instruments in a way that engages and challenges students.
- Regularly inform parents regarding the outcomes of their child’s assessment.
Aligning Curriculum, Assessment and Pedagogy

Our Values
Learning: Tasmanians are engaged in positive, productive and supported learning experiences; and encouraged towards lifelong learning. (Learners First 2014/17)

Key message
The National School Improvement Tool, (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace 2013) clearly establishes the need for effective leaders to align assessment processes with the curriculum and pedagogy.

When designing teaching and learning programs, good teachers consider:

- The content specified by the relevant curriculum.
- The type of evidence needed to make judgements against learning outcomes.
- The learning experiences that will support students to develop the knowledge and skills needed to produce the required evidence.

One way of achieving this is to use a backward design process. This is a preferred evidence based approach.

“Effective curriculum is planned backward from long-term, desired results through a three-stage process.” (McTighe and Wiggins 2012)

Explanation
Assessment tasks developed using a backward design planning process allow teachers to collect evidence that enables them to make judgements against the outcomes or standards specified in the curriculum. Backward design helps teachers to plan learning experiences that will give students the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to complete the assessment tasks.

The underlying idea of backward design is that teachers plan units of work with the learning outcomes that they are trying to achieve in mind. In their publication, The understanding by design guide to creating high quality units, Wiggins and McTighe (2011) identify three stages of backward design.

Stage 1 – Identify learning outcomes
At this stage, teachers ask questions such as:

- What should students know, understand and be able to do?
- What enduring understandings are desired?

These things should be identified using the relevant curriculum and the outcomes specified for each year level. For some students this will include goals specified in their Personalised Learning Plan (PLP). For example, in the case of the Australian Curriculum, these questions should be determined using the achievement standards, with reference to the content descriptors.

“Backward design encourages teachers and curriculum planners to first think like assessors before designing specific units and lessons.” (McTighe and Wiggins 2012)
**Stage 2 – Determine assessment evidence**

At this stage, teachers ask questions such as:

- How will we know if students have achieved the learning identified in Stage 1?
- What will we accept as evidence of student understanding and their ability to use their learning in new situations?
- How will we evaluate student performance in fair and consistent ways?

The backward design process involves teachers thinking like assessors before they design a unit of work. Teachers consider the evidence that they will need in order to judge that the learning identified in Stage 1 has occurred. Then they design assessment tasks that allow them to collect that evidence.

It is important to check for alignment between Stage 1 and Stage 2. Is any learning identified in Stage 1 not being assessed? Is anything not identified being assessed; e.g. literacy and numeracy?

**Stage 3 – Plan learning experiences and instruction**

At this stage, teachers ask questions such as:

- What do students already know and understand about the desired learning?
- How will we support learners to come to understand the important ideas and processes that have been identified?
- How will we prepare students to transfer their learning to new contexts?
- What enabling knowledge and skills will students need?
- What activities and resources will support students to achieve the desired learning?

Teachers plan the lessons and activities that will most effectively allow students to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills identified in Stage 1, and complete the assessment tasks identified in Stage 2.

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**Practical examples**

**Collecting evidence for a learning story**

A Kindergarten teacher examines the *Children are effective communicators* outcome from the *Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*. They decide that they can collect evidence against it by asking their students to draw a picture of themselves and write their name. The teacher spends time with each student, talking with them about their drawing and asking questions. The conversation is recorded. The transcript and the drawing are included in a learning story as evidence of student progress.

**An assessment task that integrates English and history**

A Year 3 teacher uses the *Australian Curriculum: English* and *History* achievement standards and content descriptors to develop a culminating task that will allow them to make assessment judgements against both subjects. The task requires students to take the role of an historian and create a brochure or slideshow explaining the history of the school and surrounding area to a new student. The teacher provides students with a rubric that details what work would look like ‘above’, ‘at’ and ‘below’ the standard expected. The teacher plans learning experiences and ongoing assessment to develop each student’s knowledge about the history of the school area and how it has changed, and the skills needed to collect and present information.

**Developing learning goals in geography**

A Year 6 teacher uses the achievement standard and content descriptors for geography to plan a unit of work. The focus of their unit is on the representation of data. They differentiated learning by providing multiple entry points and different levels of complexity in the data they present to students. They scaffold learning, monitor progress and provide regular feedback to their students.
Collecting evidence from a science inquiry

A Year 10 teacher refers to the achievement standards and content descriptors for science. They decide to include an inquiry assessment task in their physical sciences unit. They develop a template that supports students to complete their own inquiry into Galileo’s inclined plane or pendulum. Students are asked to complete the template and then write a formal science report.

The teacher plans learning experiences that will help students to develop the physics knowledge and inquiry skills they will need to complete the assessment task. From the completed template and the practical report the teacher makes a judgement about each student’s progress in relation to the achievement standard. For some students the teacher makes judgements against the learning goals in their Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Planning for a student with disability

A Year 7 teacher backward maps content from the Australian Curriculum: Science to address goals of an IEP for a student with disability. The teacher checks the expectations as outlined in the Achievement Standards. In this instance, the focus is on analysing the sustainable use of water and the key elements of the water cycle.

The student works on aspects of the water cycle accessing a selection of key words and how they relate to each other. With teacher assistant support the student is able to illustrate their understanding of key words used in the water cycle by labelling a water cycle picture. The IEP goal addressed is for the student to increase their academic vocabulary.

Questions for reflection

1. How do I use the backward design planning process to decide what learning experiences to provide to students?

2. With the backward planning process in mind, how might I best use the Australian Curriculum achievement standards and content descriptors in my planning?

3. How do I frame questions that align with each stage of the backward design planning process?

4. What are the ways that I collaborate with other teachers to plan assessment tasks using the backward design planning process?

5. What sorts of learning tasks will allow students to achieve the learning goals I set in an engaging way and allow me to gather evidence about their achievement?

6. Have I allowed for peer and self-assessment in my planning? What methods will I use to facilitate this?

7. Have I used the continua for the literacy and numeracy general capabilities to develop additional learning goals?
### Unit planning template using a backward design planning process

These templates have been developed to assist teachers to use the backward design planning process. Teachers:

- Identify learning outcomes (Stage 1) by consulting the curriculum and planning learning goals.
- Determine assessment evidence (Stage 2) by focusing on the curriculum achievement standards and planning assessment and pre-assessment tasks.
- Plan learning experiences and instruction (Stage 3) through adjustment strategies and the learning sequence.

