

Assessing to Empower Learners

Course

What Do We Assess? [4:39]

https://players.brightcove.net/2566261579001/HyuWsfFhb_default/index.html?videoId=6089863887001

About

Learn the components of student learning best suited for assessment in the library

Transcript

We need to be aware that librarians assess skills not content. Of course, those skills have to be integral to the content objectives but what we teach are the skills that will help students learn the content most effectively and that's what we need to assess. We also need to be sure that we not only teach the skill, but we assess how students can apply the skill. We don't want them to just define the word inference but to actually apply inference when they're reading a passage. They can actually do it.

You can frame your skills instruction around an inquiry process. That's a very logical way to organize any kind of an investigation. I, personally use a model of inquiry that I developed. You will find if you teach skills at every appropriate phase of inquiry, then students are going to be able to move through that process independently.

Let me just give you a few examples of the kinds of skills you're going to see on that priority list. For example, in elementary, third grade, you might have an inquiry project where students are asked to decide on the best pet to have in the classroom. Well, you might want to teach a wonder skill. Students formulate questions about the topic with guidance. What students would do then is to demonstrate that they can figure out what questions about an animal would help them decide if it would be a good pet for the classroom.

At eighth grade, you might have an inquiry project where you're asking students to present a living history museum about the impact of the Civil War through the eyes of those who lived at that time. Certainly, you might want to teach an investigate skill, recognizing the effect of different perspectives and points of view on information. Students would be able then in that living history museum, to demonstrate that they understand and they can compare different perspectives as they learn from their classmates in the living history museum.

In high school, at tenth grade, you might ask students to create a news magazine of life in the Middle Ages. The skill you might want to teach is to use specialized reference materials to find specific and in-depth information. Students would learn to use specialized databases, historical websites, and primary sources to find in-depth information about life in the Middle Ages in order to write their news articles.

We also need to think about skills for the digital environment. For example, at the connect level where contextualization is so important, students can't necessarily find an overview on the Internet, but we can provide links to overview information or we can design our instruction around big ideas, or central ideas, to help them get that concept in their head before they start finding more specific information. We can teach mind mapping to help students visualize the whole.

We also need to think about assessing dispositions and attitudes. We know dispositions are important, but they're very difficult to assess. How do you assess perseverance? Well, there are a number of ways: you could do a reflection log, an in-process research log where you could see, are they willing to go back?, or exit cards with attitude questions, or completion of interim checkpoints, so you make sure they are persevering, they are following the process. Think about what other dispositions you would want to assess, and then how you might do that.

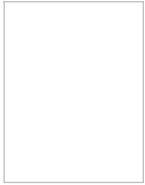
And, finally, we do need to think about responsibilities. We can assess those, think about what are the responsibilities that you want every student to develop? And the main ones for me really are the whole idea of social responsibility, of finding different perspectives and of using information ethically. Well, I know you can figure out how to assess that. That's part of our responsibility as librarians.

Activities

Teach Skill, Assess Skill

In this video, Dr. Stripling gives multiple examples of how you might first teach a particular skill related to inquiry and then assess the skill in a meaningful way. In her handout "Critical Inquiry Skills for the Digital Environment," Dr. Stripling maps essential digital research skills to the Stripling Model of Inquiry. Read through the handout and then complete the reflection activity.

RESOURCES



REFLECT & PRACTICE:

After reading "Critical Inquiry Skills for the Digital Environment," select five of the suggested teaching strategies that you would like to incorporate into your instruction. Then, brainstorm possible ways that you could assess those skills in the context of your library and/or through collaborations with teachers at your school, recording your ideas in the document above.

Handout

Packet

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Annotated Bibliography.](#)

MLA CITATION

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