For further conversation about any of these topics:

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Being good at taking standardized tests doesn't qualify students for creative contribution to society or successful citizenship.

Identify the Principles Involved, THEN Gather the Solutions

Example: How do I grade English Language Learners?

Principles/Tenets Involved:

- Teachers must be ethical. They cannot knowingly falsify a score or grade.
- To be useful, grades must be accurate reports of evidence of students' performance against standards.
- Regular report cards report against regular, publicly declared standards/outcomes. They cannot report about irregular standards or anything not publicly declared.
- Any test format that does not create an accurate report of students' degree of evidence of standards must be changed so that it does or replaced by one that does.

(continued)
Identify the Principles Involved, THEN Gather the Solutions

Example: How do I grade English Language Learners?

Principles Involved: (Continued)

- English Language Learners have a right to be assessed accurately.
- Lack of language proficiency does not mean lack of content proficiency.
- Effective teachers are mindful of cultural and experiential bias in assessments and try to minimize their impact.

If teachers act upon these principles, what decisions/behaviors/policies should we see in their assessment and grading procedures?

"Is my purpose to select talent or develop it?…If your purpose as an educator is to select talent, then you must work to maximize the differences among students. In other words, on any measure of learning, you must try to achieve the greatest possible variation in students’ scores…Unfortunately for students, the best means of maximizing differences in learning is poor teaching. Nothing does it better.”

-- Thomas R. Guskey, Education Leadership, ASCD, November 2011, Pages 16-21

"If, on the other hand, your purpose as an educator is to develop talent, then you…clarify what you want students to learn and be able to do. Then you do everything possible to ensure that all students learn those things well. If you succeed, there should be little or no variation in measures of student learning. All students are likely to attain high scores on measures of achievement, and all might receive high grades.

-- Thomas R. Guskey, Education Leadership, ASCD, November 2011, Pages 16-21
It's assessing and grading only in reference to evidence of standard(s), nothing else. If it's listed in the course curriculum, it can be evaluated and included in the final grade. If not, it can be reported, but reported in a separate column on the report card.

It often requires the removal or changing of several conventional grading practices in order to maintain grade integrity.

Grades are short-hand reports of what you know and can do at the end of learning's journey, not the path you took to get there.

Define Each Grade
A:
B:
C:
D:
E or F:
Until school districts move to SBG completely, most create scale equivalents while in transition:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Dscrptr</th>
<th>3.0</th>
<th>4.0</th>
<th>5.0</th>
<th>6.0</th>
<th>100.0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Mastery</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Developing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>No evidence</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E/F</td>
<td>No evidence</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Nobody knows ahead of time how long it takes anyone to learn anything.”

Dr. Yung Tae Kim, “Dr. Tae,” Physics Professor, Skateboarding Champion

Time is a variable, not an absolute.
It’s what students carry forward, not what they demonstrated during the unit of learning, that is most indicative of true proficiency.

We are criterion-referenced, evidenced-based, not norm-referenced in classroom assessment and reporting.

We cannot conflate reports of compliance with evidence of mastery. Grades are reports of learning, not doing.
Grades are:

- Subjective
- Inferential
- Relative

They are a fragile premise on which to base so much function and dysfunction in students' lives.

But we can do something to correct this

"Time to Change the Metaphor:

Grades are NOT compensation.

Grades are communication:

They are an accurate report of what happened.

Fair Isn't Always Equal
This quarter, you've taught:

- Main idea, Theme, Thesis
- Literary Devices used to Evoke Reader Response
- Close Reading
- Annotating Text
- Resurgence in Post-Modernism in current, popular literature
- Cultivating a Writer’s Voice
- From Classic Literature to Film

The student's grade: B

What does this mark tell us about the student's proficiency with each of the topics you've taught?

Unidimensionality – A single score on a test represents a single dimension or trait that has been assessed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Dimension A</th>
<th>Dimension B</th>
<th>Total Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Problem: Most tests use a single score to assess multiple dimensions and traits. The resulting score is often invalid and useless. -- Marzano, CAGTW, page 13
Just because it’s mathematically easy to calculate doesn’t mean it’s pedagogically correct.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fiction</th>
<th>Non-Fiction</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Speaking</th>
<th>Listening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student A</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student B</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student C</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student D</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘Time to Stop Averaging’

1. Society’s definition of normal/“average” changes over time
2. Averaging tells us how a student is doing in relation to others, but we are criterion-referenced in standards-based classrooms.
3. Averaging was invented in statistics to get rid of the influence of any one sample error in experimental design, not how a student is doing in relation to learning goal.
4. Mode and in some cases, median, have higher correlation with outside the classroom testing.
Reflecting on Summarizing:

“I used to think…, but now I think…”

What’s the difference between proficient in the standard/outcome and mastery of the standard/outcome?