For practical examples of how to apply these templates see *Good Teaching: Curriculum Mapping and Planning*.

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The Planning Cycle used with
– The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia
(Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations 2009)

This planning cycle underscores the importance of using data and gathering evidence to help create a record of every child’s progress. An analysis of this evidence and reflection on the learning outcomes, principles and pedagogy informs practice.

**Data– from observations, educator, child and parent voices, photographs, work samples etc.**

- In what ways do you gather and document information about children’s learning e.g. information from families, anecdotal records, learning stories, photos, samples of children’s work etc?
- How does the documentation record what children know and can do (their strengths, interests and abilities), as well as indicate areas where children may need additional support?
- How does the information that is collected and documented create a record of each child’s learning and development that can be shared with them and families?
- How does the information collected reflect children’s and families perspectives?

**Analyse/Reflect– What learning is taking place here?**
*What evidence of Learning Outcomes, Principles and Practices?*

- What systems do you have in place to regularly analyse the information you have gathered about each child’s learning? Who do you include in the process?
- How does the analysis give you sufficient information about the progress that each child is making in relation to the Learning Outcomes?
- Does it show you clearly the distance the child has travelled as a learner?
- How do you make children’s progress visible and meaningful to both children and their families?

**Plan/Act/Do**

- How do you use the information you have gathered to guide your planning?
- To what extent do your planning processes ensure that you incorporate the Vision, Principles and Practices of the EYLF?
- In what ways can families contribute to your planning and programs?
- How are children’s ideas and points of view heard, respected and reflected in what happens?
- How do you reflect the holistic (physical, social, emotional, spiritual and cognitive) approach to children’s learning?
FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

Our Values
Excellence: We have high expectations for our learners, and a strong commitment to the pursuit of excellence and innovation in our people, in our programs and in our resources. (Learners First 2014/17)

Key message
Assessing student learning and providing regular feedback to students on this learning are clearly established as essential components of teacher practice in the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers – Tasmania (Standards 5.1 and 5.2).

Formative assessment may be described as “formal and informal processes teachers and students use to gather evidence for the purpose of improving learning” (Chappuis 2009). It enables teachers to adapt their teaching to meet learner needs.

Good teachers do this by:
• Making judgements about where students are in their learning using pre-assessment strategies and ongoing assessment tasks.
• Identifying both correct understandings and misconceptions on the part of students.
• Using evidence about student learning to adjust instruction to meet student needs more effectively.
• Identifying the future learning that is likely to be most beneficial in improving student understanding, knowledge and skills.

What students learn is unpredictable. They do not necessarily learn what teachers intend when they teach. It is through formative assessment that teachers can tell what students have actually learned. Formative assessment when accompanied by regular feedback is potentially one of the most powerful tools that teachers can use to improve student learning.

“As every teacher knows, what students learn as a result of any particular sequence of instruction is hard to predict—what students learn is not necessarily what we teach. This is why assessment is perhaps the central feature of effective practice —assessment is the bridge between teaching and learning. It is only by assessing that we can find out whether the instructional activities in which students have engaged have resulted in the intended learning.” (Wiliam, D 2013)

Explanation
The five key strategies of formative assessment are:

Strategy 1. Clarifying, sharing, and understanding learning intentions and criteria for success
Clear learning intentions help students to understand what they are learning, increase motivation and define how success will be measured. It is important that students understand the learning intentions behind the activities they undertake in the classroom.

Sometimes learning intentions and success criteria might be quite specific. At other times co-constructing them helps students apply them to their own work. Whilst the learning intention is often the same for all students, the success criteria may be different according to the specific needs of the individual student. An effective way of communicating success criteria to students is through a rubric.

Strategy 2. Engineering effective classroom discussions, activities, and learning tasks that elicit evidence of learning
By using a wide range of effective instructional strategies teachers are able to find out where students are in their learning.

Teachers collect formative assessment information through both formal and informal processes. Examples of formal assessment processes include essays, English journals, science reports and history document studies. Diagnostic tests such as PAT Maths and PAT Reading are also examples of formal processes. They can provide valuable information about a student’s prior and current learning. Assessment tools such as the NAPLAN Toolkit and Improve can add to a teacher’s repertoire.
An example of an informal assessment process is classroom questioning. This involves asking good questions – questions that elicit evidence of the student’s thinking and understanding. Whilst these sorts of questions are not always easy to generate, they can provide teachers with significant insight into what a student has understood or misunderstood and the teaching that needs to follow.

By encouraging all students to be involved in answering the questions with techniques such as ‘no hands up’, ‘wait time’ and ‘think, pair, share’, the teacher actively engages all students in the learning process and is able to find out where students are in their learning. Teachers might also ask students to compose their own questions.

Other examples of informal assessment processes are mind maps, concept maps, KWL (‘What I Know’, ‘What I Want to Know’ and ‘What I Learned’) charts, learning logs, surveys and blogs.

**Strategy 3. Providing feedback that moves learning forward**

Regular feedback promotes further learning. It should be accompanied with opportunities for students to reflect on their own learning and plan their own future learning goals within the scope of the curriculum.

Effective feedback equips students with an appreciation of what is expected of them and how they can move forward with their learning. It is not just a dialogue between the teacher and the individual students but can involve groups of students or classes through discussion, clarification and collective negotiation.

When feedback and assessment emphasise progress towards the intended learning goals, students are motivated to keep learning. Feedback is also an opportunity for teachers to reflect on student learning and to consider ways to adjust instruction to meet student needs. Feedback that is specific, timely, respectful and constructive will enhance student performance.

Research has shown that feedback in the form of ratings and marks, or given as rewards, has little effect on student learning. Such feedback encourages comparisons between students rather than allowing individual students to reflect on their own performance and look for ways to improve.

Feedback by ratings or marks puts the emphasis on ‘ability’ rather than effort. When feedback focuses on what needs to be done in order to improve, it draws attention to effort and reinforces the belief that all can improve with effort and support.

A culture of success is created when the focus is building on a previous performance, rather than comparing grades or marks.

Rubrics can be a useful way of providing feedback to students about their areas of strength and weakness in completing a particular assessment task such as an essay, practical report or drama performance.

