

The Assessor

Answering the Tough Questions of EBR

*Read real team conversations
about the more challenging
aspects of EBR.*

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Question #1

How do we record growth in the gradebook?



Ms. Smith: How do we record growth in an EBR system?

Mr. Applebee: We record growth in the gradebook separately from academic proficiency. We use the codes AG (Adequate Growth), MG (Minimal Growth), FG (Failure to Grow), I, (Insufficient Evidence).

Ms. Smith: So is growth not reported as cumulative. It is not a moment in time?

Ms. Armstrong: Well sort of, you look at the student's growth and if you feel like they are growing toward the standards then you mark them as AG, if not MG...depending.

Mr. Freedberg: Do I sense a bit of subjectivity in reporting growth here by any chance?

Mr. Applebee: I think the codes operate like little flags to folks, MG would signal that we're not really progressing in a direction toward proficient not demonstrating enough evidence that the students do.

Ms. Smith: So it's a flag for support?

Mr. Freedberg: Do these codes indicate academic ineligibility?

Ms. Smith: And it doesn't indicate a grade? Which I think is probably the hardest thing for kids to get used to.

Mr. Applebee: I said, I believe that the codes should be used to signal short term growth (a snapshot of that week's evidence) in relation to long term growth. That was my impression.

Ms. Armstrong: I always saw growth as something that is seen in the context of many weeks. That, like, in relation to the development of the student, right?

Ms. Smith: You're considering whether any evidence up to that point shows development toward or away from proficient.

Ms. Armstrong: Okay, but I don't know what that tells me. So I've got a kid who's progressing, but they're not at proficient yet, so that's MG?

Mr. Freedberg: Yeah. And I would say that you would calibrate that with the team.

Ms. Armstrong: So growth is progress toward the target, not actually a predication if the students will hit the target eventually?

Mr. Applebee: Yes, but an MG is not that they stumbled on one particular week.

If they stumble, they might still be with progressing. All of the weeks leading up to that have pushed them, progressed them, forward as well.

Ms. Armstrong: So you're not looking in the context of just that week?

Mr. Freedberg: No, these codes should always be used to communicate current proficiency, usually a week's worth of evidence, in relation to development toward expected proficiency, typically by end of the semester.

Mr. Applebee: So does MG get entered if a student is a one to a two? Is that still minimal growth? Or if you're a three and you stay at three, is that minimal growth or not?

Mr. Freedberg: In my other EBR course we decided they were not, both of those situations could be an AG.

Ms. Armstrong: We thought that the AG MG should fluctuate less than the 4,3,2,1 scores. And we were saying that because it's all of the scores in context that it should stay more consistent.

Mr. Applebee: More Stable.

Ms. Smith: Hopefully.

Ms. Armstrong: Yes, and the FG is reserved for what we would traditionally know as an F.

Question #2

How do Final Exams work in EBR?

Mr. Olney: We don't need to have a final exam, because we have enough evidence to prove that the student is doing proficient work. However, a student who needs to continue to show evidence to prove proficiency, must have the opportunity available to prove it one last time.

Ms. Shuppert: So all students who are proficient and not proficient would be in the final exam period?

Ms. Spera: Yes. I think this helps reinforce the idea that even kids who are locked into something, into a grade or into a level, should be challenged to improve in some way and take advantage of that learning opportunity.

Mr. Olney: But you can't go down in proficiency only up after the final exam. Right?

Ms. Spera: Can you not go down? Why can you not go down?

Ms. Shuppert: Can you?

Mr. Welles: If a student has been proficient and then they turn in something horrible, are you going to drop that student in proficiency score?

Ms. Spera: A student would need to know,

if their trend is three, three, three and then last week they did a two, and now they come in and they do the final exam and they get a two again, that student is no longer showing that they have a firm grasp. Thus they would go down.

Ms. Shuppert: EBR final exams are also another opportunity to maybe address the students that are struggling to have an opportunity to bring up their low proficiencies and use that time to focus on the struggling students rather than the student that are fine.

