

Performance-based assessment essay sample



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Performance based assessment is most commonly known as an educational assessment which judges the student knowledge and skills based on observation of the student behavior or the inspection of students products. On the other hand, standardized testing is a written form test, which measures the temporary understanding of facts and skills. As a result of standardized testing outcomes being temporary, the genuine of this testing type is obsolete. Hence, I will argue that performance based assessment should be the primary form of assessment used to determine the success of student's knowledge and skills, because it assesses a wide range of student competencies, it allows student demonstrations, and it has ecological validity.

My first view for supporting my argument is that performance based assessment should be the primary form of assessment because it assesses students competencies in a wide range. Performance based assessment in a classroom could consist of the observation of a child's development of a project to assess his or her analytical abilities, portfolios which illustrates the student's progress (in many areas) over a period of time, station activities which could consist of a student's interaction with problematic issues of critical thinking skill, videotaping, interview, and etc. While, the examples listed above are just a few of many examples of performance based assessment, all of these above could serve as an instrument in an alternate form of assessment other than standardized.

According to (Rotbert, Iris) Phi Delta Kappan , 2001, utilizing the performance based assessment allows one to widen the curriculum whereas standardized testing does just the opposite by narrowing the curriculum and

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encourages rote learning. Having argued one point for supporting my view of performance based assessment; I now wish to consider rival views of standardized testing. Author (Steege, 2001) has stated that one of the leading concerns of performance-based assessment is that this form of assessment is time-consuming and impractical. I further defend my claim of performance based assessment by listing key steps to a functional performance based assessment process: (a) a clear description of what? s being assessed, (b) a method for assessing and (c) the expected outcome. These steps I believe are no more time-consuming than preparing to teach the test for the S. A. T. Which of the results would be more genuine, the performance based assessment or the S. A. T.

My second view for supporting my argument is that performance based assessment allows demonstration through performances. With the wide range of different learning styles in our classrooms today, I believed the abilities of a child is not to be assumed based on one form of a written test. Students should be assessed by a number of ways and assessment through demonstration is one, which assesses a student who? s a kinesthetic learner. Performance based assessment allows students to demonstrate mastery in a personal and integrated way. Students are able to demonstrate mastery personally because he or she will apply his or her real life experiences to the task, which are involved in the demonstration. This demonstration task can be done either individually or with teammates, which involves integration. At any rate, the real student is being tested fairly with a lesser degree of biased related test questions.

The results of this type of testing are results, which can be used in years to come. It will have more value in years as oppose to written test questions, which will be forgotten soon after memorized. However, when using the typical standardized test measurement, many people are asking the question whether it can be used after school years. Having argued the second point for my view of performance-based assessment, I will for the second time consider rival views. According to (Lam, 1995, p. 1) many rivals ask the question if performance based assessment could be fair among students with different backgrounds. I will once again support my argument by quoting research from author Tony Lam: ? Assessment for its intended purpose is unfair if (1) students are not provided with equal opportunity to demonstrate what they know and thus the assessments are biased and (2) these biased assessments are used to judge student capabilities and needs, and (3) these distorted views of the students are used to make educational decisions that ultimately lead to limitations of educational opportunities for them.?

Next, I will offer support for what is perhaps my most controversial assumption, that performance based assessment has its ? ecological validity.? Ecological validity means that the students assessment will be measured according to his or her environmental experiences. This assumption is based on the fact that performance based assessment allows students to perform, as they will have to perform real life. In other words, students use their prior knowledge from pasts experiences, cultural experiences, language proficiencies, cognitive style, and interest to perform a certain task. When using a standardized test measurement students are not

awarded this opportunity and are therefore assessed on material which they have no knowledge of.

The ecological validity? allow students to make choices. For example, an LEP student may opt to construct a project as oppose to a written test, or an oral test could be given to an LEP student using his or her native language. The ecological validity? view says that assessment is equal among all children because its assessment is tailored to the individual students instruction context and special background. Yet again having argued my third point for performance base assessment, I will for consider another rival view of standardized testing. According to (Rotbert, 2001 p. 1) there is a parallel line between accountability and standardized testing. Many people thought ? high-stake testing? would increase the academic standards within the United States. However, according to research, the data used to analyze the status of our nation? s education status does not support a decline and as a result the high-stake testing has become a self-fulfilling prophecy by weakening the academic standards. The standardized test has now become the new educational curriculum for many teachers.

My view is that performance based assessment should be the primary form of assessment used to determine the success of students knowledge and skills, because it assesses a wide range of student competencies, it allows student demonstrations, and it has ecological validity. Performance assessment has the ability to provide students with rich, contextualized, and engaging tasks that standardized testing has yet to provide. Performance based assessment allows students to choose or design tasks or questions that are meaningful and interesting to them. One can make adjustments

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based on student experiences and skills and can test student individually to insure that the student is fully examined? Now I raise the question to my standardized testing supporters, although standardized assessment is encouraged because it is a requirement for reliability, which is more necessary, the true assessment of students skills and knowledge or the weakened quality of education by the encouragement of policies that may not be in the best interest of the children?