What does exceeding the standard mean?

What is Mastery?

“Tim was so learned, that he could name a horse in nine languages; so ignorant, that he bought a cow to ride on.”

Ben Franklin, 1750, Poor Richard's Almanac
The example of what NOT to do:
oral dictation
spelling tests

“The student understands fact versus opinion.”

Identify
Create
Revise
Manipulate

Grade 8: Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. (From the Common Core Standards)

- What is the proper way to cite textual evidence in a written analysis?
- How much textual evidence is needed to support the student’s claims?
- What if the student cites enough evidence but it’s for an incorrect claim?
- What if the student is novel or stylistic in some way – will that be acceptable as long as he fulfills the general criteria?
- How specific does a student need to be in order to demonstrate being explicit?
Is the analysis complete if he just makes the claim and cites evidence without a line or two to tie it all back to the theme?

And what does, “...as well as inferences drawn from the text,” mean? Does it mean students make inferences about the text and back them up with text references or outside-the-text references? Are students supposed to comment on quality of inferences within the text? Are they supposed to make inferences when analyzing the text?

What if they can do it with one piece of text, but not another, or they can do it this week, but not another?

What text formats will we require students to analyze in this manner?

What will constitute, “Exceeds the Standard?”

---

Working Definition of Mastery

(From Wirmeli)

Students have mastered content when they demonstrate a thorough understanding as evidenced by doing something substantive with the content beyond merely echoing it. Anyone can repeat information; it’s the masterful student who can break content into its component pieces, explain it and alternative perspectives regarding it cogently to others, and use it purposefully in new situations.

---

Consider Gradations of Understanding and Performance from Introductory to Sophisticated

Introductory Level Understanding:

Student walks through the classroom door while wearing a heavy coat. Snow is piled on his shoulders, and he exclaims, “Brrrr!” From depiction, we can infer that it is cold outside.

Sophisticated level of understanding:

Ask students to analyze more abstract inferences about government propaganda made by Remarque in his wonderful book, All Quiet on the Western Front.
• Determine the surface area of a cube.
• Determine the surface area of a rectangular prism (a rectangular box)
• Determine the amount of wrapping paper needed for another rectangular box, keeping in mind the need to have regular places of overlapping paper so you can tape down the corners neatly
• Determine the amount of paint needed to paint an entire Chicago skyscraper, if one can of paint covers 46 square feet, and without painting the windows, doorways, or external air vents.

Prompt:
Write a well-crafted essay that provides an accurate overview of what we’ve learned about DNA in our class so far. You may use any resources you wish, but make sure to explain each of the aspects of DNA we’ve discussed.

Student’s Response:
Deoxyribonucleic Acid, or DNA, is the blueprint for who we are. Its structure was discovered by Watson and Crick in 1961. Watson was an American studying in Great Britain. Crick was British (he died last year). DNA is shaped like a twisting ladder. It is made of two nucleotide chains bonded to each other. The poles of the ladder are made of sugar and phosphate but the rungs of the ladder are made of four bases. They are thymine, guanine, and cytosine, and adenine. The amount of adenine is equal to the amount of thymine (A=T). It’s the same with cytosine and guanine (C=G).

The sequence of these bases makes us who we are. We now know how to rearrange the DNA sequences in human embryos to create whatever characteristics we want in new babies – like blue eyes, brown hair, and so on, or even how to remove hereditary diseases, but many people think it’s unethical (playing God) to do this, so we don’t do it. When DNA unzips to bond with other DNA when it reproduces, it sometimes misses the re-zipping order and this causes mutations. In humans, the DNA of one cell would equal 1.7 meters if you laid it out straight. If you laid out all the DNA in all the cells of one human, you could reach the moon 6,000 times!
Conclusions from Sample DNA Essay Grading

The fact that a range of grades occurs among teachers who grade the same product suggests that:

- Assessment can only be done against commonly accepted and clearly understood criteria.
- Grades are relative.
- Teachers have to be knowledgeable in their subject area in order to assess students properly.
- Grades are subjective and can vary from teacher to teacher.
- Grades are not always accurate indicators of mastery.

SIX + 1 Writing Traits Sample Rubric -- Ideas and Content

[From Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 101 SW Main, Suite 500, Portland, OR 97204]

5 = This paper is clear and focused. It holds the reader’s attention. Relevant anecdotes and details enrich the central theme or storyline. Ideas are fresh and original. The writer seems to be writing from knowledge or experience and shows insight: an understanding of life and a knack for picking out what is significant. Relevant, telling, quality details give the reader important information that goes beyond the obvious or predictable. The writer develops the topic in an enlightening, purposeful way that makes a point or tells a story. Every piece adds something to the whole.

Example Analytic Rubric:
Articulating thoughts through written communication — final paper/project

Clarity (Thesis supported by relevant information and ideas.)

