Professional Development Strand

Unit 3: Classroom Management and Administration

Module 3.2 Assessment and Evaluation

Student Support Materials

Acknowledgements

PASTEP

Primary and Secondary Teacher Education Project

Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)
GRM International

Papua New Guinea-Australia Development Cooperation Program

Unit outline

Unit	#	Modules
Unit 3 **Classroom Management and Administration**	3.1	Classroom Management
	3.2	**Assessment and Evaluation**
	3.3	Classroom Administration

Icons

📖	Read	or	research
✎	Write	or	summarise
☞	Activity	or	discussion

Table of contents

Module 3.2 Assessment and Evaluation

Rationale

This module is one of three in a two-credit point unit. The actual break-up of topics and time allocation is flexible, and to be decided upon by the lecturer. There will be approximately 24 hours of lecture periods for the three modules that comprise this unit.

The other modules which comprise this unit are

- Module 3.1 Classroom Management

- Module 3.3 Classroom Administration

This module introduces beginning teachers to the purpose and processes of assessment and evaluation in primary school classrooms.

Assessment and evaluation is perceived to be an integral part of the teaching and learning process, especially in monitoring and reporting on learner's progress at different levels or stages of development. The shift from more content based assessment and evaluation to a more process based one is discussed in the light of the reform curriculum.

Objectives

By the end of this module you will be able to:

- Define the key terms used in assessment and evaluation

- Explain the difference between assessment and evaluation

- Describe the purposes of assessment and evaluation

- Demonstrate methods and techniques of data gathering and ongoing monitoring of student progress.

- Select appropriate assessment and evaluation techniques and strategies to monitor individual student's progress

- Relate assessment and evaluation information to ongoing planning for individuals and the class.

How to use this material

This module is written as a series of topics, identified in the table of contents, and by their large sub headings. Each topic includes some readings, and activities to complete. Your lecturer will guide you through the materials during the lecture program. Sometimes, you may work directly from the book during the lectures. Sometimes, your lecturer may ask you to complete an activity or reading for homework. Your lecturer may include additional information and topics.

Major topics include:

- Assessment and Evaluation: Some definitions and key concepts

- Linking teaching and policy to assessment and evaluation practices

- Information gathering techniques.

Elective Unit: Assessment and Evaluation.

This module introduces assessment and evaluation practices relevant to primary schools. The elective unit E *Assessment and Evaluation* explores the concepts of student centred assessment and evaluation methods, including testing

Assessment

Your lecturer will provide details of assessment requirements during the first week of lectures. These assessment tasks will provide the opportunity for you to show your understanding and in some cases, apply your knowledge of the theory to practical situations.

References

The student support materials contain all the readings necessary to complete the unit. These readings have been adapted from the following texts:

Barry, K. and King, L. (1998) *Beginning Teaching and Beyond* (3rd ed) Social Science Press, Wentworth Falls, NSW.

Department of Education, Papua New Guinea (2003) *National Curriculum Statement for Papua New Guinea 2003.*

Mc Burney- Fry, G. (1998) *Improving your Practicum.* Social Science Press. Aust.

Mariko, S. (2000) *Assessment and Evaluation* Student booklet; Professional Development Strand, Madang Teachers College

Marsh, C. (2000*) Handbook for beginning teachers*. *(2nd ed)* Longman, Australia.

National Department of Education (1994) *Classroom Testing*. Measurement Services Unit. Port Moresby.

Wilson, J. and Fehring, H. (1995) *Keying into Assessment* OUP. Melbourne.

Internet sites related to assessment and evaluation:

> http://www.eddept.wa.edu.au/centoff/cmis/eval/curriculum/assessment

> http://www.education.qld.gov.au/tal/tips/01121.htm

> http://www.qscc.qld.edu.au/testing_ assessment/index.html

Why do we Evaluate Students Learning?

*Adapted from Madang Teachers College, (2000) Assessment and Evaluation Handbook.
Professional Development Strand*

How well did the students learn? What things did the students learn easily and what things did they find difficult? Why are students not learning certain things? What am I, the teacher doing, to extend the more able students and assist those experiencing difficulties?   These are some of the questions teachers may ask themselves when trying to decide upon the effectiveness of the teaching and learning taking place in their classrooms.

Purposes of evaluation.

In order to evaluate effectively you need to be clear about your purpose for evaluating. This will focus you to the sort of information you need to collect and the techniques you will use. When teachers deal with questions raised, they are involved in the process of evaluation.

Evaluation can

- Tell you how effectively students have learned in terms of your objectives

- Lead to increased learning

- Help you diagnose sources of error to help you decide a starting or follow-up point for teaching

- Help you judge the performances of students to help in grouping, planning individual programs and reporting to others

- Assist you to identify strengths and weaknesses in your teaching

- Provide students with feedback about their progress

- Stimulate student motivation

- Give students the opportunity to develop skills in self evaluation

- Give parents, school administrators and later employers a guide to the student's progress

- Be a means of making the teaching profession accountable to parents and the wider community.

