

Balanced Assessment

In order to achieve a balanced classroom assessment program, it is essential to "select and develop a variety of classroom assessment strategies and instruments to assess the full range of learning objectives" (Policy 4.2.1 TQS, 1997). It is essential to ensure alignment between assessment data required and the assessment strategy selected.

The shaded areas of the following chart indicate strengths and limitations of each strategy. As is evident from the shading pattern, no single strategy can accomplish all assessment purposes.

Preparing the Way for Valid Results: Linking Levels of Cognition with Assessment Strategies

	Selected Response	Written Response	Performance Assessment	Personal Communication
Evaluation	Not an effective way to evaluate student understanding	Effective strategy to sample student understanding	Effective strategy to sample student understanding because students work in a real world context	Provides immediate feedback and opportunity for students to clarify; however, not the most efficient way because it is time consuming
Synthesis	Mismatch between level of cognition and assessment strategy	Effective strategy to sample student understanding	Effective strategy to sample student understanding; allows students choice in the way of demonstrating their understanding and allows them to work in a real world context	Provides immediate feedback and opportunity for students to clarify; however, not the most efficient way because it is time consuming
Analysis	Effective and efficient strategy to sample student understanding	Effective strategy to sample student understanding	Effective strategy to sample student understanding because it provides an opportunity for students to explain their thinking and work in a real world context	Provides immediate feedback and opportunity for students to clarify; however, not the most efficient way because it is time consuming
Application	Effective and efficient strategy to sample student understanding	Effective strategy to sample student understanding	Effective strategy to sample student understanding because students link to a real world context	Provides immediate feedback and opportunity for students to clarify; however, not the most efficient way because it is time consuming
Comprehension	Effective and efficient strategy to sample student understanding	Effective strategy to sample student understanding; allows students to show relationships among elements of knowledge	Effective strategy to sample student understanding; however, less efficient due to time necessary for students to complete	Provides immediate feedback and opportunity for students to clarify; however, not the most efficient way because it is time consuming
Knowledge	Effective and efficient strategy to sample student knowledge	Effective strategy to sample student knowledge; however, less efficient due to time necessary for scoring	Knowledge is a necessary prerequisite for student success with the higher levels of cognition required in the performance assessment	Provides immediate feedback and opportunity for students to clarify; however, not the most efficient way because it is time consuming