4 - ABOVE AVERAGE: The central purpose of the student work is clear and supporting ideas are always well-focused. Details are relevant, enrich the work.

3 – SUFFICIENT: The central purpose of the student work is clear and ideas are almost always focused in a way that supports the thesis. Relevant details illustrate the author’s ideas.

2 – DEVELOPING: The central purpose of the student work is identified. Ideas are generally focused in a way that supports the thesis.

1 - NEEDS IMPROVEMENT: The purpose of the student work is not well-defined. Central ideas are not focused to support the thesis. Thoughts appear disconnected.

[http://teachingcommons.depaul.edu/Feedback_Grading/rubrics/types-of-rubrics.html]
Table 1: Template for Holistic Rubrics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Demonstrates complete understanding of the problem. All requirements of task are included in response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Demonstrates considerable understanding of the problem. All requirements of task are included.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Demonstrates partial understanding of the problem. Most requirements of task are included.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Demonstrates little understanding of the problem. Many requirements of task are missing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Demonstrates no understanding of the problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>No response/task not attempted.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do's for Rubrics:

1. Use fewer levels.
2. Reference the same domain all the way through the rubric or scale.
3. Keep the evaluative criteria for each level authentic to the learner's experience.
4. Keep the same part of speech all the way through the rubric.
5. Test-drive the rubric on real student work before giving it to students.
6. Provide exemplars for each level.
7. Ask students to design the evaluative criteria and rubric themselves.
8. Occasionally, exchange assessments with another teacher and, using the rubric, assess the students in each other's classes.
Do’s for Rubrics:

8. When providing multiple choices in projects or assessments, create and use only one rubric.
9. For grading scales in particular, remember to seek clear and consistent evidence over time.
10. Reflect on the rubric’s use and quality. See separate slides on questions to ask yourself and colleagues.

Don’ts for Rubrics:

1. Don’t use average, above average, or below average for the descriptor at any level.
2. Don’t write out every level of descriptors for most assessments.
3. Don’t let reports of compliance distort reports of learning.
4. Don’t use symbols with a natural sequence.

Don’ts for Rubrics:

5. Use caution on the “4.0” descriptor as, “Exceeds Expectations.” Report advanced work separately from grade-level work.
6. Use caution here as well: By their very nature, rubrics limit students
Ways for Students to Transcend Rubric Criteria:

• Demonstrate divergent thinking.
• Add your own voice: If we left your name off the project, would we know it was you that created it?
• Make meaningful connections that the rest of us did not consider.
• Extend your investigation beyond the parameters put forth in the descriptors.

Our future depends on this one here.

Ways for Students to Transcend Rubric Criteria:

• Give the teacher alternative proposals for how to demonstrate evidence of your learning.
• Teach the teacher and your classmates something they did not know about the topic.
• Express content from a different perspective or through a different domain:
  - Norse mythology expressed through careful cultivation of Bonsai trees?
  - Debate as a form of dance?
  - The human circulatory system could be used as a form of cryptography?
  - Cultures, furniture, languages, and technology experience entropy?
Ways for Students to Transcend Rubric Criteria:

• Make the content your own, not something you borrow from the teacher and return passively at the end of the unit. Let the teacher see what YOU bring to learning’s table. Don’t subordinate who you are for the sake of what a previous generation thought was salient.

And best of all: There are no penalties for giving all of these a try, even when you fail in the first attempts.

• How to Assess Higher-Order Thinking Skills in Your Classroom by Susan M. Brookhart
• From Standards to Rubrics in Six Steps: Tools for Assessing Student Learning by Kathleen (Kay) B. Burke
• Scoring Rubrics in the Classroom: Using Performance Criteria for Assessing and Improving Student Performance by Judith A. Arter and Jay McTighe
• Rubric Nation: Critical Inquiries on the Impact of Rubrics in Education (2015) by Michelle Tenam-Zemach (Editor), Joseph E. Flynn Jr. (Editor)

• Essential Questions: Opening Doors to Student Understanding by Jay McTighe and Grant Wiggins
• Creating & Recognizing Quality Rubrics by Judith A. Arter, Jan Chappuis
• How to Create and Use Rubrics for Formative Assessment and Grading by Susan M. Brookhart
• Introduction to Rubrics: An Assessment Tool to Save Grading Time, Convey Effective Feedback, and Promote Student Learning by Dannelle D. Stevens, Antonia J. Levi, Barbara E. Walvoord
An English professor wrote the words, “A woman without her man is nothing,” on the blackboard and directed the students to punctuate it correctly. The men wrote: “A woman, without her man, is nothing,” while the women wrote, “A woman: without her, man is nothing.”

“Let’s eat, Dad!”
“Let’s eat Dad.”

Punctuate this one:

That that is is
that is not is not
is that it it is

-- Daniel Keyes, Flowers for Algernon

“Go to the next slide, you will.”

