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Aimline

An aimline on a graph represents the expected rate of growth for a student. It can serve as a visual reminder or reference for comparison when graphing student progress on targeted skills.

Baseline data

Initial collection of data which serves as a basis for comparison and is often used for evaluating the impact of a teaching intervention.

Common Core Learning Standards

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Initiative is a joint effort by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers. An outcome of this work is a core of learning standards in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. The adoption process requires states to adopt the CCSS and allows up to 15% more standards based on an individual state's needs. This has resulted in the *NYS P-12 Common Core Learning Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy* and the *NYS P-12 Common Core Learning Standards for Mathematics*. The goal is that by 2012-13, classroom instruction will be aligned to the new standards.

Curriculum-based Measurement (CBM)

Direct assessment of student skills which usually involves brief and frequent assessments to measure specific skills that are targets of instruction for the student. CBM is often used in the elementary grades to assess basic skills in reading, math, written expression, and spelling.

Differentiated instruction

An approach to teaching that actively addresses diverse student characteristics in the planning phase as well as the teaching phase.

Dolch sight word list

A list of 220 commonly used English words, compiled in 1948 by Edward William Dolch, who believed children needed to recognize them in order to achieve reading fluency, as many of the words on the list cannot be "sounded out" and must be learned by sight.

Essential Questions

Questions that "lie at the heart" of a subject or curriculum, promote inquiry and produce different plausible responses. See Wiggins and McTighe (2005). *Understanding by design.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Formative assessment

This type of assessment is used to immediately determine whether students have learned what the teacher intended. Formative assessments help instructors identify content that needs to be clarified or re-taught and decide whether learning activities need to be modified. Changes can be made during the class session or before the next session. Formative assessment strategies provide feedback to students, and some tools can be used directly by the student for self-assessment purposes (e.g., rubric).

Full Option Science Systems (FOSS)

Full Option Science Systems is a research-based K-8 science curriculum developed at the Lawrence Hall of Science at the University of California at Berkeley. FOSS is also an ongoing research project with the goal of improving the learning and teaching of science. FOSS emphasizes critical thinking, inquiry, investigation, and analysis.

Individualized Education Program (IEP)

A plan developed by teachers, other school staff, and parents/caregivers to meet the needs of a student who is eligible for special education services and/or programs. Examples of components include the student's strengths, the results of evaluations and assessments, and descriptions of unique needs and goals. The IEP guides the delivery of special education supports and services.

Inquiry-based learning

An instructional style based on the idea that learning may be facilitated by giving students the opportunity to explore an idea or question on their own. To arrive at an answer or to better understand the concept, students often collect and analyze data.

Internal Assessment (IA)

A form of assessment that is implemented by the teacher in an International Baccalaureate program —for example, fieldwork in geography, laboratory work in the sciences, investigations in mathematics, and theory of knowledge essays in history. The IB program also includes External Examinations using formats such as essays, short-response questions, and case-study questions.

International Baccalaureate (IB)

International Baccalaureate is a non-profit educational foundation founded in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1968. The goal is to develop intellectual, personal, emotional and social skills in students. IB programs are found in 141 countries. Three programs are offered: a Primary Years Program, a Middle Years Program, and a Diploma Program. The Diploma Program is a two-year curriculum leading to final examinations. IB describes its qualification as one that is welcomed by leading universities around the world.

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Lesson Study

Also known as Japanese Lesson Study, this is a professional development process used by teachers to systematically examine their practice. This is a collaborative approach which focuses on planning, teaching, observing, critiquing and revising.

Mastery Measurement (MM)

The teacher identifies a sequence of objectives for the student and monitors progress on each of the objectives.

Outcome

A specific goal the teacher has targeted for a student, or students, often stated in terms of an instructional objective.

Portfolio

A purposeful collection that represents a student's work. It may be used as documentation of how the student's work has developed over time and is often evaluated using a rubric. Achievements may be in one or more areas of the curriculum.

Response to Intervention

Use of scientifically based interventions designed to provide early and effective assistance to students who are having learning and/or behavioral difficulties. Interventions are matched to student needs, and there is an emphasis on frequent data collection and analysis. Supplemental intervention is delivered in a multi-tier format, with each tier representing an increasing level of instructional intensity.

Rubric

A tool that describes what learner proficiency looks like. It typically lists the criteria as well as descriptions of different levels of performance in a continuum.

Scaffolding

Structuring a task in a systematic way so that the student is given the proper amount of support to be successful at each step. The level of support is reduced as the student builds the necessary skills.

Science Notebooks

A tool to help students develop and refine their understanding of science. Students are encouraged to use the notebooks as a scientist might. Examples of activities include formulating questions, making predictions, recording data, and communicating findings.

Section 504 Accommodation Plan
Section 504 is a federal law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance. A Section 504 Accommodation Plan outlines instructional supports and accommodations for a student with a disability who may not meet eligibility criteria for an Individualized Education Plan through special education.

Skywriting
The technique of having students use their index finger to create letters in the air. Skywriting can help students gain control over some motor planning that can be applied to writing the letters on paper.

Standardized test
A test that is designed to be given under specific and standard conditions — that is, the same test is given in the same way to all students. The test is designed to obtain a sample of what the student has learned so that results can be compared across test takers. Scoring is completed in a standard predetermined fashion.

Summative assessment
An assessment that is designed to measure the extent of student learning at certain end points (e.g., end of year) relative to content standards.

Voki
An online tool that allows the user to create a personalized speaking avatar (i.e., a graphical representation of the user or of a character). An avatar can then be used in forms of communication such as emails and blogs.