Ms. Spera: Also, I feel that a student needs to be learning and engaged even if they've demonstrated proficiency. EBR final exams are a learning opportunity not just an opportunity to assess give a grade.

Mr. Welles: It could also be used as a justification for a student that, "hey, things are as we expected."

Mr. Olney: So I heard, there must be something on that day? There must be something on that day unless the student is a senior but a student must take something.

Ms. Shuppert: Yeah, but it could also be a portfolio capstone experience, correct?

Mr. Welles: Right.

Ms. Spera: It doesn't need to be a sit and prove it out experience necessarily.

Ms. Shuppert: Yes in my other EBR course this is one of the things that we struggled with last year. If the final exam doesn't have to be a traditional final then what can it be?

Mr. Olney: For many teachers that have moved to EBR there isn't a final assessment, the day is used for other reasons, possibly catching students up or conversations about evidence.

Mr. Welles: So the idea is that there's not a final exam, but final chances at mastery, extension or just conversations about their evidence?

Mr. Olney: So if you're not doing well in learning target one and two I might give some kind of final assessment that will give you another chance to show proficiency. Or for some students that are three and fours in the targets maybe a capstone conversation or extension experience.

Ms. Spera: Mr. Welles, you have gone to EBR, is this how your final exam plays out?

Mr. Welles: Generally yes. The personalized experience to review evidence and react to feedback has been most beneficial.

Question #3

How do retakes work in EBR?

Ms. Paek: Are there things that we are tight on about retakes as a team?

Ms. Warren: Well I have a question... Are we okay if the team decides that you can't retake ever?

Mr. Davol: Yes and also are we going to replace original scores with the retake scores? Say it comes down to the end, we either have six events, for example, or three. If you're replacing, then only three scores appear, and if you're adding it as a separate event, it might be six pieces of evidence. It can't be that some people replace and some people are adding. It has to be consistent across the team.

Ms. Tenney: Well I have talked with other EBR teams and some teams will replace while others don't. For some a student gets a two and then does a reperformance gets a three. The two is overridden with the three. While other teams will add an extra column in the gradebook. And the first two are still there, the extra column shows the retake grade.

Mr. Davol: So you could have a team that just offers, like, six opportunities for one target and there's no replacing? I don't really care about replacing, I would just offer them maybe a lot of opportunities throughout the year and each assessment in the progression is the retake for the prior.

Ms. Tenney: That's another way to think of it.

Ms. Paek: Can we still report the growth this way?

Mr. Davol: Maybe the role of retakes is diminished in EBR, because you're constantly getting new chances to reperform with each new assessment.

Ms. Warren: Well what I do, you know, I put a retake section on my next exam and might allow some time for students to demonstrate if they secured the last concept and then build a retake opportunity into the next exam. You know what I mean? Like it would constantly spiral. However if I was an English teacher and you didn't perform well on particular targets of writing I wouldn't make the students write another essay and another essay and another essay, I'd simply let the next essay be the next opportunity to perform.

Ms. Tenney: I just wonder in EBR what's the role of the unit test then?

Mr. Davol: I think the units are gone.

Ms. Tenney: I mean it may not be beneficial to organize by unit anymore if you are constantly reperforming? Why do we need unit tests? Couldn't we have smaller but more frequent assessments?

Ms. Paek: I just worry that we may lose historical growth perspective of what's been happening without the unit test.

Ms. Tenney: In EBR the students are either growing or not growing. If not they fix it. They do what they need to do. They show that they learned it. It is an endless cycle. So I don't know how much of the historical nature is needed? Mr. Davol, you teach an EBR course, what do you guys do?

Mr. Davol: The next event is the retake. That would be our definition of a retake.

Ms. Paek: That doesn't feel like a retake. But that's just me.

Ms. Tenney: I guess it comes down to the definition of assessment. I think that's the really interesting question. Because without that unit nature, it doesn't feel like I need to be reassessed. Because I'm going to get assessed on that target over again no matter what. But if I'm imagining it's unit three, that's when I need to start thinking, oh, I have to reassess unit three.

