

UNIT



ASSESSMENT TOOLS

## UNIT 3: ASSESSMENT TOOLS

(4 weeks/12 hours)

### Teaching and learning resources for Unit 3

#### Handouts for Student Teachers

##### Week 9

‘Unit 3, Week 9, Session 1: Performance-based Assessment’

‘Unit 3, Week 9, Session 1: The Green Bean Competition’ (PowerPoint presentation)

##### Week 10

‘Unit 3, Week 10, Session 1: The Professional Portfolio’

‘Unit 3, Week 10, Session 1: National Professional Standards for Teachers in Pakistan (NPSTP): Standard 1 Subject Matter Knowledge’

‘Unit 3, Week 10, Session 1: National Professional Standards for Teachers in Pakistan (NPSTP): Standard 4 Assessment’

#### Resources for faculty

##### Week 8

‘Unit 4, Week 12, Session 3: Guidelines for Writing Test Questions’

##### Week 9

‘Unit 3, Week 9, Session 1: Performance-based Assessment’

#### Readings

##### Week 7

- McMillan, pp. 103–120
- Miller, Linn, and Gronlund, pp. 117–119, 268–279, 309–315

##### Week 8

- McMillan, pp. 202–215
- Miller, Linn, and Gronlund, pp. 232–250
- Stiggins, Arter, Chappius, and Chappius, pp. 167–186

##### Week 9

- McMillan, pp. 220–252
- Stiggins, Arter, Chappius, and Chappius, pp. 189–230

##### Week 10

- McMillan, pp. 256–276
- Miller, Linn, and Gronlund, pp. 282–303
- Stiggins, Arter, Chappius, and Chappius, pp. 335–355

# Week 7: Interviewing teachers about assessment

## Session 1: Constructing an interview form



### **In class today (5 minutes)**

This week they will conduct an interview with a teacher asking about her or his perceptions and beliefs about assessment. Today, they will construct the interview form or tool.

Give the class this outline for today:

- Presentation about the purpose of the interview. Review questions and format for the teacher interview about assessment
- Design an interview form for a teacher interview about assessment
- Preparing for the interview

### **Presentation: The interview (5–10 minutes)**

Content for the presentation is here for your consideration. The information you actually present and the way you present it is your choice.

Interviews and questionnaires are similar informal assessment procedures. They are used in classroom assessment to obtain factual information and opinions and beliefs from those with the most interest in what happens in the classroom: students, teachers, and parents. Interviews have an advantage over questionnaires in that the interviewer can probe and get below the surface of the initial response. One disadvantage to both procedures is that responses can be biased and the interviewer may not know it. Also, responses are not standardized, and thus it is harder to compare answers from people who participate in the same interview. Despite this, interviews can be used with individuals and with small groups (such as focus groups). The primary purpose of this interview is to give Student Teachers practice creating the questions and form for an interview.

The secondary purpose of the interview is to introduce Student Teachers to classroom teachers' knowledge, opinions, and attitudes toward assessment. Each Student Teacher will only interview one teacher. Because interview responses are intended to be individualized rather than standardized, it is difficult to draw reliable conclusions about the topic from a collection of individual responses.

However, there will be approximately 25 teachers interviewed in each college or university class, and so, if they look at all of the data collected, they may be able draw some conclusions about this group of teachers and their opinions and beliefs about assessment. They may find, for example, that all the teachers they interview equate assessment with testing. Or they may find that all the teachers equate feedback with praise.

### **Discussing a format and questions (15 minutes)**

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Ask Student Teachers what information they want to collect about the teacher before they start asking questions.

Student Teacher responses may include background information such as the teacher's name (optional), date, school (optional), teacher's grade and/or subject(s), number of students in the class, number of years of teaching experience, preparation for teaching (degree), and assessment course(s) taken and when.

Ask Student Teachers which questions they might include on their interview form.

