

Muritai School

Information for the Board of Trustees

Assessment Glossary

Assessment in education is the process of gathering, interpreting, and sometimes recording and using information about students' responses to an educational task in order to provide the next learning step. Assessment is primarily concerned with providing teachers and/or students with feedback information. Research evidence shows strong connections between teachers providing clear goals for learning and giving feedback linked to criteria with student motivation and improvement.

Student achievement is raised when teachers have high, attainable expectations focused on learning. The commitment generated through setting goals and developing criteria, in collaboration with students, is the glue that holds teaching and learning teams together (*Curriculum Update, Issue 47, August 2001*)

Achievement objective or AO

An objective describes the scope and parameters for learning, and identifies the particular skills, knowledge and understanding to be developed, in each strand of each discipline.

Assessment activity/task

A set of instructions for students, usually designed by the teacher, to effectively allow students to demonstrate the knowledge, skill and understanding they have acquired, usually as a direct result of classroom instruction and participation.

Assessment tools

Assessment tools are resources to support teachers and students with their learning. Some assessment tools available to schools include:

- The New Zealand curriculum exemplars
- Professional development programmes in assessment (for example, AToL, or online support)
- Assessment Resource Banks (ARBs) – an online collection of materials for maths, science and English designed to assess achievement through learning programmes that reflect the curriculum at levels 2–5
- National Education Monitoring Project (NEMP) tasks
- Assessment Tools for Teaching and Learning (AsTTle) literacy and numeracy tools
- Supplementary Test of Achievement in Reading (STAR)
- Performance Achievement Tests (PAT); Essential Skills Test (EST)
- School Entry Assessment (SEA) – are designed to assess emerging concepts about print, numeracy, and spoken language and are performance-based
- Running records
- National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA)

Conferencing

Conferencing describes the process of providing one-to-one feedback and feed-forward to students, through in-class dialogue, in order to affirm achievement and provide next steps for learning.

Diagnostic assessment

Diagnostic assessment provides information for teachers on what or how students are achieving at a particular time. Diagnostic tools give detailed information about students' learning needs; and prompt reflection on appropriate teaching strategies to meet these. Diagnostic assessment also informs future programme planning, and gives valuable information to teachers on how they may scaffold the learning to meet the individual learning needs of students.

Exemplars

These are samples of authentic student work, often annotated, to illustrate levels of achievement. These could be examples of written work, or designed tasks, art works, or recordings of dance, drama, or musical works.

Formative assessment

Formative assessment refers to all those assessment activities undertaken by teachers, and by the students themselves, which provide information, to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged. Such assessments become formative when the evidence is actually used to adapt the teaching to meet the needs of students

Feedback / Feed forward

Specific, constructive feedback about learning, as it is unfolding, is one of the most powerful influences on student achievement. Positive feedback celebrates success, and helps keep students motivated, whilst constructive feedback highlights important aspects to focus on. Feed-forward provides an outline of the steps to be taken (scaffolding) towards achievement. Feedback/feed-forward includes all dialogue to support learning in both formal and informal situations.

Formative assessment is used for setting personal goals.

Askew and Lodge (2000) view formative assessment as the combination of three dynamic and interactive processes:

1. Instruction or direct teaching (the 'gift').
2. Construction or dialogue between teacher and student ('ping pong').
3. Co-construction or free flowing dialogues between teachers and students together and separately ('loops').

It is widely argued that formative assessment has the greatest impact on learning and achievement.

Learning intention

Learning intentions describe the knowledge, skill, understanding(s) and/or attitudes/values that are designed to develop an aspect of the curriculum. They are usually negotiated with students and expressed in a lesson or series of lessons. Learning intentions are expressed in language that students understand and support them in understanding what they are supposed to be doing and why. Ideally students will put learning intentions into their own words.

Learning intentions are also referred to as intended learning outcomes and usually are preceded by the stem: *Students will . . .* (description of intended learning). A student may also write them in the first person: *I am learning to ...* (description of intended learning).

Portfolio

A systematic and organized collection of student work that exhibits to others, directs evidence of a student's efforts, achievements, and progress over a period of time. At Muritai the portfolio should involve the student selection of its contents and include information about the performance/achievement criteria and evidence of student self-evaluation. It should include representative work, providing a basis for evaluation of the student's progress.

Self-assessment

A process in which a student engages in a systematic review of their progress and achievement, usually for the purpose of improvement. It may involve comparison with an exemplar, success criteria, or other criteria. It may also involve critiquing one's own work or a description of the achievement obtained.