Mr. Davol: Do you think the whole idea of separate retakes is kind of like an old school way of thinking of grading?

Ms. Tenney: Maybe, I don't know.

Ms. Paek: So EBR “retakes” is like keeping all of the evidence and then analyzing, like, where all of the scores occurred, did poorer scores happen at the beginning of the semester or were all their first attempts at things showing mastery? That’s what EBR is, right? It’s a portfolio of your work, right?

Ms. Tenney: Essentially it is.

Ms. Warren: So in English they learn skills that can thread through the whole year, like learning to write an argumentative essay. And so if you aren’t able to demonstrate it four weeks later you don’t necessarily do a retake. Because they know the student will have an opportunity to demonstrate that very same thing four weeks later.

Ms. Tenney: Maybe when you get toward the end of the term, sometimes there’s more retaking? Because there’s less opportunity to show mastery?

Mr. Davol: Yes, but in my other EBR class we talked about that if you don’t master a concept, you can’t really move forward in the curriculum. So there would be more retaking and reassessing when there are more concepts that you have to be able to understand and use before you can do the next thing.

Ms. Tenney: This is a very difficult concept as well. I didn’t know it three weeks ago, but now I can show you that I can do it, why should that first score hold me back? But if you’re in a points-based world, it does.

Ms. Paek: So should we call them

reperformances as opposed to retakes?

Mr. Davol: I think reperformances, and those reperformances are the same or different instruments, (assessments)?

Ms. Paek: I think they would be different correct?

Ms. Tenney: Yes because if you’re need alot of evidence and we need lots of retakes then many versions of assessment are needed.

Ms. Tenney: Ok, but I have another question, if our concepts are isolated then we would do retakes, but if they build on each other or are transferable then we don’t need retakes because the next naturally occurring assessment in the pacing would be the retake?

Mr. Davol: I think that’s where it’s a little different in my other class, because there’s a body of concepts that you’re expected to know. There are things that you need just to know and they don’t necessarily connect to one another. Wouldn’t we want to do retakes in this case?

Ms. Paek: This is how our curriculum is. So do we offer more retakes than other courses because of this?

Mr. Davol: In math I know if you don’t understand how to graph quadratics it will be hard to do the next unit without this ability. So retakes each unit are a must.

Ms. Paek: So that’s one of the dilemmas. Like I can write an argument in this unit but in the next I can’t because the topic changed, can I still not write an argument? Should I have another

chance at it with this topic or simply wait until the next unit?

Ms. Warren: But if the student never demonstrated and mastered the target that you really need to know in an early unit, how can they be expected to show mastery with next unit’s content? Wouldn’t we want them to retake each unit instead of letting Unit 2’s exam be the retake for Unit 1’s

Ms. Tenney: Yes, that’s where you would do retakes.

Ms. Paek: Ok this is getting confusing.

Mr. Davol: We came to an understanding in my other EBR course that each unit is like a toolbox. There are many toolboxes (units) throughout the semester and we will watch students “build a house” with each separate toolbox. In our gradebook we have evidence of how each student “built the house” with each toolbox.

Ms. Tenney: Then at the semester we review all evidence as part of a larger portfolio which ultimately determines the grade?

Mr. Davol: That’s the way I think we should do it.

Ms. Warren: Agreed.



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Question #4

How much evidence is enough in EBR?

Ms. Vail: It was really interesting when we first started EBR, I was just going crazy, because I was trying to have the same amount of evidence as I had in traditional grading. And it was ridiculous how much I was trying to grade and give feedback. Now I have three pieces per learning target. I feel it is a good base amount.

Ms. Meyers: My other EBR team settled on anywhere between three and five pieces of evidence per target. In some cases evidence between targets might be the same. In another standard there might only be one piece of evidence.

Mr. Luzi: So does the amount of evidence depend on the skill?