“To a person uninstructed in natural history, his country or seaside stroll is a walk through a gallery filled with wonderful works of art, nine-tenths of which have their faces turned to the wall.”

-- Thomas Huxley, 1854
Which one leads to more willingness to stick with a lengthy article and learn how microscopes work?

1. Kellen plays with the microscope, trying out all of its parts, then reads an article about how microscopes work and answers eight comprehension questions about its content.

2. Kellen reads the article about how microscopes work, answers eight comprehension questions about its content, then plays with the microscope, trying out all of its parts.

With hocked gems financing him,
Our hero bravely defied all scornful laughter
That tried to prevent his scheme.
Your eyes deceive, he had said;
An egg, not a table
Correctly typifies this unexplored planet.
Now three sturdy sisters sought proof,
Forging along sometimes through calm vastness
Yet more often over turbulent peaks and valleys.
Days became weeks,
As many doubters spread
Fearful rumors about the edge.
At last from nowhere
Welcome winged creatures appeared
Signifying momentous success.

Prime the brain prior to asking students to do any learning experience.

**Priming** means we show students:

1) What they will get out of the experience (the objectives)
2) What they will encounter as they go through the experience (itinerary, structure)
Journalistic vs. Encyclopedic Writing

“The breathing of Benbow’s pit is deafening, like up-close jet engines mixed with a cosmic belch. Each new breath from the volcano heaves the air so violently my ears pop in the changing pressure – then the temperature momentarily soars. Somewhere not too far below, red-hot, pumpkin size globs of ejected lava are flying through the air.”

-- National Geographic, November 2000, p. 54

“A volcano is a vent in the Earth from which molten rock (magma) and gas erupt. The molten rock that erupts from the volcano (lava) forms a hill or mountain around the vent. Lava may flow out as viscous liquid, or it may explode from the vent as solid or liquid particles...”

-- Global Encyclopedia, Vol. 19 T-U-V, p. 627

Meaningful Arrangement and Patterns are Everything
Read complex text aloud with proper vocal inflection and pacing. Students can understand text in readabilities above their own independent, silent reading proficiency when the complex text is read aloud by someone who understands the material.

What is the Role of Each One?

• Formative Assessment
• Summative Judgment
• Common Formative Assessment
  
  [Focus on Common Evidence first!]
• Alternative Assessment

Formative vs Summative in Focus:

Lab Reports in a Science Class
(Or any other lab-like activity in any subject area)
“If we don’t count homework heavily, students won’t do it.”

Do you agree with this?

Does this sentiment cross a line?

Two Homework Extremes that Focus Our Thinking

• If a student does none of the homework assignments, yet earns an “A” (top grade) on every formal assessment we give, does he earn anything less than an “A” on his report card?

• If a student does all of the homework well yet bombs every formal assessment, isn’t that also a red flag that something is amiss, and we need to take corrective action?

Be clear: We mark and grade against standards/outcomes, not the routes students take or techniques teachers use to achieve those standards/outcomes.

Given this premise, marks/grades for these activities can no longer be used in the academic report of what students know and can do regarding learner standards: maintaining a neat notebook, group discussion, class participation, homework, class work, reading log minutes, band practice minutes, dressing out in p.e., showing up to perform in an evening concert, covering textbooks, service to the school, group projects, signed permission slips, canned foods for canned food drive...
Set up your gradebook into two sections:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formative</th>
<th>Summative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignments and assessments completed</td>
<td>Final declaration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on the way to mastery or proficiency</td>
<td>of mastery or proficiency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Study Executive Function!

*Late, Lost, and Unprepared*
Joyce Cooper-Kohn, Laurie Dietzel

*Smart, but Scattered*
Peg Dawson, Richard Guare

Also, *Smart, but Scattered for Teens!*
Reflecting on Summarizing:

“I used to think...,
but now I think...”
Great differentiated assessment is never kept in the dark.

“Students can hit any target they can see and which stands still for them.”

-- Rick Stiggins, Educator and Assessment expert

If a child ever asks, “Will this be on the test?”.....we haven’t done our job.

We can learn without grades, we can’t learn without descriptive feedback.
“The Class of 2013 grew up playing video games and received feedback that was immediate, specific, and brutal – they won or else died at the end of each game. For them, the purpose of feedback is not to calculate an average or score a final exam, but to inform them about how they can improve on their next attempt to rule the universe.”

Feedback vs Assessment

**Feedback:** Holding up a mirror to students, showing them what they did and comparing it with what they should have done – there's no evaluative component!