Success criteria

Success criteria (learning outcomes/indicators) describe what students have learnt or how students are aiming to achieve a learning goal (in relation to a learning intention). At Muritai the purpose of success criteria is to ensure students understand the teacher's criteria for making judgments about their work. Success criteria are always richly contextualized. If they have been involved in the creation of success criteria students are more likely to take more ownership for their learning, be self-evaluative as they are working, and questioning about the assessed work as it evolves. Measuring whether a single learning intention has been met (whether it has become an outcome) may involve co-constructing several success criteria.

The stem usually precedes success criteria:

I will know I have achieved this when... (description of criteria for achievement).

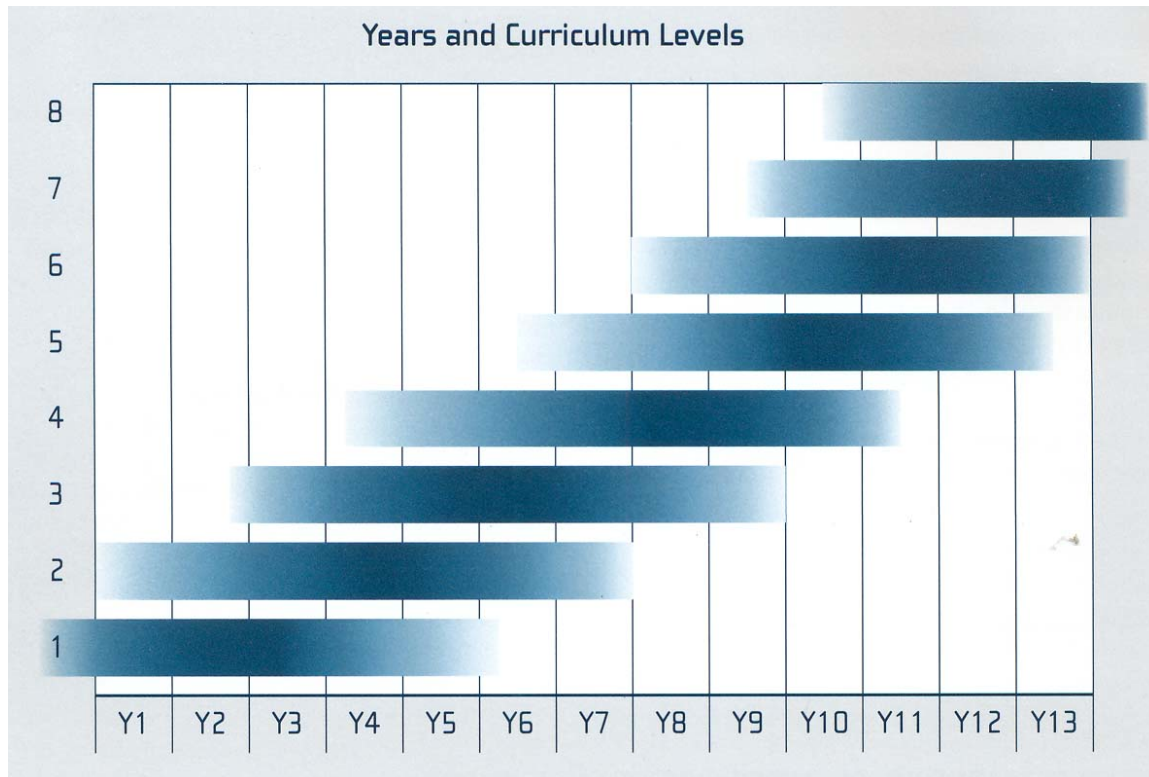
Summative assessment

This is an evaluation made by the teacher at the conclusion of a unit of work, instruction, or assessment activity to assess student skills, knowledge, and understandings at that particular point in time, or the validity of an assessment task.

This is used for the reporting of aggregated data.

Curriculum Levels

The National Curriculum is developed in levels that cover approximately two years work. Below is the level diagram produced by the Ministry of Education in the New Zealand curriculum, 2007.



So generally in the expectation in summary is that children are working at –

Level 1 = Year 1 and 2

Level 2 = Year 3 and 4

Level 3 = Year 5 and 6

Level 4 = Year 7 and 8

Students however can be working below or above expected levels

ASSESSMENT TOOLS at MURITAI SCHOOL

School entry assessment –

Children in NZ are generally assessed when they begin primary school as a new entrant. This school entry assessment enables teachers to gather information about their literacy and numeracy skills so they can better work with the children they have in their class as both individuals and in groups.

1. Concepts about Print –student’s awareness of print and books
2. Checkout –knowledge of basic numeracy
3. Tell me – aspects of oral language

Designed to assess emerging concepts about print and numeracy, and the oral use of language, presented in kit form. They are all performance-based and use close observation as a major strategy for the diagnosis of strengths and weaknesses.

Although there are scores for each of the tests. The SEA is not primarily a diagnostic assessment, but incorporates elements of achievement and readiness.