**Strategy 4. Activating learners as instructional resources for one another (Peer assessment)**

Student judgments about their own learning and the learning of their peers can provide valuable evidence of student progress for their teacher. Peer assessment can be effective both in terms of product (for example a culminating performance) and process (for example a group work task).

Students have proven to be very astute judges of their own contributions and the contributions of their peers to group work. Equally there is evidence to suggest that developing reflection, resourcefulness and resilience in students through peer assessment raises overall standards and improves individual achievement.

Peer assessment can activate learners as a resource for each other. It should be used to help the individual being assessed to improve their work.

**Strategy 5. Activating learners as owners of their own learning. (Self-assessment)**

When students are given strategies to be evaluative thinkers, it helps them to identify their strengths and weaknesses and to set goals for further learning. It helps them answer questions like, ‘What am I good at?’, ‘What do I need to work on?’ and ‘What should I do next?’

Students who take an active role in their own learning are more likely to improve. Strategies such as ‘traffic lights’, ‘coloured cups’, ‘learning portfolios’ and ‘logs’ encourage students to make decisions about where they are in their learning and identify the support they need (Wiliam 2011).

The more effectively students are able to manage their own learning, the better they learn. Teachers should guide students to become self-regulated learners.

“As one student said to the teacher when given a mark of 4 out of 10 for a piece of work: “How is that going to help me get better?” ” (Black et al. 2003)
Practical examples

**Modelling good work to illustrate success criteria**
A science teacher gives students three anonymous examples of a practical report from students in a previous year. They ask them to identify good or bad aspects of each before they write their own report.

Often high performing students already know what good work looks like, so this gives others an opportunity to have the same information.

Students are much better at spotting mistakes in other people’s work than their own, and once they spot them, they are much less likely to make them in their own work. (Strategy 1)

**Thumbs up or down to quickly assess student understanding**
A teacher writes a sentence on the board and asks students to punctuate it as a group. After various students add punctuation, the class is asked to give thumbs up or thumbs down. The teacher is quickly able to assess which students are able to correctly punctuate a sentence. (Strategy 2)

**Asking good questions to elicit evidence of learning**
Instead of asking their class, ‘Who do you think was responsible for World War III?’ a history teacher says to them, ‘I think Russia was responsible for WWII – what do you think?’ This requires greater engagement from the students by asking them to provide reasons for their decisions. The teacher is able to make judgements about the quality of the discussion and the individual student responses. (Strategy 2)

**Using data to identify weaknesses**
A Year 8 English teacher has analysed NAPLAN data for the students in their class. The data identified grammar and punctuation as areas of weakness. Using Improve teachers create their own tests which focus on areas of specific weakness. They deliver the tests to the class online. By analysing the data they have a better idea of how to target support for the students who need it most. (Strategies 2 and 3)

**Encouraging students to identify their own errors**
Instead of just ticking the correct and incorrect answers, a mathematics teacher challenges a student by saying:

‘Five of your answers are wrong. Tell me which ones you think they are and what you did wrong’. (Strategies 3 and 5)

**Focussing on success criteria**
In a Prep class the teacher is focusing on sequencing of ideas. The learning intention is named up to the students as, ‘We are learning to order stories’. The success criteria are discussed with the students and written as, ‘We will know we have been successful if the pictures are in the same order as the story we read.’

The students are asked to cut up, order and then glue pictures of a story onto a piece of paper. The teacher notices that whilst John is having trouble with the scissors, he has cut up all the pictures. The teacher responds by saying, ‘Well done, I notice you have got the first picture in place. Now what happened next in the story?’ By focusing their comments on the success criteria rather than skill with using scissors, the student is getting direct and specific feedback about their learning. (Strategy 3)
Provisioning feedback to move learning forward

It is the beginning of second term. In a Year 2 class the teacher is doing a running record with a student to assess their reading progress. Before the student begins reading, the teacher explains the reason they are doing the assessment is that it is part of the school program at this time of the year.

After the student has finished reading, the teacher outlines the sorts of reading behaviours the student is now able to do saying, ‘You are doing really well at working out what the next word might be.’ The teacher also makes a comment about the level the student has achieved compared to their previous reading assessment saying, ‘You are now on level 24 and that is a change of 3 levels since last time.’

The teacher makes suggestions for future focus and next steps saying, ‘It would be good to make sure you pause when you see a full-stop.’ The teacher asks the student how this assessment matches up with their own assessment of their performance. (Strategy 3)

Working with peers to match feedback to work

In a Year 7 science class the students were asked to write a persuasive text about environmental issues.

As the students had been working on persuasive writing in English, the learning intentions for this work focused on science understandings about the effects of pollution on the environment. Students were encouraged to use devices to persuade an audience. The success criteria were given to the students so they had a clear idea of the expected quality of writing and the features to be included.

After completing their first drafts, the teacher wrote comments on strips of paper. The teacher returned the writing to the students in small groups with the comments and asked the students to match the comments with the piece of writing. This ensured the students read their feedback and in the same lesson students worked on their persuasive writing to make the necessary improvements. (Strategies 3, 4, 5)

Creating a data wall to visualise student progress

Middle school teachers in a district high school decide to create a data wall to help them visualise student progress across a range of subjects. They find a confidential location near the staffroom. It is a room where they plan collaboratively and are able to discuss student progress freely. A ‘sticky’ is placed on the wall for each student. The ‘Sticky’ has the student’s name, a photo and space to record assessments.

Using group level NAPLAN data they identify written communication as an area of need. They establish learning goals, assessment tasks and learning sequences for each subject by reference to the Australian Curriculum literacy continua and learning area statements.

Once the students have completed their writing tasks, teachers place coloured dots representing achievement ‘at’, ‘below’ and ‘above’ the achievement standard. Teachers are also able to record comments on the sticky under the headings ‘problem’, ‘analysis’, ‘cause’ and ‘solution’. The data wall helps them to visualise where students are in their learning and acts as a springboard for discussion about how to move them forward. (Strategy 3)
Examples of online resources

Two online resources which can support teachers to make formative assessment judgements are the NAPLAN Toolkit and Improve. The NAPLAN Toolkit can be especially useful for pre-assessment. It allows teachers to analyse data for their class or year level and provides raw scores, percentile rankings and information about where students are in relation to the national minimum standard. Improve can be used at any stage of the learning cycle to diagnose issues and monitor student learning.