☞ **3.2 Activity 1**

In a non-educational setting, identify five things you've recently judged as being 'good' and five things you've thought were 'bad' and give reasons for your judgement.

Give an example of a time when you have evaluated something and based your judgement on some form of evidence or collected data.

Assessment and Evaluation: Some Definitions and Key Concepts

Adapted from Wilson, J & Fehring, H. (1995) __Keying Into Assessment__ OUP. Melbourne; Barry, K. & King, L. (1998) __Beginning Teaching and Beyond__ Social Science Press.

As teachers, we are constantly faced with the challenges of assessment and evaluation in our classrooms. As a tertiary student, your college life revolves around the submission of assignments and essays, and the end of semester testing program. Sometimes you may be required to be a part of a group who are being evaluated, and sometimes you may be evaluating others.

What do these terms **assessment and evaluation** mean? What about **measurement** and testing**?**

Before reading on, complete the next activity.

☞ 3.2 Activity 2

In your workbook, write down your definition of the following words. Do not refer to any other references.

- *Assessment*
- *Evaluation*
- *Measurement*
- *Testing*
- *Formative Assessment*
- *Summative Assessment*
- *Norm Referenced Assessment*
- *Reporting.*

Keep your responses, as you will be referring to these again later.

Defining the terms

📖

Measurement

Measurement involves using rules to assign a number(s), such as a score, rating or a ranking, to an individual or group for a specified behaviour or performance. (Ebel & Frisbie, in Barry and King, 1998)

In other words, **measurement** takes place whenever a **score, rating** or **ranking** is given to a student eg. Mea scored 7 out of 10 answers correct.

Assessment

The term ' assessment' refers to the **collection of information** about a student's learning achievements and the effectiveness of educational programs. *(Wilson & Fehring, 1995, p.3)*

As teachers, we gather data, or information about what students have learnt and how they went about their learning, and we can do this in many different ways. We then use this data/information to make value judgements about achievement in a particular subject (or learning area), attitudes towards learning, strengths and weaknesses in a specific skill, knowledge and understanding of process etc.

The following are examples of assessment data or information that have been collect for evaluating a student's information

Matai's English file / portfolio:
- A draft of a story
- An edited version of the same story, written three days later
- A published version of the story
- A proofreading exercise completed in class
- Reconstructing the story from parts.

John's art folio
- Construction made from local gathered materials
- Leaf printing
- Drawing and design of tapa cloth design

.

☞ 3.2 Activity 3

What information or data could you collect to assess a student's handwriting?

Formative assessment

Formative assessment is a term used to refer to continuous or ongoing assessment and evaluation processes. Formative techniques are often informal and are closely linked to the teaching and learning practices in the classroom eg anecdotal records, learning logs, reflective journals, contracts and goal- based assessment.

Summative assessment

Summative assessment refers to assessment practices that are undertaken at a particular time – often at the end of a unit of work, a subject, a year of study or a course. The purpose of this form of assessment is to sum up the achievement of a student.

Evaluation

In the strict sense, evaluation is the major step in the overall process but it must be preceded by measurement and /or assessment. Neither the measurement nor assessment processes involve judgements about the worth of a score, rating or ranking.

The term 'evaluation' is used to denote the making of **value judgements** about students' work. Having collected the information relating to one or more of the syllabus areas, teachers make judgements about competencies, skill development, attitudes, and general change and growth in learning. We use various benchmarks (or yardsticks) to make such judgements. We also use assessment data to make judgements about our teaching and learning methods, curriculum programs and resources in terms of their effectiveness.

Look at the example below.

Jacob has demonstrated achievement of the following objective taken from the Lower Primary Language Syllabus Grades 3 – 5 (Dept of Education, PNG p8)

Communicate effectively and creatively in spoken vernacular in a wider range of contexts and for more mature purposes, such as telling stories with more details and taking part in discussions to share ideas and experiences.

Teacher's comment: Jacob told a story to the class in tok ples, which related his experiences when fishing and travelling in a canoe with his father. He joined in the discussion about transport, sharing his experiences on a boat trip to a local island. Jacob spoke clearly and effectively.

The teacher has made a judgement related to the information gained whilst Jacob was presenting his talk.

Norm referenced assessment

Norm referenced assessment is a formal technique whereby a student is compared with a standard, or level of performance, of a group of students who have previously undertaken the same activity or task.

The 'norm', average or typical expectation of the group becomes the standard with which to compare the achievements of individual students in the future.

The purpose of this form of assessment and evaluation is literally to **compare** student's work on a particular activity/ task. These 'tests' are often criticised because the tasks are taken out of context (decontextualised) from the everyday classroom curriculum.

Criterion referenced assessment

Criterion – referenced assessment assists teachers in interpreting information in respect to a student's performance against set criteria. It is an absolute measure. For example, if John's teacher had stated that he must get 9 out of 10 items correct in order to show mastery of the task, then 7 out of 10 would be interpreted as non achievement of mastery.