6 Year Net (Observation Survey) –

This assessment happens when the student is Year 2 and turns six years old. The student completes the assessment one-on-one with the teacher who is assessing him/her and is asked to complete specific tasks to do with

- identifying letters,
- understanding print concepts, For example, reading from left to right and top to bottom, and making connections between the text and illustrations,
- reading text, recognizing words,
- writing vocabulary (students are asked to write as many words as they can and know in 10 minutes), and
- hearing and recording sounds in words.

Running Records –

Running records are an ongoing form of assessment that gives teachers reliable information about a student reading skills and fluency. Running records are used in most New Zealand schools to help teachers assess your child’s oral reading ability. They were developed in 1993 by Marie Clay to provide a tool for analyzing young reader’s strategies and fluency.

When taking a running record the teacher sits next to the child and as the child reads they will keep track of accuracy and errors on a separate sheet of paper. Errors are tallied during the reading whenever a child substitutes one word for another in the text, misses a word out, adds in an extra word or has to be told a word. An error is not recorded if a child self-corrects, but the child has to read independently (with little or no teacher support). The data gathered from running records can be used to give an accuracy percentage (number of correct words as a percentage of the total words) and this can help the teacher decide if a student needs to be reading easier or more challenging books. If it is below 90 % the child needs an easier text, if it is above 94 % the child needs a harder text. During a running record, teachers also look at how well the reader uses the following: Meaning (whether a child’s attempt at a word makes sense),

Sentence structure (whether a child's attempt at a word is grammatically correct) and Visual cues (whether a child's attempt looks right for given clusters of letters).

At the end of the story the teacher will also check for comprehension by asking the child to re-tell as much of the story as they can remember. A good reader will be able to tell the teacher not just the series of events in the story but other details like where it was set and about the relationships between the characters. The teacher may also note other behaviours in the child reading such as pauses and whether or not they are willing to have a go at tough words. It is certainly a thorough assessment when carried out correctly. The main down side of running records is that the data has to be gathered one to one and this can be time consuming and difficult for a teacher with a classroom full of students. Running records are taken most often (every 2 – 4 weeks) in the earlier stages of learning to read (emergent) and are used less for fluent readers (about once a term). Once a child can read, running records are often replaced with testing that focuses more on working out whether they actually understand what they are reading.

Once reading fluency is achieved running records are no longer held on a student. It is around this time that STAR testing picks up to assess a student's reading progress and ability.

Progressive Achievement Tests – (PAT)

PAT stands for Progressive Achievement Tests. These tests are designed to assess listening comprehension from Year 3, reading vocabulary from Year 4 and both reading comprehension and maths from Year 4 onwards.

PAT test results give teachers an idea of how a student measures against the national results of other students in the same age and in the same Year group. These results also give teachers an idea of what to focus their teaching on in follow up. PAT results for individuals and groups are generally referred to in 'stanines' – stanines range from 1 (lowest) through to 9 (highest) – and presented as a national norm as a bell curve. A student achieving a stanine 3 is achieving below, stanine 5 is at the national norm and stanine 7,8,9 above to well above the national norm.

Stanines are used to compare an individual student's achievement with the results obtained by a national reference sample representing a certain year level.

STAR Tests

STAR stands for Supplementary Tests of Achievement in Reading. This testing is based on reading ability and progress and generally picks up where running records leave off, that is in Year Three.

STAR testing helps teachers more accurately assess the students reading ability where are all concerned.

- word recognition
- sentence comprehension
- paragraph comprehension and
- vocab

In particular STAR helps teachers to identify students who need extra help, create groups so students are matched with others of similar ability, assess students new to the class/school, identify particular difficulties students or groups of students may be having, gain some idea and evaluate how effective a teaching programme may be or to compare students with the national standard for that age/year group.

STAR information is presented overall in **stanine format** but can also be shown as well as a breakdown of particular skills as strengths and weaknesses.

Writing Exemplars

An exemplar is an authentic piece of student work, annotated to illustrate learning, achievement, and quality in relation to the levels in the national curriculum statement.

The purpose is to highlight features that teachers and students need to watch for, collect information about, and act on to promote 'next step' learning. Exemplars help to answer the question, "What is quality work?", for students and teachers.

Not designed as a formal assessment tool, but instead as an illustration of quality work at different curriculum levels. To be used formatively by students and teachers. The idea is to use it to position student's writing against the appropriate level of the curriculum - always used informally and formatively. Often exemplars are used to cross credit AsTTle writing assessments to position a child on the continuum as beginning, proficient or advanced at each level.

The use of an exemplars may see the children's achievement as presented into **curriculum levels and may use AsTTle ratings of basic, proficient and advanced.**

AsTTle

AsTTle stands for Assessment Tools for Teaching and Learning. AsTTle provides teachers, students, and parents with information about a student's level of achievement, relative to the curriculum achievement outcomes, for levels 2 to 6 and national norms of performance for students in years 4 to 12.