NAPLAN Toolkit

The NAPLAN Toolkit: [https://naplan.education.tas.gov.au/] provides reports which allow teachers and school leaders to review NAPLAN results since 2010 for their students. Teachers can use this information to judge where students are in their learning and plan future learning programs.

The information is provided in three separate reports. The domains included are Grammar and Punctuation, Numeracy, Persuasive Writing (2011 and 2012 only), Reading and Spelling.

The reports are:
1. Student Results by Domain
2. Domain Results by Question
3. Writing – Rubric Analysis

The toolkit includes links to actual question wording and relevant teaching strategies for each item.

The Student Results by Domain report provides capacity for individual student performances to be examined with a view to informing the development of personalised learning plans (PLPs).

The percentages correct data supports teachers to identify areas of the curriculum requiring future focus or extension for the selected group of students.

The teaching strategies provide resources to support educational planning processes.

Improve

Improve: [http://www.improve.edu.au/] is an online formative assessment tool developed by Education Services Australia (ESA). It gives teachers access to numeracy, literacy and science test items that are digitally linked to relevant curriculum and learning resources. Teachers can construct a test or quiz that focusses on a specific skill or area of understanding. Tests are completed online and marked automatically.

Reports can be generated at both an individual or class level. This allows teachers to capture evidence of a student’s understanding and identify misconceptions. The data can be analysed to inform learning programs. It includes a facility that asks students to rate how confident they feel about an answer being correct, and to direct them to resources based on the results. By using this facility teachers can decide whether their students know the answers or are just guessing.
Using a ‘Bump it up Wall’
Teachers in a primary school use a ‘Bump it up Wall’ to help their students know what ‘better’ looks like. The wall empowers them to set personal goals for achievement by enabling learners to see where they are in their learning and providing feedback that will take their learning forward. Students can contribute to their own learning as they recognise where they can make improvement by reference to the work samples on the ‘Bump it up Wall’. The teachers and students work collaboratively to create the ‘Wall’. It provides a forum for discussion and a mechanism for student peer and self-assessment. It can also give students a better understanding of the purpose and intended outcomes of a task and help them decide on a way forward with their learning (Strategy 3).

Questions for reflection

1. What kinds of formative assessment strategies do I use in my classroom?
2. What diagnostic testing do I currently use and what use do I make of the data?
3. How do I know if my students understand the lesson?
4. How do I gain insight into levels of student engagement?
5. How do I gain insight into levels of student understanding?
6. What feedback should I give students and to what extent is feedback tied to learning outcomes and success criteria?
7. Is feedback specific, timely and focussed on student learning?
8. How does my feedback help my students monitor their own learning?
9. What adjustments should I make to my instruction?
10. How do I encourage the students to learn with and from each other?
ENSURING CONSISTENCY OF TEACHER JUDGEMENT

Our Values
Equity: We all have the right to challenging and engaging learning opportunities in appropriate settings. (Learners First 2014/17)

Key message
Make consistent and comparable judgments is highlighted in the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers – Tasmania (Standard 5.3). It is important for schools to have processes in place that allow teachers to share student work and discuss their assessment judgements.

This is important because it helps to ensure that assessment is consistent between teachers and across schools.

Effective leaders:
• Provide opportunities for moderation to occur in their school.
• Allocate time in staff meetings for in-school moderation.
• Allow for teacher release in their timetables.
• Provide opportunities for moderation through professional development.
• Ensure that teachers participate effectively in state wide moderation days.

Good teachers:
• Make consistent evidence based judgments about the quality of student work.
• Find time to engage in conversations with their peers about student work.
• Value sharing ideas based on agreed content and assessment processes.
• Work together to reach agreement about assessment judgements.
• Engage fully within structured moderation process in their school and network.
• Use quality moderation to inform their reporting to parents.

Explanation
Why is consistency important?
When teachers interpret and assess in consistent ways, community confidence in education is maintained. Students and their families can be sure that assessment ratings are awarded using common understandings within and across schools.

Earl, 2004 (cited in Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat 2007) comments on the value of teachers working together, noting, “When teachers work together to consider the work students have produced, or listen to their presentations or analyse their electronic projects and so on, they bring the collective wisdom of all the people in the group to the exercise. More eyes (and consequently more brains) result in more reliable determinations of what students understand”.

Moderation processes where teachers work together and discuss assessment tasks and student work samples are a key to supporting consistent teacher judgement.

Why moderation?
There are two broad purposes of moderation:
• To build shared understanding of expected student learning pathways, know where students are in their learning and plan for future student learning (aligned with formative assessment).
• To build consistent judgements of student performance against agreed standards for reporting purposes (aligned to summative assessment).

It is important that schools plan for both ongoing, learning-focused moderation and moderation for reporting purposes. Moderation should be seen as much more than a ‘one-off’ event in the school year.

The benefits of collaborative moderation
Ongoing moderation activities broaden teacher access to quality tasks and effective teaching approaches because they are engaging in conversations about practice and sharing examples of student work – either individual tasks or portfolios that contain a range of evidence.

Collaborative moderation also helps teachers determine their own professional learning needs as they are encouraged to reflect on their learning from the moderation process and to ask the question, ‘What do I need to learn in order to help my students improve?’.
Practical examples

**Sharing student evidence**
Kindergarten teachers across a network meet once a term to moderate. Each term they focus on a different outcome from the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia. In Term 2 their focus is connectedness. They share video and photographic evidence of student demonstrations of building positive relations with others. This informs summative mid-year reporting and future planning for their students.

**Meeting regularly to plan learning experiences**
Year 2 teachers from a large primary school meet on a regular basis to moderate student writing and plan their next teaching focus. They use First Steps Writing to inform them of the fine grain assessments they need to inform the next set of learning experiences they will deliver to students.

**Using a protocol to discuss student work**
A group of Year 6 teachers give their students the same geography task. They meet to share and discuss one student work sample each teacher selects. They use a protocol to discuss students’ work in which the teachers take turns to relate how teaching and learning was designed and scaffolded in order to enable students to complete the task. The teachers explain why they selected the particular work sample. The teachers then take ten minutes to reflect on student work samples in relation to the Year 6 geography achievement standard. The teachers make suggestions on feedback to the student that may also provide the basis of a comment for reporting to parents on progress in geography.