**Assessment:** Gathering data so we can make a decision

**Greatest Impact on Student Success:**

Formative feedback

Two Ways to Begin Using Descriptive Feedback:

- “Point and Describe”
  (from *Teaching with Love & Logic*, Jim Fay, David Funk)

- “Goal, Status, and Plan for the Goal”
  1. Identify the objective/goal/standard/outcome
  2. Identify where the student is in relation to the goal (Status)
  3. Identify what needs to happen in order to close the gap
When providing descriptive feedback that builds perseverance,

...comment on decisions made and their impact, NOT quality of work.

Effective Protocol for Data Analysis and Descriptive Feedback found in many Schools:

Here’s What, So What, Now What

1. Here’s What: (data, factual statements, no commentary)

2. So What: (Interpretation of data, what patterns/insights do we perceive, what does the data say to us?)

3. Now What: (Plan of action, including new questions, next steps)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Topic or Proficiency</th>
<th>Right</th>
<th>Wrong</th>
<th>Simple Mistake?</th>
<th>Really Don’t Understand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Dividing fractions</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Dividing Fractions</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Multiplying Fractions</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Multiplying Fractions</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Reducing to Simplest Terms</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Reducing to Simplest Terms</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Reciprocals</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Reciprocals</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Reciprocals</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Date

Mr./Mrs./Miss ________________________,

I understand....

I need assistance in....

I suggestion the following four steps for me to take in order to learn these content and skills:

Sincerely,

_______________________

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Action</th>
<th>Result on Student Achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Just telling students if correct and incorrect</td>
<td>Negative influence on achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarifying the scoring criteria</td>
<td>Increase of 16 percentile points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing explanations as to why their responses are correct or incorrect</td>
<td>Increase of 20 percentile points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking students to continue responding to an assessment until they correctly answer the items</td>
<td>Increase of 20 percentile points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphically portraying student achievement</td>
<td>Increase of 26 percentile points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

-- Marzano, CAGTW, pgs 5-6

A child is attempting to ride a bicycle, and the bike falls over. Another child, learning to walk, loses her balance and lands on her bottom. A baby's green peas slide off his spoon as he moves it toward his mouth. How do their parents respond? Good parents don’t say, “You fail, you’re not able to meet bicycling standards,” “I'll develop a rubric for walking without falling,” or, “We need a Common Core curriculum to help you keep your food in your spoon.” ....[They] simply say, “Try again.”

- Richard L. Curwin, Education Leadership, ASCD, September 2014, p.38
Students should be allowed to re-do assessments until they achieve acceptable mastery, and they should be given full credit for having achieved such.

**Perspective that Changes our Thinking:**

*A 'D' is a coward's 'F.' The student failed, but you didn't have enough guts to tell him."

-- Doug Reeves

• A  
• B  
• C  
• I, IP, NE, or NTY

Once we cross over into D and F(E) zones, does it really matter? We'll do the same two things: **Personally investigate** and **take corrective action**
If we do not allow students to re-do work, we deny the growth mindset so vital to student maturation, and we are declaring to the student:

• This assignment had no legitimate educational value.
• It’s okay if you don’t do this work.
• It’s okay if you don’t learn this content or skill.

None of these is acceptable to the highly accomplished, professional educator.

If an “F” on a project really motivated students to work harder and achieve, retention rates would have dropped by now. They haven’t; they’ve increased. We need to do something more than repeatedly document failure.

Recovering in full from a failure teaches more than being labeled for failure ever could teach.

It’s a false assumption that giving a student an “F” or wagging an admonishing finger from afar builds moral fiber, self-discipline, competence, and integrity.
Re-Do’s & Re-Takes: Are They Okay?

More than “okay!” After 10,000 tries, here’s a working light bulb. ‘Any questions?’

Thomas Edison

Pilot training United States Air Force Training Manual

b. Minimum Academic Performance — The minimum acceptable score on any phase exam or End-of-Course exam is 85 percent. Should a student receive less than the minimum acceptable score, the instructor will remediate the student into a special, different course for that phase will be administered. Unsatisfactory performance will be referred to the appropriate military authority.

c. Minimum Demonstration/Performance Test Standard — The minimum acceptable performance on any demonstration/performancet test will be the standard against which the student is graded. The required proficiency level for events requiring a demonstration/performancet test.

d. Minimum Hour Requirements — These are minimum hours per phase requirement for graduation.

e. Instructor Responsibilities — Instructors are responsible for training accomplishment; however, students should monitor their own training and develop mission profiles when appropriate.

Quotes for the Classroom, Mindsets for Teaching:

“The fellow who never makes a mistake takes his orders from one who does.”

-- Herbert Prochnow

“I have learned throughout my life as a composer chiefly through my mistakes and pursuits of false assumptions, not my exposure to founts of wisdom and knowledge.”

-- Igor Stravinsky

“An expert is a man who has made all the mistakes which can be made, in a narrow field.”

-- Neils Bohr
"I've missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. Twenty-six times I've been trusted to take the game-winning shot, and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why... I succeed."

