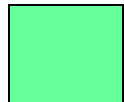


Preparing the Way for Valid Results: Linking Levels of Cognition with Assessment Methods

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" ([Teaching Quality Standard](#), 1997, p. 6). The selection of an appropriate assessment method is a purposeful decision, based on the level of cognition embedded within the verbs of the learner outcomes.

In order to make valid interpretations of the results of student assessment, alignment is needed between assessment data required and the assessment method selected. The shaded areas of the following chart indicate strengths and limitations of each method in relation to the levels of Bloom's Taxonomy. As is evident from the shading pattern, no single method can accomplish all assessment purposes.

	Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
Selected Response						
Written Response						
Performance Assessment						
Observation						
Personal Communication						



The identified methods are effective ways to sample student understanding at the identified levels of cognition.



The identified methods are appropriate ways to sample student understanding at the identified levels of cognition. However, they are time consuming and other methods may be more effective.



Personal communication provides opportunities for immediate feedback and clarification, although it is very time consuming. It is a credible way to differentiate for students who require additional support to demonstrate their understanding.



While selected response items provide students with the opportunity to *recognize* responses at the level of evaluation and synthesis, other methods would be needed to determine if students could independently *create* a response at the appropriate level.

Assessment Method	Sample Formats
Selected Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> multiple choice, true/false, matching, cloze
Written Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> short answer and extended response
Performance Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> projects and tasks involving the development of products and/or performances
Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> focused observations of students at work
Personal Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conversations with students and written reflections