Decision making

Decision making is the final step in the evaluation process. What will the teacher do as a consequence of measuring, assessing and evaluating students' learning?

If it is judged that most students have achieved the objectives of the unit that had been taught, the teacher will probably decide to move on to the next unit. If it is judged that some of the unit was not understood well, the teacher will probably revise or re-teach the work before moving on to the next unit. If it is judged that a few students have not mastered particular aspects of the unit, the teacher will probably plan individual remedial programs for those students.

☞ 3.2 **Activity 4**

> 1. *In your own words, explain the difference in meaning between the terms, 'measurement', 'assessment', 'evaluation' and decision making.*
>
> 2. *Explain with an example the difference between norm-referenced and criterion referenced assessment.*
>
> *Reflect upon measurement, assessment, evaluation and decision making in your college program, and during your previous practicum experiences.*

Types of evaluation

Three types of evaluation are commonly regarded as important by teachers. They are:

- Diagnostic evaluation

- Formative evaluation

- Summative evaluation

Diagnostic evaluation.

Diagnostic evaluation has two main purposes:

- One purpose is concerned with determining *starting points for teaching*. This decision is based on information related to the student's prior learning and their general ability.

- The second purpose is concerned with identifying *learning difficulties* as the basis for follow- up teaching.

Formative evaluation

Formative evaluation is used during teaching. It is concerned with giving feedback to the student and the teacher about the progress of learning. This feedback can give students an indication of how the learning is going – what they are doing well and which areas of learning are in need of improvement.

Techniques which are important in formative evaluation are observation, questioning, conferencing, marking, collecting work samples, student presentations and demonstrations, student self –evaluation and short answer tests.

☞ 3.2 Activity 5

Present a summary in your own words of the different definitions discussed related to assessment and evaluation. Present your work as a table or a chart to share with your group.

Assessment: Readings from the Syllabus Documents

On the following pages, there are two readings. They are both published by the National Department of Education. One is an extract from the *Primary Curriculum in Papua New Guinea* (1999), the other from the *Primary Education Handbook* (1999).

Read the following articles carefully. Look for discussion of the different types of assessment and evaluation discussed previously.

Assessment

Assessment in schools has several different purposes. It can show the students themselves how well they have learned something, or what kind of things they are best at doing. It can show the teachers how well they have taught something. It can show teachers what areas different students need extra help with. It can help show parents how their children are improving. It can help teachers or the Department of Education compare one student with all the others, and give each student a grade (such as Distinction or Pass).

Students learn in many different ways and have many different skills. When students have to show how much they have learned or what their skills are, they should also be allowed to do this in many different ways. So teachers should use many different kinds of assessment.

If teachers only use multiple-choice tests (in which students only have to write A, B, C or D as an answer), students who are good at explaining things in words or doing practical things will not have a chance to show what they are good at. Using many different kinds of tests gives all students a chance to show what they are good at. It also encourages students to learn all the required skills and knowledge, not just the kinds that can be tested in one particular kind of test.

The kinds of tests that teachers use should be closely related to the kind of skills or knowledge they have been trying to teach. For example, if teachers have been teaching how to play a particular game, they should test their students by watching them play; they should not just ask the students to write down the rules of the game. Also, if they have been teaching the students how to do a particular kind of writing, they should test their students by getting them to write something of their own in that style.

The Department of Education gives teachers some examples of different ways to test students. Sometimes teachers will be able to use these without making changes, but often teachers will have to make up their own tests, using these examples as a guide. There are thousands of classrooms across the country. A single set of tests cannot show how well students have learned what has been done in every classroom. It is important that teachers develop their own ways of testing their own students.

Sometimes it is necessary for the Department of Education to test all the students in a particular grade across the country, using the same set of tests at the same time. These are the national examinations, and they are important in grades when some students are allowed to go on to higher grades and some are not (for example, Grade 8 and Grade 10).

Many people think that national examinations are the only ones that matter. This is not true. Assessment done within the schools is extremely important, and together with the national examinations, it is used to decide the students' final results.
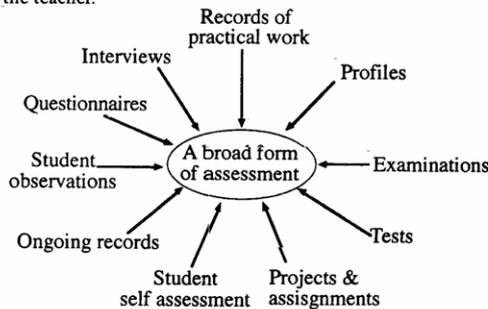
When students leave school, they should have more than a list of marks or a set of grades in different subjects. They should also have a certificate from their school which says all the most important things they have actually achieved at school.