Possible questions include:

- Do you assess children's learning? Why do you assess learning? How do you assess their learning? How often do you assess learning?
- Some people say that assessment is part of teaching. Do you agree? Why? Why not?
- Do you keep records of assessment? What records do you keep?
- Do you give tests? How often? How do you prepare a test? Do you think students should be allowed to mark each other's tests?
- Do you make adjustments in your teaching based on assessment? Can you give me an example?
- What does *feedback* mean to you? Please give me an example of feedback you might give to a student in your class. How do you give feedback?
- Do children in your class assess their own learning? Can you give me an example?

You might want to provide a set of questions for Student Teachers to choose from to help them get started.

Advise Student Teachers to avoid asking too many questions and to think carefully about the sequence of questions.

Encourage them to prepare probes to initial questions so that they receive detailed responses; for example, 'Tell me more about what you mean by ...,' 'Can you give me an example?', and 'Why do you say that?' Finally, remind them to provide plenty of space on their forms to write the teacher's full response.

### **Drafting the interview form (30 minutes)**

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Ask Student Teachers to design their interview form.

Review the forms they design and encourage them to seek feedback from peers.

### **Preparing for the interview (10 minutes)**

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Explain to Student Teachers that they should all plan to interview a teacher. They should work in pairs, and while one Student Teacher asks questions, the other should record the responses. However, a teacher should only be interviewed once, so each Student Teacher needs to interview a different teacher.

Remind Student Teachers to conduct the interview when students are not in the classroom so the teacher's attention isn't divided between responsibilities to them and to the Student Teacher. The interview should last no more than 15–20 minutes.

Explain to Student Teachers to be careful not to evoke negative feelings on the part of the teacher. They can tell the teacher that they are doing this to practice writing questions for an interview and creating a form on which to record responses to the interviewer's questions. The Student Teacher can remind the teacher that they are not judging the teacher's responses. There are no right or wrong answers.

Finally, remind them that they will need two copies of their interview form: one to ask questions from and another on which to record responses.

## Session 2: Conducting the interview

Arrange for Student Teachers to be in schools on this day carrying out their interviews.

## Session 3: Reviewing the data—What did you learn?

### **In class today (5 minutes)**

Explain that in this session Student Teachers will discuss data from the interviews; the second half is used to discuss data from the observation:

- Small group discussion of responses to the interview questions
- Class discussion of responses to the interview questions
- Critique of the interview tool
- Homework assignment
- Closing

### **Small group discussion of responses to the interview questions (20 minutes)**

Student Teachers form groups of five and choose one person to report to the class. The group discussion centres on teachers' responses to the big questions about the meaning of assessment and feedback. Discussion should also include questions and concerns about the interview tool, both its questions and format. There isn't much time, so the discussion needs to move fast.

### **Class discussion of responses to the interview questions (20 minutes)**

A selection of the following questions can shape the discussion:

- Did anyone get an answer with which they strongly agreed? Tell the answer.
- Did anyone get an answer with which they strongly disagreed? Tell us.
- Are these answers consistent or inconsistent with what you are learning in this course?
- Did you get the impression that teachers value tests? Do they make their own?
- Can you tell from their responses if the teachers use information about their students' knowledge and skills to make decisions about teaching? For example, do they check on prior knowledge before they begin to teach a new topic?



- Did the interview cause you to feel that you may have a different attitude toward assessment and different skills from other teachers working in the school where you are hired to teach after you graduate?
- If so, will that be a particular challenge for you?
- What will you do about the challenge, if it exists?

### **Critique of the interview tool (10 minutes)**

Remind Student Teachers about the limitations of open-ended interviews as a method of collecting information. One challenge is that the same question can produce 20 different responses from 20 interviewees, so it can be difficult to generalize across a set of data collected—especially when responses are very different.

Interviews can be biased. Respondents often say what they think an interviewer wants to hear. Questions and probes must be selected carefully so as to avoid bias or leading respondents to a particular answer. For example, an interview on the same topic as the Student Teachers' would not begin with a question such as 'Why do you do assessment?' because it must first be established that the teacher actually does assessment.

On the other hand, interviews produce rich, descriptive data that can be very revealing and interesting.