And what's a successful batting average in baseball?

F.A.I.L.

First Attempt in Learning

From Youtube.com:

Dr. Tae Skateboarding
(Ted Talk)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lHfo17ikSpY
Helpful Procedures and Policies for Re-Do’s and Re-Takes

- Always, “…at teacher discretion.”

- Don’t hide behind the factory model of schooling that perpetuates curriculum by age, perfect mastery on everyone’s part by a particular calendar date.

- As appropriate, students write letters explaining what was different between the first and subsequent attempts, and what they learned about themselves as learners.

- Re-do’s and re-takes must be within reason, and teachers decide what’s reasonable.

- Identify a day by which time this will be accomplished or the grade is permanent, which, of course, may be adjusted at any point by the teacher.

- With the student, create a calendar of completion that will help them accomplish the re-do. If student doesn’t follow through on the learning plan, he writes letters of apology. There must be re-learning, or learning for the first time, before the re-assessing.

- Require the student to submit original version with the re-done version so you and he can keep track of his development.

- If a student is repeatedly asking for re-doing work, something’s up. Investigate your approach and the child’s situation.

- C, B, and B+ students get to re-do just as much as D and F students do. Do not stand in the way of a child seeking excellence.

- If report cards are due and there’s not time to re-teach before re-assessing, record the lower grade, then work with the student in the next marking period, and if he presents new evidence of proficiency, submit a grade-change report form, changing the grade on the transcript from the previous marking period.

- Reserve the right to give alternative versions and ask follow-up questions to see if they’ve really mastered the material.

- Require parents to sign the original attempt.
• It's okay to let students, “bank,” sections of the assessment/assignment that are done well.
• No-re-do’s the last week of the grading period.
• Replace the previous grade with the new one, do NOT average them together.
• Sometimes the greater gift is to deny the option.
• Choose your battles. Push for re-doing the material that is transformative, levering, fundamental.

Premise

A grade represents a valid and undiluted indicator of what a student knows and is able to do – mastery.

With grades we document progress in students and our teaching, we provide feedback to students and their parents, and we make instructional decisions.

10 Practices to Avoid in a Differentiated Classroom [They Dilute a Grade’s Validity and Effectiveness]

• Penalizing students’ multiple attempts at mastery
• Grading practice (daily homework) as students come to know concepts [Feedback, not grading, is needed]
• Withholding assistance (not scaffolding or differentiating) in the learning when it’s needed
• Group grades
• Incorporating non-academic factors (behavior, attendance, and effort)
• Assessing students in ways that do not accurately indicate students’ mastery (student responses are hindered by the assessment format)
• Grading on a curve
• Allowing Extra Credit
• Defining supposedly criterion-based grades in terms of norm-referenced descriptions (“above average,” “average”, etc.)
• Recording zeroes on the 100.0 scale for work not done

0 or 50 (or 60)?

100-pt. Scale:
0, 100, 100, 100, 100, 100 -- 83% (C+)
60, 100, 100, 100, 100, 100 -- 93% (B+)

When working with students, do we choose the most hurtful, unrecoverable end of the "F" range, or the most constructive, recoverable end of the "F" range?

Be clear: Students are not getting points for having done nothing. The student still gets an F. We’re simply equalizing the influence of the each grade in the overall grade and responding in a way that leads to learning.
Imagine the Reverse...

A = 100 – 40
B = 39 – 30
C = 29 – 20
D = 19 – 10
F = 9 – 0

What if we reversed the proportional influences of the grades? That “A” would have a huge, yet undue, inflationary effect on the overall grade. Just as we wouldn’t want an “A” to have an inaccurate effect, we don’t want an “F” grade to have such an undue, deflationary, and inaccurate effect. Keeping zeroes on a 100-pt. scale is just as absurd as the scale seen here.

Consider the Correlation

| 100 | 4  |
| 90  | 3  |
| 80  | 2  |
| 70  | 1  |
| 60  | 0  |
| 50  | -1 |
| 40  | -2 |
| 30  | -3 |
| 20  | -4 |
| 10  | -5 |
| 0   | -6 |

A (0) on a 100-pt. scale is a (-6) on a 4-pt. scale. If a student does no work, he should get nothing, not something worse than nothing. How instructive is it to tell a student that he earned six times less than absolute failure? Choose to be instructive, not punitive.

[Based on an idea by Doug Reeves, The Learning Leader, ASCD, 2006]

Temperature Readings for Norfolk, VA:
85, 87, 88, 84, 0 (Forgot to take the reading)

Average: 68.8 degrees

This is inaccurate for what really happened, and therefore, unusable.
Clarification:

When we’re talking about converting zeroes to 50’s or higher, we’re referring to zeroes earned on major projects and assessments, not homework, as well as anything graded on a 100-point scale. It’s okay to give zeroes on homework or on small scales, such as a 4.0 scale. Zeroes recorded for homework assignments do not refer to final, accurate declarations of mastery, and those zeroes don’t have the undue influence on small grading scales.