Assessment

Assessment is a way of finding out if the child understands or has learned something. It should also:

- Provide help if students are not learning
- Compare children with other children
- Compare children against a checklist or some chosen criteria, such as 'the ability to read a book' etc.

The words 'assessment' and 'examinations' are often spoken as if they mean the same thing. They do not. Examinations are one type of assessment tool. There are many other ways to assess someone. There is currently an ongoing debate to decide how best to assess children and who should do it. The reform curriculum is stressing a broader type of learning which means broader forms of assessment may be needed. The diagram shows the variety of assessment tools available to the teacher.

Detailed decisions on how assessment will be done for the new curriculum have not yet been made.

Curriculum and assessment are closely related.

Records of practical work

Interviews

Profiles

Questionnaires

Student observations → A broad form of assessment ← Examinations

Ongoing records

Tests

Student self assessment   Projects & assisgnments

Classroom testing, DOE, 1984 (revised 1994). A useful book to help understand assessment. Available from MSU, CDD.

Examinations

National examinations are set by the Measurement Services Unit of the Curriculum Development Division. The three main reasons for examinations have always been:

- Selection
- Monitoring standards
- Awarding certificates

Although examinations are believed to be too narrow to test integral human development, they are believed to be fair and free from corruption.

Some people now suggest that assessment should provide a much broader picture or profile of each child so that future selectors or employers have more information.

There are two examinations that primary students currently sit, one for children in grade six and the other for children in grade eight. The grade six examination is called the Primary Education Certificate Examination (PECE). The grade 8 examination is called the Certificate of Basic Education (COBE).

Primary Education Handbook Page 33

Internal or external assesment?

Internal assessment: Designed, set and marked by teachers within a school.

External assessment: Designed, set and marked by the Department of Education.

External assessment is usually an examination. Internal assessment often includes areas that examinations cannot test such as report writing or speaking skills. Both types of assessment are important.

There are combinations of these; for example, the Grade Ten Science Practical Examination is designed externally but set and marked internally

*Assessing
performance:
for better
learning*

Two examinations

Primary Education Certificate Examination (PECE)	**Certificate of Basic Education (COBE)**
For grade six Even though the word 'primary' is used for this examination, it was not designed for primary schools.	**For grade eight** This examination was first trialled in 1994 and approved in 1995. In 1999 all provinces sat it except for Sandaun.
It was first introduced in 1982 and is meant for community school children and is used to select for grade seven.	It is skills-based and does not attempt to test content knowledge. It is used to select for grade nine.
There are three papers	There are four papers
Written expression	Written expression
Basic Skills	Literacy skills
Combined Subjects	Numeracy skills
	General skills

PECE specifications

COBE specifications

COBE trial report

PECE report

Transition headaches

The 'transition' situation of the changing education structure mentioned earlier, makes examinations difficult as different provinces are at different stages of reform. There are some rules to help decide what examination students should take. All provinces now have enough primary classes to sit COBE. If COBE is administered in a province, it must be offered to all students in grade eight including those taking grade eight in high schools.

The future of the grade six exam

Current discussion is leaning towards the removal of the PECE grade six examination. The following reasons have been given:
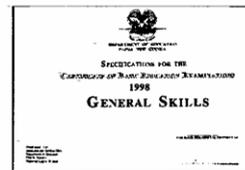
Although the public have confidence in the PECE, it is becoming less important as a selection tool. Many children now go on automatically to grade seven. It costs a lot of money to produce and this money could be used for other projects. Its removal will also save time often used in coaching children for the examination. Some type of monitoring examination may be needed in lower primary to check schools or provinces using a sample of children, but maybe an examination for every child is not necessary.

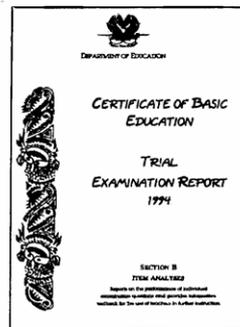Some options are being considered by MSU. They are:

1 Providing provinces with an original copy which they can print and administer themselves if they wish
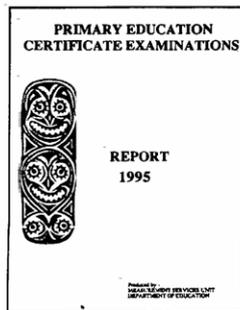2 Having a user-pay policy
3 Abolishing it altogether

Assessing performance: for better learning

Monitoring standards

The Measurement Services Unit monitors all examinations to ensure that the examinations are not faulty. Reports of each examination are produced every year. This shows how well schools performed that year. Remember that exam results are only one sign of a child's educational performance. Currently, MSU also monitors standards at grade 6. You can find out more from the report they publish on a regular basis (see right).

Standards are not only set by examinations

It is much harder to monitor other 'standards' related to the whole curriculum. A quality education is defined in the *Education Sector Review* (ESR page 169), which includes the ability to identify with communities and the acquisition of knowledge and skills relevant to the community. If these are also considered 'standards' then more time and a different form of monitoring are needed to find out if there has been improvement.

