Assessment as Learning Through this process students are able to learn about themselves as learners and become aware of how they learn—become megacognitive.

Students reflect on their work on a regular basis, usually through self and peer assessment and decide (often with the help of the teacher) what their next learning will be.

Assessment as Learning helps students to take more responsibility for their own learning and monitoring future directions.

Assessment of Learning The purpose of this kind of assessment is usually summative and is mostly done at the end of a task, unit of work etc.

Teachers may use tests or collect a range of available evidence to assess the quality and accuracy of student work. A strong emphasis is placed on comparing students, highlighting which students are doing well and which are doing poorly.

In Assessment of Learning there is usually no indication of what the student needs to do to improve.

Assessment for Learning The emphasis shifts from summative to formative assessment in Assessment for Learning.

Assessment for Learning happens during the learning, often more than once, rather than at the end. Students understand exactly what they are to learn, what is expected of them and are given feedback and advice on how to improve their work.

It is not about making comparative judgements; Assessment for Learning is about enhancing learning.

Assessment as Learning is the ultimate goal, where students are their own best assessors.

Lorna Earl (2003)

Students reflect on their work on a regular basis, usually through self and peer assessment and decide (often with the help of the teacher) what their next learning will be.

Assessment as Learning helps students to take more responsibility for their own learning and monitoring future directions.

Spotlight on the Beach Road Math’s Cluster

In the first newsletter the focus was on Consistency and Moderation. There have been many schools who have been tackling this issue including the Beach Road Cluster in the Mathematics for Learning Inclusion Project.

On Friday 28th July 2006 teachers from five schools met and moderated samples of evidence in Maths using the SACSA Protocol.

Feedback from this day attests to the value of going through this process:

“This process that we have gone through, has equipped me with the knowledge, skills, abilities, open-mindedness etc to be able to transfer and use moderation in my teaching practice, with my colleagues. It can only improve my practice....”

Teachers looking at samples of student work including electronic evidence on the computer.
The teachers in the Beach Road Math’s Cluster are explicitly ensuring their students have opportunities to demonstrate what they know, can do and understand in a range of contexts, over time, to achieve all Maths Outcomes.

A special thank you to Julie O’Neill from Christies Beach Primary School, Lisa Errington from Noarlunga Downs Primary School and their students who provided the following evidence of learning.

"Teachers need to see assessment data as saying something about them, what they are doing and what they need to do. Our eventual success depends on our ferreting out student responses and adjusting our performance, not just theirs, in light of results."


**Assessment of Learning**

The teacher has used work products to assess what the child knows, can do and understands about comparing, ordering, estimating and measuring the capacity of containers and be able to measure with accuracy using Millilitres and Litres, the appropriate standard measure for the container. The teacher can then use this information to plan for teaching and learning experiences - assessment for learning.

"Teachers need to see assessment data as saying something about them, what they are doing and what they need to do. Our eventual success depends on our ferreting out student responses and adjusting our performance, not just theirs, in light of results."

Assessment for Learning

A conversation with the students while measuring the capacity of the bucket allowed the teacher to support the students in understanding exactly what they know and can do and provide support and feedback on how to improve.

The teacher was able to ask some guiding questions which gave her some information about what they could do and help them to work out how they could improve their method of how to keep a more accurate count.

Teacher: Why did you decide to use the cup for the measuring tool to measure the capacity of the bucket?

Student 1: We thought that it might be easier to fill the bucket with than the jug. The jug is hard to fill. We have to keep adding bits with our hands.

Teacher: How are you going to know how many cups it took to fill the bucket if you are both putting in cups of sand at the same time?

Student 2: Oh...we’ll just remember in our heads.

Student 1: Yeah, then we’ll add them together.

When the bucket was full.

Teacher: How many cups did it hold?

Student 2: We lost count. We’ll have to start again.

Teacher: Can you think another way of filling the bucket without losing count of how many cups?