**Using a common assessment task**
Teachers of Year 8 mathematics from five schools across a network meet to design a common task based on the Year 8 achievement standard and the appropriate content descriptors and proficiencies. They design the final assessment task and a rubric which pays close attention to a demonstration of problem solving and reasoning proficiencies.

They teach a sequence of work which provides multiple opportunities for students to engage with the key concepts being taught and then use the written assessment task for summative assessment purposes. They contact each other via Lync to share work samples and discuss the evidence provided in order to make consistent judgements about the levels of student understanding and reasoning demonstrated.

**Using portfolios to guide reporting and future planning**
The health and physical education staff in one high school meets to share portfolios of student work prior to mid-year reporting. They share key evidence against the year level achievement standard for Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education (HPE). They focus their discussions on the implications of the evidence for reporting and for their planning for Terms 3 and 4. As a staff they decide that they need to focus more on collecting a balanced range of evidence including oral presentations and videos of movement skills.

**A whole school approach to assessing**
The Year 9 and 10 teachers in a district high school work together to develop a plan for assessment across each learning area. They focus on ways to ensure a range of assessment types and conditions and to ensure that assessments are valid and equitable.
Moderating student work

Moderation processes help to ensure that assessments are appropriate, reliable and consistent between teachers. Moderation is most successful when it:

- involves groups of teachers meeting together regularly
- encourages open and transparent communication among teachers
- provides constructive feedback and professional support
- is part of what we do as school or networks of schools.

Moderation is a more powerful process when it is conducted across a whole year group or subject area rather than with individual teachers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan – don’t leave things to chance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Plan for moderation processes in your school and across schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Analyse student level, class level, school-based and national data to determine areas of inconsistency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Build moderation into your teaching program; for example, make time for discussions with other teachers, use staff meeting time, develop mechanisms such as data walls.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prepare – decide on appropriate assessment tasks to use for moderation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Examine the achievement standards presented in the relevant curriculum document.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Design an assessment task making sure that it:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- is aligned to the achievement standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>- will provide valid evidence against these standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>- allows students to display evidence across the full range of achievement</td>
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<tr>
<td>- is authentic and fits within the context of normal student learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>- can be administered successfully by teachers in the time available.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Prepare simple guidelines that include assessment tools such as criteria, rubrics and marking keys for the teachers administering the task.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliver – administer the task and form an initial assessment judgement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Scaffold learning, so that students have the knowledge and skills necessary to complete the task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Administer the assessment task following the guidelines that have been prepared.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- As individuals, form an initial assessment judgement using the assessment tools that have been provided.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moderate – collectively review assessment judgements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Agree on a protocol to use for this process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Share your student work samples with the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Arrive at an agreed position about the selected work samples.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Adjust your own assessment judgements as necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Agree on what would move particular work samples to a higher level.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reflect – adjust your teaching program and evaluate the process</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Revisit the appropriate achievement standards and content descriptors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Adjust your teaching and assessment program on the basis of the group feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Evaluate the process and plan for additional moderation activities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example of a protocol for sharing student work

Using a protocol to focus on evidence in student work samples

Why use a protocol?
It gives all group members the opportunity to participate and the process is kept to a predetermined time limit.

Purpose
- Determine what students know and can do based on specific pieces of work.
- Analyse student learning in relation to achievement standards.
- Consider whether assessment tasks are designed to produce the desired range of evidence.
- Provide suggestions for improving instruction.

Time – 65 mins, but can be adjusted to suit different purposes.

Group size – Groups of 5 to 8 seem to be most effective, but this can vary.

Complex work samples – If work samples are particularly complex or involve extensive reading or viewing, they should be made available to participants beforehand.

Roles
Presenter – The teacher who brings copies of a student work sample, the associated assessment task and any rubrics used, and describes the context in which the task was given. Student names should be removed.

Facilitator – The facilitator leads discussion within the group. They are the person who monitors the time, keeps the group on task, and ensures that the group asks clarifying questions and observes the norms.

(Protocol continues over page)
Example of a protocol for sharing student work (continued from previous page)

Using a protocol to focus on evidence in student work samples

**Procedure**

1. **Introduction** (5 mins) – Teachers briefly introduce themselves. Facilitator introduces the protocol, including the purpose and norms.

2. **Teacher presentation** (10 mins) – Presenter describes the context in which the student work was completed and the achievement standard that it relates to. They share the student work sample, assessment task and any rubrics used.

3. **Clarifying questions** (5 mins) – Facilitator goes around the group, inviting each participant to ask clarifying questions of the presenter. The facilitator intervenes if they judge that a question goes beyond ‘clarifying’.

4. **Reading/viewing** (5 mins) – Teachers examine the materials individually, making notes about the evidence that they see and that the work is indicative of a particular rating (A-E if using the Australian Curriculum).

5. **Further clarifying questions** (5 mins) – Teachers have the opportunity to ask urgent clarifying questions that have arisen from their reading.

6. **Identifying evidence** (15 mins) – The facilitator goes around the group, asking each teacher to share the assessment evidence they saw. Teachers can also share evidence they thought was missing. If the group is looking at a single work sample rather than a portfolio, the facilitator acknowledges that a student would not normally be assigned a summative rating on the basis of one sample.

7. **Making an on-balance judgement** (5 mins) – The facilitator goes around the group and asks each teacher for the rating that they gave the work sample. There is no discussion at this stage. Then the group comes to a consensus decision. The group also identifies the additional evidence they want to see to assign a higher rating.

8. **Reflection on the task** (10 mins) – The group reflects on the assessment task. They suggest how it might be modified to provide better evidence against the achievement standard. For example, they might consider:
   a. Does this task help students show evidence for different ratings against the targeted standard?
   b. What are the strengths of this task?
   c. How might the task be strengthened further and aligned more closely with the achievement standard?

The presenter has an opportunity to respond to these comments if they wish.

9. **Where to next for this student** (5 mins) – The group identifies the future teaching focus that would allow the student to work toward a higher rating.