Research is being carried out by the National Research Institute to monitor 'success' of the reforms. They have developed a range of indicators or 'standards' to check against and a report was made in 1999, *Reforming Education: Attending to Relevance and Quality* (see right).

Are standards falling?

It is too early to say if standards are rising or falling as a result of the education reform. It is also difficult to state clearly because, as already mentioned, people have different viewpoints of what is meant by 'standards'. Some consider it to be only the examination marks. However, the philosophy described earlier and the points about 'quality' discussed on page 14 of this book remind us that education is more than getting good marks in examinations. We also need to think about aspects not easily assessed, such as socialisation and participation as described in our constitution, or performance in sports, musical or artistic ability and so on.

If we focus on the examination performance of grade eight students sitting for COBE, preliminary results show that students in top up community schools can perform as well as students in high schools (see *Standards of Performance* - right).
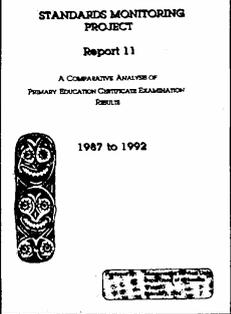
Selection procedures

Only 50% of grade 8 graduates will go into grade 9. COBE will be the main selection tool. National criteria in the form of cut-off marks are set as a guide. These are used by the provincial education board to find a pool of students. Additional criteria can then be used.

Selection from grade six to grade seven and grade eight to grade nine is a provincial responsibility. The need for grade six selections is reducing.
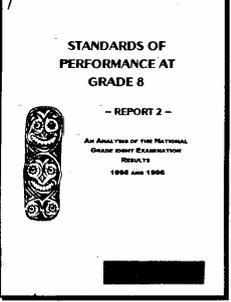
Links to CODE and other alternatives

After grade eight, children who are not selected for further education will be able to enrol with CODE to continue with grade nine and ten studies or they may enrol in a vocational school.
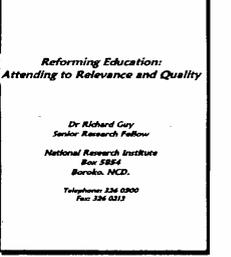
STANDARDS MONITORING PROJECT

Report 11

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PRIMARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION RESULTS

1987 to 1992

Standards monitoring project report no. 11

STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE AT GRADE 8

– REPORT 2 –

AN ANALYSIS OF THE NATIONAL GRADE EIGHT EXAMINATION RESULTS
1995 AND 1996

Standards of performance at G8

Reforming Education: Attending to Relevance and Quality

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Boroko, NCD.

Telephone: 326 0300
Fax: 326 0213

Reforming education: Attending to relevance and quality, 1999. This report discusses the meaning of quality education and lists 34 qualitative indicators which can be used to assess reform outcomes. The indicators emphasise the important role that teachers play in education.

☞ 3.2 Activity 6

After reading through the definitions in the earlier part of the module, and reading the Department of Education's information on assesment, can you comment on any changes in assessment that you might see when looking at the new syllabus? Discuss this in your groups and with your lecturer. What types of assessment and evaluation can be identified in these readings? What is your opinion on the use of examinations? Are these suitable for evaluating primary school students?

Linking Teaching, Policy and Assessment and Evaluation Practices

*Adapted from Wilson & Fehring (1995) Keying into Assessment OUP.*

There are many influences on schools that impact upon assessment policies and practices.

Such influences may include:

- The school environment (teaching and learning policy and beliefs)
- Family and community (voters, employers employees, parents)
- Pressure groups (ethic, religious, unions)
- Policies of the Government.

It is important that the learning philosophy of the school should be reflected in the curriculum programs, and in the assessment and evaluation strategies chosen.