Student 1: I think we need to write down the number of cups.

Teacher: Oh...that might be a bit hard in the sandpit. What do you think?

Student 1: Yeah (Silence for a while) I know one of us could fill the bucket while the other counts.

Student 2: Okay but I want to be the one to put in the sand.

Student 1: But I want to. I know we could take it in turns. You do it and I’ll count, then you do it and I’ll count. We could see if we get the same number.

This student has identified that you use a variety of strategies to determine the capacity of an object; that width is as important as height. The student also shows a better understanding of what the role of estimation is.

The students completed a Maths Journal after lessons to show what they had learnt. This process allowed the students to learn about themselves as learners, to identify what they can and can’t do and what they know and don’t know.

Assessment as Learning

The students completed a Maths Journal after lessons to show what they had learnt. This process allowed the students to learn about themselves as learners, to identify what they can and can’t do and what they know and don’t know.

A RANGE of work samples—journals, photos, observations, work products (etc)—constitutes evidence of achievement. In this example, it is the COMBINATION that shows achievement of Maths outcome 1.4 and 1.5

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**Home Math's Journal**

The Math's Journal provides a link between home and school maths. The journal is that of “Diviga” (the name of the soft toy was democratically selected by the class, a combination of divide and gorilla). The journal is taken home with the soft toy and a tool kit of math's equipment. The family solve math's problems and explore maths at home for a night or so. This journal is then shared with the class.

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**Strand: Measurement**

**Outcome 1.4**

Compares and orders the measurable attributes of distance, surface, space, mass, turn/angle and time to describe the size of a wide range of familiar, figures, objects and events.

(The focus in this unit of work was on capacity)

**Strand: Measurement**

**Outcome 1.5**

Chooses and uses a variety of strategies to measure the size of a wide variety of figures, objects and events drawn from the world around them.

(The focus in this unit of work was on capacity)
WHAT’S POWERFUL ABOUT HAVING COMMON AND EXPLICIT OUTCOMES TO ASSESS AND REPORT AGAINST

Teachers’ say:

“When I program I need to look at the outcomes above and below the Standard for my year level and then select and provide opportunities for all to achieve where they can”.

“My prejudgements of students has always inadvertently affected my assessment. My perceptions of learners will now be based on the evidence of the learning aligned with outcomes”.

“When I program my activities for each outcome I will ensure the students have opportunities to demonstrate/achieve all outcomes”.

“I will continue to reflect and see that even the struggling students are achieving and continue to move them on by explicitly programming against outcomes.”

Teachers at the Beach Road Cluster Moderation Day.

“The SACSA Standards represent the expectations we have of all learners. From R-10 the Curriculum Standards of the SACSA Framework are based on a standards-referenced approach to assessment which relies heavily on teachers using professional judgements in considering an interrelated set of performance characteristics”.

Teacher Interpretive Guide. South Australia’s new student reports. Information for Teachers. 2006.

Outcomes Focus on Equity

“A commitment to common outcomes signals a belief that all students can be successful learners...A situation where less is expected of and achieved by certain groups of students is unacceptable. School systems and teachers are all responsible for ensuring that each student has access to the learning conditions he or she requires to achieve the outcomes to the best of his or her ability”.

First Steps in Mathematics. Number Overview. Page 3. Western Australia Education Department.

“Reporting against outcomes helps us to be clear about where a child should be heading and where they are at any given point in time.”

“People without information cannot act. People with information cannot help but act.”


“The Standards in the Framework depict the developing capabilities of children and students along a continuum of ever improving performance.”

SACSA Framework. Page 8

Extra copies of the newsletter available from:
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Assessment Strategies

FOCUS FOR NEXT ISSUE

Have your say...

What would you like to see in future editions of the Let’s Talk Assessment Newsletter?

Make a contribution...

Are you involved in interesting and innovative assessment practices at your site or know of any? This is a good chance to share with others.

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