

ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES: TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

Observational/Anecdotal Records - Teachers may gather observational or anecdotal data by recording information about student behaviors, attitudes, work habits, and degree of cooperation with others. To collect observational data during class time, teachers may use checklists with established criteria. Anecdotal data can be collected by recording descriptive notes during or after an instructional period. In either case, both individual and group comments can be used to document student performance and participation in class activities.

Individual Interviews - Through interviews with students, teachers can gain valuable insights about perceptions regarding course content, assignments, and instructional approaches. This technique affords teachers and students the opportunity to address issues which other strategies may not allow. In response to structured or unstructured questions, for example, student viewpoints and opinions about the meaningfulness of their arts learning may surface. An interview can also reveal student misperceptions about teacher expectations, assignment objectives, and project directions or procedures. Interviews can occur formally or informally both during and after the completion of an assignment.

Task-Based Assessments - These tasks or problems require students to review and organize information, make inferences, synthesize ideas, and design and execute a plan of action. The teacher establishes the task parameters and identifies the criteria for evaluating students. When establishing those criteria, the teacher might consider questions such as the following: How well did the student clarify the problem and procedures? Did the student exhibit sophisticated problem-solving skills? Did the student consider atypical strategies and solutions? Evidence for the evaluation may come from a variety of sources such as samples of preliminary and in-process student work (written notes, diagrams, sketches, models, etc.), anecdotal notes recorded by the teacher during the task, oral or written self-reports by students, interviews with students after completing the task, and any finished product/performance. Videotaping or audiotaping could provide additional documentation of student progress relative to the task.

Quizzes/Tests - When constructed carefully, quizzes and tests may be appropriate for assessing student attainment of certain arts knowledge and skills. Teachers may use a variety of item formats, including matching, multiple choice, short answer, and extended essays. Effective test items can be written for assessing a range of cognitive knowledge and skills, from simpler (e.g., comparing and contrasting, analyzing, and synthesizing).

Narrative Summaries - Teachers can record descriptive narratives to summarize a student's progress throughout the course of instruction. These summaries may be generated from one or more of the previously described methods of assessment. For instance, information logged regularly in observational and anecdotal records could be combined with periodic reviews of portfolios to yield meaningful documentation of a student's development over time. Although this assessment technique is quite time-intensive, the narrative summary is one of the most valuable reflections of a student's intellectual, behavioral, and affective growth.

A Look at Performance Assessment for Art Education by the National Art Education Association.