Below is an example of two very different schools. The assessment and evaluation policies of the two schools are very different and so their methods of assessment and evaluation are different.   Look closely at their choice of assessment strategies
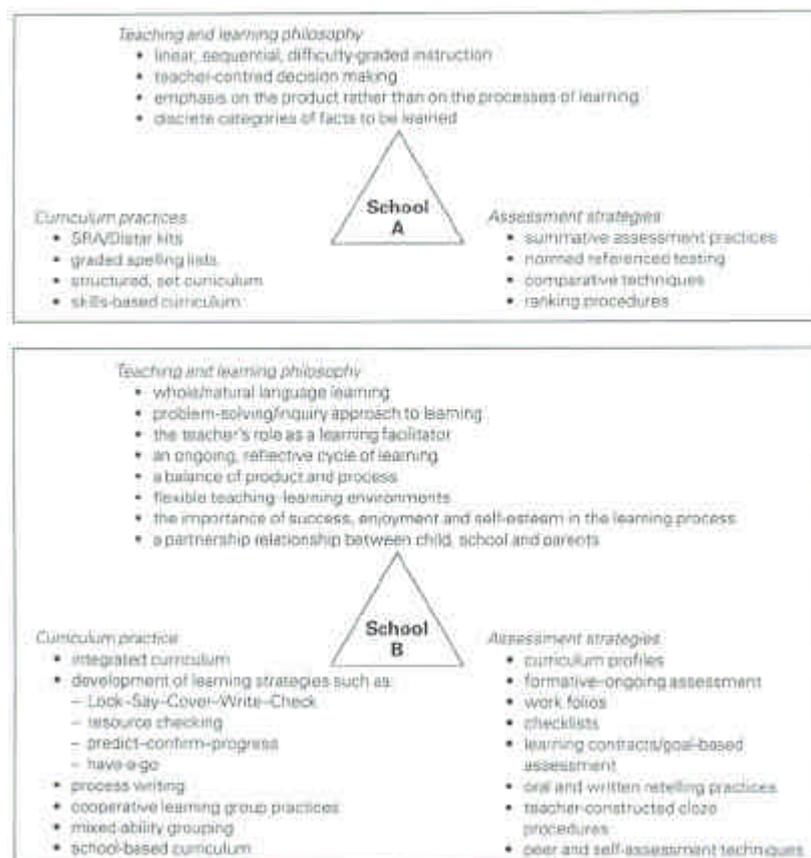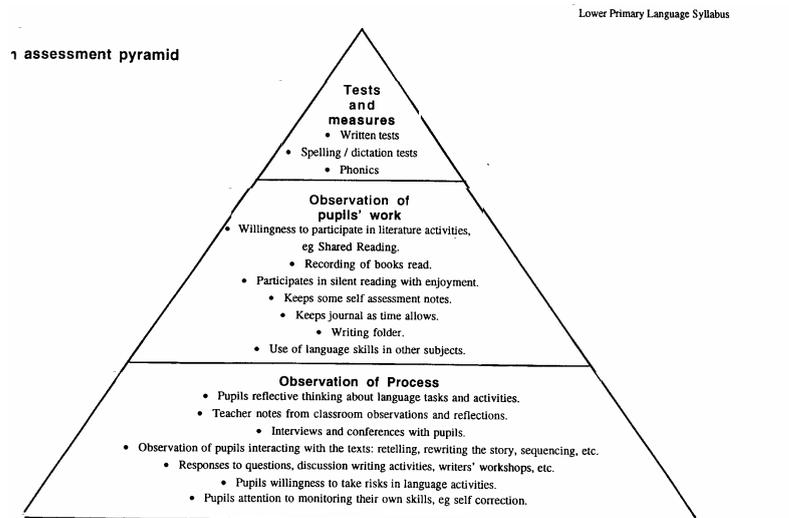
☞ 3.2 Activity 7

Go back to the reading taken from The Primary Curriculum in Papua New Guinea (1999) on page 14 of this module. After reading this again, which teaching and learning philosophy would best match the ideas in the article? Which points from the diagram would support your choice? What type of assessment strategies described in the diagram would be relevant to the philosophy described in the article?

Looking at the Syllabus Documents

It is important that you are familiar with the assessment suggestions given in each of the syllabus documents for lower and upper primary. They reflect the philosophy and teaching methods recommended by the National Department of Education.

The example below is from the Language Syllabus: Grades 3 – 5. The assessment pyramid below represents the suggested types of assessment and amount of time given to each area of the pyramid.

Lower Primary Language Syllabus

n assessment pyramid

Tests and measures
- Written tests
- Spelling / dictation tests
- Phonics

Observation of pupils' work
- Willingness to participate in literature activities, eg Shared Reading.
- Recording of books read.
- Participates in silent reading with enjoyment.
- Keeps some self assessment notes.
- Keeps journal as time allows.
- Writing folder.
- Use of language skills in other subjects.

Observation of Process
- Pupils reflective thinking about language tasks and activities.
- Teacher notes from classroom observations and reflections.
- Interviews and conferences with pupils.
- Observation of pupils interacting with the texts: retelling, rewriting the story, sequencing, etc.
- Responses to questions, discussion writing activities, writers' workshops, etc.
- Pupils willingness to take risks in language activities.
- Pupils attention to monitoring their own skills, eg self correction.

☞ 3.2 Activity 8

Looking at the pyramid, what can you see about the amount of assessment in each area, which is recommended?

Look at other syllabus documents in the lower and upper primary area. Find the section on assessment and summarise in your own words.

Assessment and Reporting: National Curriculum Statement 2003

The Lower Primary reform syllabus materials have been circulating for some years. The Upper Primary documents and updated National Curriculum statement are in limited circulation at the time of writing. Section 7 outlines assessment and reporting.

The new National curriculum and Upper Primary syllabus documents introduce an outcomes based approach to teaching, learning and assessment.

Below is a summary of the key points related to assessment and reporting in the updated National Curriculum statement.