10. **Close** – the facilitator thanks the presenter and the participants.
Ensuring consistency of teacher judgement

Questions for reflection

1. Are we planning at a school and network level for moderation as an ongoing process?
2. Have our school moderation processes been recorded and how are we using them to maintain a consistent approach?
3. What actions do I take as result of moderation processes? How do I set new goals for myself and my students? What evidence will show that I have met my new goals?
4. How do we work with schools in our network to extend our moderation processes further? How would we ensure consistent judgements across our schools?
5. Does my school have mechanisms in place for sharing assessment evidence across and between schools?
6. As a school, do we use EPS statistical moderation reports to help us moderate our summative assessments?
7. How do we use the ACARA work sample portfolios to ensure consistency of judgement?
8. How do we use the AITSL professional standards for teachers to inform our practice?
9. How do we ensure the common assessments tasks we design for moderation purposes allow for the full range of achievement?
SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

Our Values
Respect: Positive and effective interactions with each other and with our environment are conducted on the basis of responsibility, integrity and accountability. (Learners First 2014/17)

Key message
Summative assessments draw an inference about an individual’s or a group’s current level of attainment against established standards using evidence of student learning. Reporting is the process of communicating information about student learning—including a student’s level of attainment and the progress they have made to a range of stakeholders especially parents.

The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers – Tasmania (Standard 5.4) state that proficient teachers “report clearly, accurately and respectfully to students and parents/carers about student achievement, making use of accurate and reliable records”.

Summative assessment:
• Provides a snapshot of achievement at a point in time.
• Is commonly made for a purpose such as reporting to parents or accreditation.
• Involves on-balanced judgement based on evidence of student learning collected over time.

Reporting to parents:
• Includes written reports and face-to-face meetings.
• Should be clear, concise and written using plain English.
• Will often include summative assessment judgements.

Effective leaders provide time in staff meetings to discuss and develop consistent approaches to reporting.

Good teachers use the information they gather for formative purposes to contribute to a fair summative report on each student.

Explanation
Summative assessment
Summative assessment, or assessment of learning, is assessment that provides a picture of student learning up to a particular point in time, such as the end of a unit of work or reporting period. Its purpose is to give an indication of a student’s level of achievement.

Arriving at a summative assessment involves making an on-balance judgement about student learning. On-balance judgements are professional decisions made by teachers about each student’s overall progress.

Summative assessment judgements should be based on the evidence collected from a range of formative assessment activities over time. These activities need to align closely with the relevant curriculum outcomes or standards and allow students to demonstrate their understanding in a variety of ways.

To be fair and accurate summative assessment should be based on:
• Both formal assessment tasks and informal observations.
• Tasks with ‘low floors and high ceilings’ that allow for the full range of achievement including students who find learning difficult and students who are gifted or highly able.
• Targeted evidence collected over the whole learning sequence, course or reporting period.

Maintaining an ongoing record of student progress will help teachers to make an informed and accurate judgement. In-school and cross school moderation processes are important to ensure consistency of summative judgements.

In the primary and secondary sectors, summative assessments are most commonly made to support mid-year and end-of-year reporting to parents. In the senior secondary sector they are also made at the end of a course for accreditation purposes.
**Reporting**

School reports are an essential element in the partnership between teachers, schools, students and parents in all the years of schooling from Kindergarten to Year 12.

Reports should be easy to read and provide useful information to parents about their child’s progress. They will often, but not always, include a summative assessment rating. In addition to written reports, face-to-face meetings with parents are crucial for student learning.

In Kindergarten, parents will receive feedback about their child’s progress through informal conversations, formal parent teacher meetings and a full written report or “Celebration of Learning” at the end of the year.

Parents of children from Prep to Year 10 will receive a progress report in Term 1, a full report on their child’s achievement at mid-year and a summary report at the end of the year. In addition to written comments, the reports at both mid-year and end-of-year will provide summative assessments. Where summative assessments are reported for Australian Curriculum subjects:

- From Prep to Year 2 achievement will be reported using the written descriptor.
- For Years 3–10, achievement will be reported using the letter ratings A–E and a written descriptor.

In Years 11 and 12, students receive a written progress report midway through Term 2. In mid Term 3 they receive both written comments and a rating against each of the relevant course standards. Criteria or competencies are rated in terms of achievement for most courses. Summative assessment for all types of courses is made at the end of the teaching year and communicated to students by the Tasmanian Qualifications Authority (TQA) in December.

From Prep to Year 10, A–E assessments are summative assessments made for the purpose of reporting. They are made against the achievement standard as a whole and intended to be used for reporting to parents. Teachers should avoid using them on individual pieces of work where only some parts of the achievement standard will be assessed. In Years 11 and 12, however, teachers will often use letter ratings including A, B, C and D on major pieces of work to indicate achievement against subject criteria.

**Writing good reports**

The reports teachers write for parents should be:

- Fair, inclusive and manageable.
- Appropriate to the learner’s age, stage of development and individual circumstances.
- Engaging and easy to read.

Studies show that parents seek answers to three main questions when they read reports:

1. How is my child going?
   - Do they have the right attitude?
   - Are they trying hard enough?
   - Is their behaviour a matter for concern?
   - What progress are they making in ‘subject’ areas?
   - What are their strengths and weaknesses?
2. Is everything OK or should I be concerned?
   - How are they going compared to others of the same age?
   - Are they doing their best? (Are there any destructive influences?)
3. How can my child learn better?
   - What will the school do?
   - How can I help?
   - What can my child do?

A good report must convey complex information about the learner’s progress and subtle judgements in a few well-chosen words.

Teachers should write in a way that is clear, precise and meaningful. The language should be free of jargon and vague abstractions. It should be the language of common, everyday understanding.

Parents want honesty in reporting but they also value balance between critical and constructive comments.
Celebration of learning for a kindergarten student

A Kindergarten teacher structures their program using — *The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*. They maintain anecdotal records and take photos during the year. Their end-of-year report is a celebration of learning and provides information to parents about their child’s progress against the five outcomes of the framework. They include some of the photos they have collected in the report as supporting evidence.

Assembling portfolios to inform reporting

A Year 6 teacher organises their learning program so that the students keep their work in a portfolio. This is not just an accumulation of all the tasks the student has completed in class. Students select the work they add to the portfolio with guidance from the teacher to show what they learned. The teacher evaluates the portfolios before they begin their reports to inform comments and A–E assessments. The teacher uses the portfolio during the parent teacher conference.