Grading Late Work

• One whole letter grade down for each day late is punitive. It does not teach students, and it removes hope.
• A few points off for each day late is instructive; there’s hope.
• Yes, the world beyond school is like this.

Helpful Consideration for Dealing with Student’s Late Work:

Is it chronic....

...or is it occasional?

We respond differently, depending on which one it is.
Summative Assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards/Outcomes</th>
<th>XYZ Test, part 1</th>
<th>PQR Project</th>
<th>XYZ Test, part 2</th>
<th>GHI Perf. Task</th>
<th>Most Consistent Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 [Descriptor]</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 [Descriptor]</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 [Descriptor]</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 [Descriptor]</td>
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<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 [Descriptor]</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gradebooks and Report Cards in the Differentiated Classroom:
Ten Important Attributes

1. Everything is clearly communicated, easily understood
2. Use an entire page per student
3. Set up according to Standards/Outcomes
4. Disaggregate!
5. No averaging – Determine grades based on central tendency, trend, mode
6. Behavior/Effort/Attendance separated from Academic Performance
7. Grades/Marks are as accurate as possible
8. Some students may have more marks/grades than others
9. Scales/Rubric Descriptors readily available, even summarized as possible
10. Grades/marks revisable
Responsive Report Formats

Multiple Categories Within Subjects Approach:

Divide the grade into its component pieces. For example, a “B” in Science class can be subdivided into specific standards or benchmarks such as, “Demonstrates proper lab procedure,” “Successfully employs the scientific method,” or “Uses proper nomenclature and/or taxonomic references.”

The more we try to aggregate into a single symbol, the less reliable that symbol is as a true expression of what a student knows and is able to do.

Report Cards without Grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course: English 9</th>
<th>Standard Descriptor</th>
<th>Standards Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Standard 1 Usage/Punct/Spelling</td>
<td>(1) 2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Standard 2 Analysis of Literature</td>
<td>(2) -1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Standard 3 Six + 1 Traits of Writing</td>
<td>(3) 3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Standard 4 Reading Comprehension</td>
<td>(4) 3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Standard 5 Listening/Speaking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Standard 6 Research Skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional Comments from Teachers:

Health and Maturity Records for the Grading Period:

100 point scale or 4.0 Scale?

• A 4.0 scale has a high inter-rater reliability. Students’ work is connected to a detailed descriptor and growth and achievement rally around listed benchmarks.

• In 100-point or larger scales, the grades are more subjective. In classes in which teachers use percentages or points, students, teachers, and parents more often rally around grade point averages, not learning.
Consider:

• Pure mathematical averages of grades for a grading period are inaccurate indicators of students’ true mastery.

• A teacher’s professional judgment via clear descriptors on a rubric actually increases the accuracy of a student’s final grade as an indicator of what he learned.

• A teacher’s judgment via rubrics has a stronger correlation with outside standardized tests than point or average calculations do.  

(Marzano)

Accurate grades are based on the most consistent evidence. We look at the pattern of achievement, including trends, not the average of the data. This means we focus on the median and mode, not mean, and the most recent scores are weighed heavier than earlier scores.

Median: The middle test score of a distribution, above and below which lie an equal number of test scores

Mode: The score occurring most frequently in a series of observations or test data

Grading Inclusion Students

Question #1:

“Are the standards set for the whole class also developmentally appropriate for this student?”

• If they are appropriate, proceed to Question #2.

• If they are not appropriate, identify which standards are appropriate, making sure they are as close as possible to the original standards. Then go to question #2.
Grading Inclusion Students

Question #2:
“Will these learning experiences (processes) we’re using with the general class work with the inclusion student as well?”

• If they will work, then proceed to Question #3.
• If they will not work, identify alternative pathways to learning that will work. Then go to Question #3.

Grading Inclusion Students

Question #3:
“Will this assessment instrument we’re using to get an accurate rendering of what general education students know and are able to do regarding the same standard provide an accurate rendering of what this inclusion student knows and is able to do regarding the same standard?

• If the instrument will provide an accurate rendering of the inclusion student’s mastery, then use it just as you do with the rest of the class.
• If it will not provide an accurate rendering of the inclusion student’s mastery, then identify a product that will provide that accuracy, and make sure it holds the student accountable for the same universal factors as you are asking of the other students.

For more details, see:
ljung@uky.edu
guskey@uky.edu

The next four slides' content can be found in this article.
"Myth 2: Report cards cannot identify the student’s status as an exceptional learner.