- The process of assessment and reporting in schools should be continuous and based on the learning outcomes defined in the national subject syllabuses. The learning outcomes describe the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that students should achieve for each grade of schooling from Elementary to Grade 12 in all subjects. These learning outcomes are written in terms that enable them to be demonstrated, assessed or measured. The learning outcomes will
  - o Help teachers assess and report students' achievements in relation to the learning outcome statements;
  - o Allow student achievement of the outcomes to be described in consistent ways;
  - o Help teachers to monitor student learning; and
  - o Help teachers to plan their future teaching programs.

- Assessment and reporting procedures should provide systematic and continuous ways of collecting information about students' learning. Up to Grade 7, assessment is school based and internal. From grades 8 to 12, teachers use a combination of internal and external assessment. Both internal and external assessments at Elementary, Primary and Secondary should reflect students' achievement of the learning outcomes described in the syllabuses.

- Assessment and reporting should be based on a balanced approach. This can be achieved through a variety of ways of gathering evidence about students' learning, using formal and informal assessments such as:

  - o observation of students' performance (practical assessment), processes and products;
  - o concept maps;
  - o self and peer assessment;
  - o portfolios; and
  - o written tests and examinations.

- Students, parents and guardians are entitled to receive feedback about students' progress towards achieving the intended outcomes. Information given to students must

be clear, accurate and fair. Students will improve their standards of achievement by knowing what they need to concentrate on in the future.

- Formal reporting to parents and guardians will vary depending on the level of schooling. Schools should present reports in ways that are suitable for their communities to read and understand.

Information Gathering Techniques

Adapted from Barry, K. & King, L.(1998) Beginning Teaching and Beyond Social Science Press

As teachers, we are looking for data-gathering techniques that reflect our beliefs about curriculum development and learning.

When teachers make assessment and evaluation decisions they need to plan, observe, collect information, analyse, interpret, synthesise, reflect, take action and report.

We will now look at some ways of gathering reliable information using appropriate techniques.

Observation

Observation is the most commonly used evaluative technique. Teachers are constantly observing learning and behaviour, both in and out of the classroom, and from these observations they make evaluations. Observation is especially important in teaching young students who cannot read or write and those with special needs.

There are several tools which can be used for making systematic observations and these include anecdotal notes, checklists and rating scales.

Anecdotal notes

An anecdotal note is a descriptive comment made by the teacher about significant student behaviour. The comment usually relates to incidental learning and learning not covered in the formal evaluation program.

Anecdotal notes might relate to:

- Some aspect of a student's physical development

- An area of interest outside the formal curriculum

- Interest in learning and work habits

- Ability to follow instructions

- Ability to participate in class activities

- Relationships with others in the class.

Anecdotal notes can be organised in a number of ways:

- Use an exercise book with one page allocated for each student, or use filing cards, (one per student)

- On a class list, leave a space for notes about each student. You could aim to cover all students in a week, a fortnight, or a month. At particular times you might just focus on one subject or one group of students.

Anecdotal Notes : Week 3	
Piawa	Having trouble working with fractions in Maths sessions this week. Converting to mixed numbers causing problems.
Julie	Working well with her group this week. Joining in and contributing to discussions
Kini	Has been sleepy and unwell this week. Will talk to Kini
Joe	Not completing tasks this week. Not concentrating, or the work maybe too hard.

Checklists

Checklists can be used by both teachers and students to monitor learning. A typical checklist contains students' names on a class list and the criteria to be evaluated. These criteria relate to learning objectives, examples, activities or behaviour. Achievement or occurrence is shown by a check such as a tick or a "yes" and non-achievement by a cross or a "no". Also, checklists often feature a space for comments about individual students and another space for a general class comment.

Maths Activity Centres				
Name: Jessica				
Tasks	Date	Comments	Date	Comments
1. clocks	3/6	☺		
2. Bingo	1/6	OK		
3. Scales	7/6	good		
4. water play	5/6	✓		

Maths Project Report		
Name:		
Date	Topic/Maths covered	Comments

Writing Title Tally

Date started: Date finished:

Title:

Type of text:

Comments/Reflections on the story:

Self-assessment:

Junior Writing Title Tally		
Name:		
Date	Title	Student/Teacher's comments
		☺ ☺ ☹

(from Wilson, J &Fehring, H. (1995) Keying Into Assessment. P.81)

Rating scales

A rating scale is a more refined version of a checklist. By the use of a scale, generally with up to five points on it, teachers can differentiate between degrees of performance or behaviour. Below are some typical rating scales.

1. *Numerical*   This is a scale shown by numbers, such as:

1   2   3   4   5

In a numerical scale, the lowest number represents the minimum, the highest number the maximum performance.

1.   *Word/ Phrase/Letter Scale:* The same principles apply as for numerical scales. Below are some examples:

A	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**
Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Limited
Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

☞ 3.2 Activity 9

Using one of the syllabus documents available, design a checklist and a rating scale for a learning area, topic and year level of your choice.