Ask Student Teachers if they think interviews have a place in assessing children's learning in the classroom. Is this a technique they would use to find out what children understand or know, or believe about a topic?

### **Closing (5 minutes)**

Call on five Student Teachers and ask each to give an original statement or question (with no repetitions) representing the most important fact, concept, or uncertainty they encountered during this week's class sessions.

## Week 8: Essay questions—Measuring complex achievement

Week 8 does not have any handout exercises and bases its content on reading from McMillan (pages 202–215), Miller, Linn, and Gronlund (pages 232–250), Stiggins, Arter, Chappius, and Chappius (pages 167–186).

The absence of handouts makes it possible for Instructors to design their own activities to teach the concepts covered in the assigned readings and the course guide outline for week 8. It is important to make connections between this week and the previous week (week 7).

Tell Student Teachers that this week they will continue to study the assessment tools. This week will focus on essay questions, which are more challenging to create and mark as compared to the assessment tools studied last week but are very useful for assessing complex achievement. Tell Student Teachers that in week 16 of the course they will be asked to write essay questions for this course to help them prepare for the final exam; thus, they should start paying special attention to course topics and skills that can be better measured by essay questions.

## Session 1

In addition to using the assigned readings and the course guide, consult the handout 'Guidelines for Writing Test Questions' and refer to the 'essay questions' section of the handout. Design an activity that includes working with this handout to teach the following concepts:

- Definition of short-answer essays (restricted-response questions)
- Definition of longer-answer essays (extended-response questions)

Use assigned readings for week 8 to design learning activities to cover the following:

- Learning goals that can be measured by short-answer essays
- Learning goals that can be measured by longer-answer essays
- Advantages and disadvantages of essay tests

## Session 2

In addition to using the assigned readings for this week, use the handout 'Guidelines for Writing Test Questions' to teach Student Teachers about the following concepts:

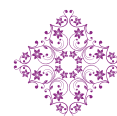
- Guidelines for writing essay questions
- Practice writing essay questions

The following connection can be made with week 16: Design a classroom activity or homework assignment for Student Teachers that requires writing essay questions using the content from any week from this course.

## Session 3

Use readings assigned for this week to teach Student Teachers about guidelines for scoring essay questions.

During week 16, when Student Teachers are expected to write essay questions for a final examination for this course, they are asked to write a sample answer for an essay question. Discuss this practice with them so they are familiar with the idea of writing model answers to use when grading essay questions.



## Week 9: Performance-based assessment (project-based assessment)

Student Teachers must prepare in advance for session 1, week 9.

At the end of the previous session, provide each Student Teacher with the 'Performance-based Assessment' handout and an example of a student group PowerPoint presentation for 'The Green Bean Competition'.

Before the first class of this week, Students Teachers should have read 'Performance-based Assessment' and the PowerPoint presentation 'The Green Bean Competition'.

The Instructor as well as Student Teachers need to prepare for this class. Before class write these definitions of *performance assessment* on chart paper (or choose other definitions that you prefer):

Performance assessment requires students to demonstrate knowledge and skills, including the process by which they solve problems. (Project Appleseed)

Any assessment strategy designed to estimate a child's knowledge, understanding, ability, skill, and/or attitudes in a consistent fashion across individuals emphasizing methods other than standardized achievement tests, particularly those using multiple-choice formats. Performance-based assessments typically include exhibitions, investigations, demonstrations, written or oral responses, journals, and portfolios. (New York State Education Department)

A set of strategies for the...application of knowledge, skills, and work habits through the performance of tasks that are meaningful and engaging to students'. (K. M. Hibbard, *A Teacher's Guide to Performance-Based Learning and Assessment*)



### Session 1: Introduction to performance-based assessment

#### **In class today (10 minutes)**

This week, Student Teachers will learn about performance-based assessment tasks, what goes into creating them, and how to use them in class to measure learning.

Tell Student Teachers that they will study and interact with two examples of performance-based assessment projects, one extended task (three weeks) and one short-duration task (three to four days).