AsTTle is a tool that operates in both personal computer (PC) and Mac environments. Teachers can use AsTTle to create 40-minute paper and pencil tests, designed for their own students' learning needs. Once the tests are scored, the AsTTle tool generates interactive graphic reports that allow teachers to analyze student achievement against curriculum levels, curriculum objectives, and population norms. AsTTle tests range from year 4-8 – level 2-4. An advantage of using AsTTle is to gain information about how the Muritai cohort performs against similar high decile schools (population norms).

Assessment rates students against a curriculum level and presents them as basic, proficient or advanced in each level (i.e. 2a means a student is at level 2 advanced.) Information is presented in a number of categories relevant to the discipline –

Writing — audience, content, structure, language resources, grammar, punctuation, spelling – and then presented as an overall score and an overall rating of use of deeper and surface features.

Reading – finding information, knowledge, understanding, connections, inference, punctuation, grammar and spelling - and then presented as an overall score and an overall rating of depth of thinking through the use of deeper and surface features.

IKAN maths test

This interview type test assesses for knowledge and things that students know without having to use a strategy. It is delivered either as an interview with individual or small groups of students, or as a written test, usually conducted with groups of students, by Power Point through data

projector. The written test assesses students' knowledge of Forward and Backward Number Word Sequences, fractions, place value and basic facts. It shows stages for number knowledge, which are linked to the curriculum levels, and a strategy stage/curriculum level is able to be identified. A record sheet for each student will highlight key learning areas for each student.

There are eight-strategy stages altogether, with the first three often grouped together:

- **Stage 0-3: Counting from One** - children can solve problems by counting from one, either using physical materials, or in their head.
- **Stage 4: Advanced Counting** - children can solve problems by counting in ones, or by skip counting, starting from numbers other than one.
- **Stage 5: Early Additive** - children can solve simple problems by splitting up and adding together the numbers in their head.
- **Stage 6: Advanced Additive** - children use a range of different methods to solve more challenging problems in their head.
- **Stage 7: Advanced Multiplicative** - children use a range of different methods to solve multiplication and division problems in their head.
- **Stage 8: Advanced Proportional** - children can solve complicated problems involving fractions, decimals and percentages using a combination of methods.

Numeracy Project Stages

Curriculum - Level 1					Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Stage 0 Em	Stage 1 1-1	Stage 2 CA	Stage 3 CAI	Stage 4 AC	Stage 5 EA	Stage 6 AA	Stage 7 AM	Stage 8 AP

National performance data is available so you can cross check how your school is performing against a national database.

Peters Spelling Test

The purpose of this spelling test is to assess spelling capability in context and to give a 'spelling age' for each individual. The test is of 40 words and progressively gets more difficult as it goes on. The test operates at year 3-6 at Muritai and tends to reinforce observations of those children who struggle to spell on a day-to-day basis.

No norms are given and an appendix provides the spelling ages of each word from the dictation passages, and problems and remedial actions can be discerned from the patterns.

PRETOS spelling (Year 7-8)

The Proof-Reading Tests of Spelling are broad measures of a child's ability to discriminate between misspelt words and correctly spelt words, presented in the context of meaningful paragraphs. The tests provide a measure of spelling achievement within the context of a proofreading task, as well as giving diagnostic information about individual pupil's spelling accomplishments. The abilities tapped by the PRETOS are broader than those associated with the traditional assessment of spelling.

A separate, non-overlapping test is provided for each class within the New Zealand range Year 4 to Year 8 inclusive. At Muritai the test is done in year 7-8 and is designed to indicate more than a spelling age – to identify a student's awareness of language in context. Each test is made up of three or four paragraphs consisting 12-14 lines of text, with two lines having no misspelt words.

The PRETOS have been standardized to provide norms covering the period March to November inclusive. Class percentile ranks are provided for both production and recognition scores. The production score is a measure of the child's ability to spell a word correctly after identifying it as an error, and to locate the error-free lines. The recognition score is a measure of the ability to recognize misspelt words.

In addition to the normative scores for production and recognition, the format of the tests provides specific information on:

- (i) misspelt words that are identified and re-spelt correctly
- (ii) misspelt words that are identified but not re-spelt correctly
- (iii) misspelt words that are not identified
- (iv) correctly spelt words that are identified as misspelt
- (v) words that are incorrect because of context, rather than because of "spelling".

Results are presented as **stanines**.

I hope this helps you understand the technical jargon. The list could go on for miles as there are many other tools we use from time to time. These ones above are school wide processes to moderate student achievement across classrooms and cohorts.

Andrew Bird

Principal