Collecting information for an A–E report

A Year 8 English teacher plans their teaching and learning program term by term so that students can be exposed to the whole of the curriculum. Their planning begins by establishing learning outcomes based on the achievement standard. It includes assessment tasks that will allow students to show what they can do. Before each reporting period they finalise an A–E assessment using the records they have kept and their knowledge of the students in their class. Each report includes a short succinct comment which focuses on the student’s strengths and areas for future focus.

Providing an explicit future focus in mid-year reports

Teachers in a primary school map out a scope and sequence using the *Australian Curriculum* for mathematics. They identify a concept such as understanding fractions, and examine the curriculum achievement standards and content descriptions to analyse what comes before and what comes after. In Term 2 the teachers are able to assess student progress more accurately for the mid-year report. They are also able to identify a future focus for improving understanding of fractions. This is communicated to students and their parents in the report they write.

Face to face interviews with parents

A high school recognises the importance of providing direct feedback to parents. They find the traditional parent teacher night is not as well attended as it has been in the past. They decide to change the format so that parents are able to book sessions with teachers during a parent week. Parents have greater flexibility with evenings and times. They are also offered the option of a phone interview as a last resort. They purchase software that allows parents to book interviews online at a time that suits both the parent and the teacher.

Making mark books available to students and parents

The English teachers in a regional high school develop a common system for keeping records of student progress. These mark books allow for anecdotal comments as well as the more traditional ways of recording progress. A feature of these mark books is that each student is allocated their own page. The teachers share the page with their students so that it becomes part of the feedback mechanism. They also share it with parents at face to face interviews and informal meetings. A version of the mark book has been developed in Onenote.
A Learning Story template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Learning Story</th>
<th>Photos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child’s or group of children’s name/s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Story (Include observations of play/activity; e.g., action, language, interactions, body language, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Connections to *The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*  
(What outcomes are evident? Does the learning story show evidence of belonging, being or becoming?) | |
| Opportunities and Possibilities  
(How will the learning be extended, what other play experiences will be set up?) | |
**Example of a learning story**

The end of year Celebration of Learning report celebrates the learning journey of Kindergarten students. Teachers will report against the 5 learning outcomes from the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia. The Celebration of Learning may contain learning stories, written comments, annotated photos or work samples.

**Bruce Conquers the Climbing Wall**

(A Learning Story Example)

Bruce Blogg

19/1/16

**Outcome 3:**

Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

**The Story**

Over the past few days Bruce has been watching other children use the chain to climb up the climbing wall but he has been reluctant to have a go himself. Today Bruce waited until the other children had moved away from the climbing equipment and then he grabbed the chain and started to slowly climb. As he climbed Bruce kept looking down to make sure his feet were going into the gaps between the planks of wood. When he got to the top he had a big smile on his face and called out to his friends. Bruce repeated his climbing experience many times getting a little faster each time.

**Opportunities and Possibilities**

Bruce has shown he can try new things in a positive way. His sense of confidence is growing and he showed pleasure in his achievement of climbing the wall by sharing it with others. He was able to take responsibility for setting himself a realistic challenge.

Bruce will be encouraged to continue to take responsibility for setting himself new challenges and expanding his play to include other climbing experiences.
These report samples provide guidance about the style of report recommended for high needs, secondary, primary and early childhood education students. Comments use parent friendly but educationally informative language. A future focus for student learning is provided either in the comment or as a separate section.

Example of a report for student with an IEP

**JASON STUDENT**

Year 7

End of Year 2013

**Sample Support School**

Home Group Teacher/s: James Teacher, Jane Person

### Australian Curriculum English

Jason always arrives each morning smiling and relaxed. He follows class routines by placing his bag in his locker and book into his basket. He greets staff with a ‘hi’ and will turn his back to be unfastened from his harness. He then proceeds to the toilet often key word signing ‘toilet’ without prompts and returns to check his timetable coactively with an adult. Jason will look through his timetable nodding his approval at preferred activities and taking off visuals for tasks he prefers not to do. Jason is beginning to vocalise his needs and wants more readily and will key word sign, such as ‘drink’ or proceed to the tap himself to pour a drink. Jason responds to directions and conversations by nodding his head and showing pleasure by smiling. He uses ‘Jason words’ to communicate his likes, such as ‘the man!’ for Leo Sayer and ‘pool’ for swimming. Jason participates enthusiastically in shared reading and will turn the pages of a book. He matches words and pictures from the ‘Book of the Week’ and ‘writes’ (scribbles) about pictures from a text or himself during school based activities. Jason has begun to enjoy circle time, responding with a ‘mac switch’ for greetings and locating his name and picture on the white board. Jason rearranges class mates’ names to their original position at the conclusion of ‘where is’.

### Australian Curriculum Mathematics

Jason has participated in Mathematics by responding to change in everyday events, for example, identifying preferred activities on his personal timetable and placing the visual symbol in the ‘current activity’ position. Jason understands the key word sign for ‘finish’ and will move onto the next activity with verbal, visual and physical prompts. Jason enjoys listening to and watching a ‘Days of the Week’ song by A.J Jenkins (YouTube) and will move happily from one activity to the next if the song is sung by a staff member. Jason matches ‘days of the week’ words and places them in sequence as set out on his activity sheet. Jason is able to sort objects familiar to others and can follow simple pattern directions, for example, selecting instruments during music.

### Australian Curriculum Science

This year in Science, we have completed four units from Primary Connections linking with the Australian Curriculum. We focused on plants, geology and soil, classifying living things and examining natural and processed materials. We have discovered how scientists work to test ideas, observe events and present our findings. Jason has enjoyed using scientific equipment such as digital microscope and thermometer as well as measuring equipment. We have engaged with a variety of materials such as recycled paper making and we have also grown our own plants and observed a selection of pond insects. Jason has been very interested in the practical activities, and has often been willing to complete the follow up learning tasks associated with each activity.

