

Good test takers and diagnostic assessment

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Q Ans. According to Levine (n. d) there are five types of high-level thinking that differentiate between a good test taker and a poor test taker, namely concept formation, problem solving ability, memorization and application of rules, critical thinking ability, and creativity. Good test takers remember things by forming concepts whereas poor test takers are habitual to cramming things up. Good test takers think logically so they have excellent problem solving ability whereas poor test takers do not think quite as logically and thus do not have as good problem solving ability as the good test takers have. Good test takers easily remember the concepts and are able to apply the rules that govern different subjects whereas poor test takers cannot remember concepts and accordingly, have difficulty applying them wherever required. Good test takers draw conclusions by considering the author's viewpoint, identifying reliable sources in support of arguments, and consider their biases whereas poor test takers tend to take the things at face value and draw erroneous conclusions accordingly. Good test takers are creative and like to have their own input into projects whereas poor test takers want guidelines and are not as creative as good test takers.

Similarities between good and bad test takers are that both commonly experience test anxiety and difficult situations during test but the way they handle them differentiates between the two. Some ways in which teachers can improve the skills of poor test takers include frequent testing, testing soon after teaching a topic and then retesting later, and testing with cumulative questions (Hoy and Hoy, 2009).

Q. 2: Ans.

No, we should not conclude about a child's ability or progress using only formative and summative assessments. We also need to carry out diagnostic

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assessment and authentic assessment before reaching any conclusions about the children's progress. Drawing conclusion without diagnostic and authentic assessment is inadequate because the teacher tends to assume that all children have the same level of existing knowledge whereas in reality, this is not the case. Diagnostic assessment provides the teachers with a way to map out a route or chart a way using the existing knowledge of the individual children. Diagnostic assessment also provides the teachers with an opportunity to identify misconceptions or gaps in the prior learning of the students so that they exactly know what the children know already and what are they able to do. Diagnostic assessment defines the individual children's abilities to the teachers so that they can divide their attention among the children as per their needs. The objective should be to try to bring all children at the same level before judging their abilities by means of formative or summative assessment. On the other hand, authentic assessment aims at creating standardized tests that provide the teachers with evaluation of the children's performance in real-life tasks as well as their ability to apply the theoretical concepts they learn on real-life situations (Hoy and Hoy, 2009). The importance of authentic assessment in drawing conclusion about a child's ability or progress cannot be overemphasized since the fundamental objective of teaching is to enable the children to perform efficiently in real-life challenges.

References:

Hoy, A. W., and Hoy, W. K. (2009). *Instructional leadership: A research-based guide to learning in schools* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education.

Levine, M. (n. d.). Why Some Students are Poor Test-Takers. Retrieved from http://www.readingtreelearning.com/pdf/poor_test_taking.pdf.