Wiki
A website that includes the collective work of many authors. Can allow a person to edit and comment on the work of others.

Wordle
An online tool for creating "word clouds" from passages of text. The more frequently a word appears in the text, the larger it shows up in the word cloud.

Resources

25 Quick Formative Assessments for a Differentiated Classroom
by Judith Dodge (2009). NY: Scholastic.

> This is a collection of brief flexible assessments to help teachers take a "snapshot of student learning." This resource includes grade-level modifications and student samples.

CAST (Center for Applied Special Technologies)

> CAST is an educational research and development organization which focuses on Universal Design for Learning. UDL "provides a blueprint for creating instructional goals, methods, materials, and assessments that work for everyone"—with an emphasis on flexible approaches that can be customized and adjusted for individual characteristics. All students can benefit from UDL, particularly learners with diverse characteristics (e.g., physical, sensory, and learning differences; those considered gifted). See *http://www.cast.org/index.html.*

Checking for Understanding: Formative Assessment Techniques for Your Classroom
by Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey (2007). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

> The authors maintain a focus on the "student's point of view" in describing approaches that allow teachers to continuously check for understanding. Examples of approaches include varied student response techniques that increase engagement and ideas for integrating projects and performances into daily classroom practice.

Classroom Assessment for Student Learning: Doing It Right - Using It Well (2nd Edition, 2011)
by Jan Chappuis, Rick J. Stiggins, Steve Chappius, and Judith A. Arter. Assessment Training Institute, Pearson.

> Increasing student motivation and learning through improving strategies of classroom assessment is discussed through real-world examples. This work focuses on accurate classroom assessments of all types and their integration into day-to-day classroom activities. Determining clear learning targets, involving students, and communicating results are keys to success.

Data and Assessments. National Education Association.
http://www.nea.org/home/39078.htm

> The characteristics of effective assessment systems are explored including the importance of formative assessments that "provide detailed information about student learning directly and clearly to both students and teachers. These assessments allow for re-teaching and redoing of instructional tasks." Formative assessment is discussed as important in planning and adjusting instruction.

Effective Classroom Assessment: Linking Assessment with Instruction
by Catherine Garrison, Dennis Chandler and Michael Ehringhaus (2009).
Westerville, OH: National Middle School Association and Measured Progress.

Translating standards into meaningful targets is one of the challenges addressed in this resource. The standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment cycle is described. Authors address the importance of gathering information from multiple sources and understanding the nature of the feedback loop.

Formative Assessment Strategies for Every Classroom: An ASCD Action Tool
(2nd Edition, 2010) by Susan M. Brookhart. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

The formative assessment process and tools in this guide can be used with every grade level and subject. Ideas for both individual assessment as well as group work assessment are included. Tips on how to provide useful feedback to students are offered.

How Classroom Assessments Improve Learning by Thomas R. Guskey (2003). In *Educational Leadership (Using Data to Improve Student Achievement)*. Volume 60, Number 5, pp. 6-11.

Author argues that assessments designed for ranking are generally not effective for helping teachers modify their instruction and respond to students. Focus is on useful assessments, corrective action, and giving students multiple opportunities to succeed.

Ideas on Assessment for EL Students: AccELLerate! *The Quarterly Review of the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition & Language Instruction Educational Programs.* Winter 2011,Volume 3, Issue 2.

This issue emphasizes various factors that should be considered when designing and implementing ELP and content-area assessments. These papers provide a national context for discussing assessments. Examples of topics include insight into how long it takes to reach English proficiency, linguistic accommodation support, and Universal Design (UD) principles in computer-based formats.

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition

See NCELA for a broad range of research and resources in support of an inclusive approach to high quality education for students who are English language learners. *http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/assessment/*

Resources

New York State Teacher Centers Network

The New York State Teacher Centers Network continues to be recognized as an important and effective vehicle for professional development. Teacher Centers have re-tooled their professional development offerings to help teachers make connections among the State Education Department initiatives related to "College and Career Ready Students": Data-driven Instruction, Common Core State Learning Standards, and Teacher/Leader Effectiveness. Learn more about professional development opportunities that integrate classroom-based assessments with the CCLS and teacher evaluation/development requirements at *http://www.nysteachercenters.org/*.

School Tips: Quality Classroom Assessment Techniques. (2011). American Federation of Teachers. *http://www.aft.org/yourwork/tools4teachers/assessments.cfm.*

Quality classroom assessments are described as the best tools to determine what students know, what they need to know and whether they are on track to reach instructional goals. Assessment techniques such as using anecdotal records and asking well-designed questions are described. Communicating with students about specific instructional outcomes is highlighted as well as the importance of specificity when giving feedback.

Science Formative Assessment: 75 Practical Strategies for Linking Assessment, Instruction, and Learning by Page D. Keeley (Editor). (2008). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

This work addresses the different considerations when choosing assessment strategies and explores tools such as concept card mapping, directed paraphrasing, first word-last word, explanation analysis, and justified list. While focused on science, many of the strategies can be used across content areas.

Test Access & Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: Policy and Tools to Guide Decision-Making and Implementation (2006). The University of the State of New York. The State Education Department Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities.

This guide is a necessary component of every NYS teacher's professional library. It "provides policy and guidelines for documenting and implementing testing accommodations for classroom, districtwide and State assessments." Testing accommodations provide "an opportunity for students with disabilities to demonstrate mastery of skills and attainment of knowledge without being limited or unfairly restricted due to the effects of a disability." Examples of accommodations include changing the way in which test items are presented to the student and altering the student's method of responding.