### Arts

During 2012, the students in Green class have been involved in Drama sessions which have primarily been focussed on developing communication skills, teamwork and listening skills through activities that enhance both the imagination and sense of humour. These activities have included parachute games, role play, microphone exploration, listening games, feelings games, story development, dress ups and character creation. Jason is new to Drama this year. As Jason is a very social student who enjoys having a good laugh, he very quickly took to Drama sessions! Unfortunately, due to Drama clashing with the allocated time for Jason to have his lunch, he has had limited access to Drama sessions this year. He is able to independently indicate choice of character from up to 8 pictographs. Jason enjoys parachute games, though is not always willing to finish his turn. He can visually track both puppets and people dressed in costumes when they move around the room. Jason loves interacting with puppets, particularly the bird puppet that eats his fingers and shoes! This is a highly motivating activity for him.
GOOD TEACHING: Quality Assessment Practices – Guiding Learning

Example of an Australian Curriculum mid-year report

SARAH STUDENT
Sample High School
Home Group Teacher/s: James Teacher
Mid-Year 2014

Australian Curriculum English - Julie Teacher

Sarah is performing above the standard expected for Year 9.

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
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<td>Good</td>
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</table>

Sarah is a keen reader and enjoys opportunities to critique fiction and non-fiction texts. Sarah’s research work on Shakespeare was well planned and well written. Her critical essay showed that she was able to develop and sustain an argument about the way in which the family feud contributes to the tragic death of Romeo and Juliet.

Sarah’s creative writing has shown improvement and she uses language to create an effect. Her short story had a clear plot line and interesting characters. Suspense was sustained throughout.

When rushed, Sarah tends to make unnecessary mistakes so needs to work on her time management skills. Sarah is confident when speaking to an audience and she listens attentively to others. A pleasing result Sarah.

Future Focus
Sarah should work on her time management skills especially when proofreading.

Parent/Teacher: Invited □ Required □

Australian Curriculum Mathematics - Kate Teacher

Sarah is performing at the standard expected for Year 9.

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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sarah has made good progress in Mathematics. She can collect data and record it accurately in a table. Sarah can work out mean, median and mode. Her data analysis skills are well developed and she is able to interpret graphs.

Sarah’s work on simple interest was sound, but she found some of the trigonometry work to be difficult at first. It was pleasing to note that she persevered with her assignment and was able to complete it successfully. Once guided in the right direction, Sarah was able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of different solutions and provide reasons for her answers, which were almost all correct.

Future Focus
Sarah’s work is of a pleasing standard and will continue to develop with greater self-confidence. She needs to concentrate on problem solving using a range of strategies.

Parent/Teacher: Invited □ Required □
Example of an *Australian Curriculum* mid-year report

**Australian Curriculum English**

**C** Peter is performing at the standard expected for Year 5.

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<th>Needs Attention</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
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<td>Effort</td>
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Peter has improved in English. Peter is a keen reader of imaginative fiction and he understands what he reads. I would like him to read more non-fiction books. He is interested in animals and machinery, for instance, and I have encouraged him to read books on these subjects.

Peter is imaginative and he writes well. His story, ‘The Creature from Another Planet’ was very good, although he could have given more thought to the ending. It was good to see Peter working with words to provide better descriptions of his characters. Peter always participates in class discussions, and can be an enthusiastic group member with interesting things to say.

Peter has been updating his online blog regularly on our student intranet site.

**Future Focus**

Peter needs to improve his planning and editing of written work. Peter should read more non-fiction books to improve his general knowledge.

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**Australian Curriculum Mathematics**

**C** Peter is performing at the standard expected for Year 5.

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Peter has made progress since the beginning of the year. In class we have been working on solving problems using the four operations, exploring and making models of two and three dimensional shapes, and developing fluency with placing decimals and fractions on a number line. We have collected and represented data as part of our Science unit.

Peter found some of the tasks associated with our ‘Cubed House’ project difficult, especially when it came to calculating the construction costs of each house. However, with guidance he found the correct way to finish the task. I am encouraging Peter to ask for help when he gets stuck rather than give up. Once he grasps a concept, Peter can solve most problems he encounters.

**Future Focus**

Peter needs to work on drawing connections between written instructions and practical tasks. I am happy to talk with you about things we can do to help Peter.
Australian Curriculum English
Jessica is performing above the standard expected for Year 2.

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Reading – Jessica is a fluent reader. The expression she uses when she reads demonstrates her understanding of the text. Her comprehension skills are progressing very well.

Writing – Jessica writes with neat, legible handwriting. Her use of punctuation is improving and her spelling is good. Jessica is learning to creatively use language to entertain the reader.

Future Focus
- Extending her ideas and using descriptive language
- Developing her proof reading skills so that she corrects punctuation
- Improving her presentation skills when sharing her work
- Developing her vocabulary and comprehension skills

Australian Curriculum Mathematics
Jessica is performing above the standard expected for Year 2.

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Mathematics – Jessica is able to learn new concepts as they are introduced and is highly motivated to do well in this subject. Jessica has a good understanding of number. Her automatic response work is progressing very well.

Future Focus
- Revising and consolidating place value
- Developing her understanding of fractions
- Recognising the time on digital and analogue clocks
- Problem solving using all four processes (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division)
Questions for reflection

1. How do I use the achievement standard and work sample portfolio for each Australian Curriculum subject I teach when planning and making summative assessments?

2. How do I keep accurate assessment records for each of the students in my class?

3. Are there ways that I can share the information in my record books with my students and their parents?

4. How do I write reports that are concise and use simple language which every parent can understand?

5. How can I include fair and accurate information about the strengths and areas for future focus of the students in my class as I write reports?

6. What are the mechanisms my school uses to report to parents directly through a face to face conference?

7. What are the ways that I include my students as part of the assessment process?

8. How do I develop rubrics that accurately reflect the assessment criteria that I have identified as the learning goals for a unit?

9. What are the methods I use to help parents to understand the assessment information I communicate with them?

10. How do I ensure that my reports are written clearly, accurately and respectfully?

References and further reading


Masters, G 2013, Reforming Educational Assessment: Imperatives, principles and challenges, Australian Council for Educational Research, Camberwell, VIC.


Wiggins, G & McTighe, J 2011, The understanding by design guide to creating high quality units, ASCD, Alexandria, VA.

Wiliam, D 2011, Embedded formative assessment, Solution Tree Press, USA


**DoE Documents**

Learners First 2014/17 Strategy School Support and Expectation 2014

Assessment and Reporting Policy
[Doc ID: TASED-4-1143]

Assessment and Reporting Procedures
[Doc ID: TASED-4-1144]