Questioning

Questioning can be used to evaluate learning. It can help determine previous knowledge and assist in deciding on the starting point for the lesson. Questioning on an individual basis can be useful in evaluating a student's progress. It may be just a question or two about a student's understanding of a topic, or it may consist of a number of guiding questions about a particular topic or skill. It is important to be encouraging; to listen carefully to what the student has to say, and to be flexible in your questioning.

Collecting work samples

Samples of students' work collected over a period of time can provide a valuable database for both teacher and student. The best way to do this is to have a file for each student and add samples of work at regular intervals. The work should be dated for ready identification. The samples of work should include a range of the student's performance and may include very best work, typical in –class work or tasks which have proved to be difficult.

Student presentations and demonstrations

From time to time, you can evaluate learning by asking students for an in-class presentation or demonstration. These could include such things as a short talk, or a role play.

Student demonstrations might involve a process or a product. Examples may include the demonstration of a skill in physical education, showing competency in using a tool or playing an instrument. When evaluating demonstrations, it is important that you have specific performance criteria, clear directions about requirements and a well designed checklist or rating scale.

Journals / learning logs / diaries

These are a means of recording learning, thoughts and feelings in written or visual form or both over a period of time. Written journals are a means of developing writing skills, promoting higher level thinking skills and reflecting on learning.

Journals can be like diaries, or they may be a mixture of teacher and student entries. Journals are usually kept in an exercise book or loose leaf folder. Journals can be invaluable in helping to monitor learning.

☞ 3.2   Activity 10

> *What problems could you see when using journals for assessment? How could you overcome these problems?*

Portfolios

A portfolio is a collection of work that has been put together over time. The major purpose is to show the development of a student's knowledge/skills/attitudes over time in relation to particular outcomes in a learning area.

The following steps may be useful in helping to plan a useful portfolio:

- Consider the background factors (what resources will I require? How will the portfolio be stored, how will instructions be given to the students?)
- Decide on the purpose of the portfolio. What is the portfolio going to be used for?
- Specify the knowledge/skills/attitudes to be demonstrated in the portfolio
- Decide on the samples of work that will be included
- Select the evaluative techniques and recording processes
- Make decisions (what decisions need to be made on the basis of performance)

Peer assessment

Peer assessment involves students making judgements about other student's work. This takes time to develop effectively in the classroom. The students should be old enough to make reasonable judgements about each other's work. Student peer assessment requires quite a deal of modelling and assistance from the teacher. It should be used for formative types of assessment, not summative.

Student self evaluation

Student self-evaluation should be encouraged by all teachers, because it promotes the responsibility for setting of goals and evaluating the success or otherwise of the goals.

Self-evaluation helps students assess their strengths and weaknesses and makes them more aware of better performance.

Some examples can be seen below.

(*from Wilson, J &Fehring, H. (1995) Keying Into Assessment. p 81*

What about testing?

You may have noticed that in this introduction to assessment and evaluation, there has been little mention of tests and test construction.

Tests certainly do have their place in the overall evaluation of students, and are mentioned in the National Department of Education syllabus documents, but from your readings, you should note the emphasis in the new syllabus document is less on formal testing and more on evaluating using assessment strategies which focus upon student achievement.

Should you wish to know more about test construction and administration, optional modules may be available at your college. Your lecturer may also supply you with some readings in this area or cover this topic during the lecture program. The elective module *Assessment and Evaluation* covers test methodology .

Check up

> *What are the four parts of the evaluation chain?*
>
> *Define the terms **measurement, assessment** and **evaluation.***
>
> *What is the difference between norm referenced and criterion referenced assessment?*
>
> *List briefly some of the information gathering techniques used by teachers.*

☞ **3.2 Activity 11**

> *As part of your school experience program, observe and collect examples of assessment tasks used by your supervising teacher.*
>
> *Collect samples of work from one student to make a portfolio of work, and assess this using a checklist made by you.*

Key Terms and Glossary

Measurement	Using rules to assign a number, such as a score, rating or ranking to an individual or group for a specified behaviour or performance.
Assessment	Refers to a collection of information about a student's learning achievements and the effectiveness of education programs.
Formative assessment	Continuous or ongoing assessment and evaluation processes.
Summative assessment	Assessment practices that are undertaken at a particular time, often at the end of a unit of work. It is a 'summing up' of achievements
Evaluation	The making of value judgements about a student's work.
Norm Referenced Assessment	When a student is compared with a standard or level of performance of a group of students who have previously undertaken the same activity or task
Criterion Referenced Assessment	Measures a student's performance against set criteria
Diagnostic evaluation	Evaluation used to determine starting points for teaching or identifying learning difficulties.
Anecdotal notes	A descriptive comment made by the teacher about significant student behaviour.
Rating scales	Used to differentiate between degrees of performance and behaviour.
Portfolio	A collection of students' work that has been put together over time to show development in relation to particular outcomes in a learning area.
Peer assessment	Students make judgements about other students' work.