“Fact: According to guidance recently provided by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights (2008), a student’s IEP, 504, or ELL status can appear on report cards (which communicate information about a student’s achievement to the student, parents, and teachers) but not on transcripts (which are shared with third parties—other schools, employers, and institutes of higher education) (Freedman, 2000). Even on report cards, however, schools must carefully review whether such information is necessary.”

“Myth 3: Transcripts cannot identify the curriculum as being modified.

“Fact: This is perhaps the most common of all reporting myths. Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1997 and 2004, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, transcripts cannot identify students as qualifying for special services or accommodations—supports that provide access to the general curriculum but do not fundamentally alter the learning goal or grade-level standard. However, schools can legally note curriculum modifications—changes that fundamentally alter the learning goal or grade-level expectation (Freedman, 2000, 2005).”

Three types of learning criteria related to standards (see Guskey, 2006):

“Product criteria address what students know and are able to do at a particular point in time. They relate to students’ specific achievements or level of proficiency as demonstrated by final examinations; final reports, projects, exhibits, or portfolios; or other overall assessments of learning.”
“Process criteria relate to students’ behaviors in reaching their current level of achievement and proficiency. They include elements such as effort, behavior, class participation, punctuality in turning in assignments, and work habits. They also might include evidence from daily work, regular classroom quizzes, and homework.

“Progress criteria consider how much students improve or gain from their learning experiences. These criteria focus on how far students have advanced, rather than where they are. Other names for progress criteria include learning gain, value-added learning, and educational growth.”

Check out the FREE Website for Perspective and Practicality on Assessment and Grading Issues!

www.stenhouse.com/fiae

1. Two new, substantial study guides for Fair Isn’t Always Equal
2. Q&A’s - abbreviated versions of correspondence with teachers and administrators
3. Video and audio podcasts on assessment and grading issues
4. Testimonials from educators
5. Articles that support the book’s main themes

Also, check out ASCD’s Education Leadership November 2011 issue
Vol. 69, Number 3
Theme: Effective Grading Practices
Single Issue: $7.00, 1-800-933-2723
www.ascd.org

Among the articles:

- Susan M. Brookhart on starting the conversation about the purpose of grades
- Rick Wormeli on how to make redos and retakes work
- Thomas R. Guskey on overcoming obstacles to grading reform
- Robert Marzano on making the most of standards-based grading
- Ken O’Connor and Rick Wormeli on characteristics of effective grading
- Cathy Vatterott on breaking the homework grading addiction
- Albie Kohn on why we should end grading instead of trying to improve it
New Resource on Grading:
“The Grading System We Need to Have”

http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/classroom_qa_with_larry_ferlazzo/2014/05/response_the_grading_system_we_need_to_have.html

Response to a parent of an AP student when his teachers started doing re-assessments for full credit in their AP classes:


Principal’s Blog as he worked with faculty on Re-do’s and SBG:

http://blog.stenhouse.com/archives/2013/03/21/profiles-effective-pd-initiatives-owen-j-roberts-middle-school/

Former AP Teacher, now Building Administrator, Reed Gillespie

Responses to Re-Do Concerns:

http://www.reedgillespie.blogspot.com/2013/04/redos-and-retakes.html

12 Practical Steps to Conducting Re-do’s:

http://www.reedgillespie.blogspot.com/2013/04/12-steps-to-creating-successful-redo.html
Particularly Helpful: The Work of High School Teacher, now District Leader, Matt Townsley

“What is the Difference between Standards-Based Grading (or Reporting) and Competency-Based Education?”

http://www.competencyworks.org/analysis/what-is-the-difference-between-standards-based-grading/

And,

www.sbgvideos.org

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Great Books on Feedback, Assessment, and Grading:

• *Elements of Grading* (Reeves)
• *How to Give Feedback to Your Students* (Brookhart)
• *Balanced Assessment, From Formative to Summative* (Burke)
• *Grading Smarter, Not Harder* (Dueck)
• *Grading* (Brookhart)
• *How to Grade for Learning* (O'Connor)
• *A Repair Kit for Grading: 15 Fixes for Broken Grades* (O'Connor)
• *Fair Isn’t Always Equal* (Wormeli)
• Checking for Understanding: Formative Assessment Techniques for your Classroom (Fisher and Frey)
• Transforming Classroom Grading (Marzano)
• Classroom Assessment and Grading that Work (Marzano)
• How to Assess Higher-Order Thinking Skills in your Classroom (Brookhart)
• Grading Exceptional and Struggling Students: RTI, ELL, IEP (Guskey, Jung)
• On Your Mark: Challenging the Conventions of Grading and Reporting (Guskey)

Three particularly helpful books I just read and I highly recommend:

• Brookhart, Susan. How to Assess Higher-Order Thinking Skills in your Classroom, ASCD, 2010
• Alternatives to Grading Student Writing, Stephen Tchudi, Editor, NCTE, 1997