Ms. Vail: Yes. A skill of writing may only require a few pieces of evidence while the skill of reasoning may need more. You want to find the sweet spot of how much is enough to communicate effectively but not too many so it's too much to manage.

Mr. Greco: And what is the time frame between each event?

Ms. Juliano: No. So I need three pieces of evidence over a unit? A semester?

Ms. Vail: Over the semester. Originally in my other EBR course we had 30 pieces of evidence, and it's been

parsed down. It felt like I was grading everything.

Ms. Meyers: Yeah, so that's not counting like the more informal stuff? Like the formative work, the work that they're doing in class, the work they're doing with peers?

Ms. Juliano: Exactly the peer feedback, the self reflection, all those pieces, I think are left as inactive in the gradebook correct?

Ms. Meyers: Yes but it should still help tell a learning story for the students.

Ms. Vail: But that means more evidence then. So the question is how much evidence is enough in the gradebook?

Mr. Greco: I would say as little as you need but not any less. In a portfolio model the student should know where he or she stands at all times and if there is not enough evidence to tell that story then you need more.

Ms. Juliano: Generally do teachers have the same amount of evidence for formative and summatives?

Mr. Luzi: No. Formatives usually have more but these aren't the ones that go officially into the gradebook to determine a grade.

Ms. Juliano: Students still need to see these formative scores.

Mr. Luzi: So every day there's assessment, reflection going on within the instruction, just whether it becomes evidence in the gradebook is the question. Is going to be in the gradebook as an active item?

Mr. Greco: At the beginning of the year then, are you not waiting a while before you're taking evidence that counts? Isn't the gradebook going to be blank for awhile?

Ms. Juliano: Not necessarily. It depends on the course. But all EBR courses are doing formative work that they can put in the gradebook as inactive until they get active scores.

Mr. Luzi: So if a student is working at a three or a four level in the formative work, but is a one or two in the summative active scores then they don't have other chances to demonstrate and the active scores are what goes into the grade?

Ms. Vail: Yes, but that's where the retake comes in a little bit. But too much evidence will cause "learning white noise" (too much evidence), while too little will cause phone calls. We need to find what is just right.

Ms. Meyers: We talked about the differences between quantity and pacing of evidence and the idea that a student should be able to use the gradebook to assess where they are, and the parents, the family should be able to assess where they are at any time.

Mr. Greco: Yes. Important because if I'm a parent I want to know how my kid is doing.

Mr. Luzi: I'm just thinking about it as a parent. Is there enough evidence changing each week that I can see how my kid is growing? So every

week, is there some new stuff?

Ms. Juliano: Oh, there's stuff being assessed every week. It just might not be an active item or even in the gradebook.

Mr. Greco: So the gradebook is still full?

Ms. Vail: What would a parent see as the year went on?

Ms. Juliano: And also is all of the evidence is still tied to the targets correct in the gradebook?

Ms. Juliano: Yes and yes. A parent would see it all.

If your assessment timeline short then there will be lots in the gradebook versus being able to say a skill like "construct an argument" where your timeline would be much longer between events because of the nature of the skill, thus having fewer scores in the gradebook.

Ms. Vail: So If I understand this correctly, there will always be a "saturation point" of evidence depending on the skill being assessed and once a teacher can get an accurate picture of the student's competence then they don't need any more evidence.

Ms. Juliano: That's the way I see it.



Question # 5

How does Homework work in EBR?

Mr. Keane: So with homework in EBR, I think I see it as an opportunity to take advantage of reperformance if and when you need that.

Ms. Allison: Yea, but one student may need the homework and another may not.

Mr. Baig: If you ace my assessment, good for you. That's awesome. No homework needed for you.

Mr. Clagett: For me we should circle back and talk about the purpose of homework in general?

Mr. Keane: Yes we should discuss what's the role of homework in learning?

Mr. Clagett: We are asking this question because students won't do my homework if they don't get points for it.

Ms. Allison: Yes, but I'm not worried about that. If I'm a student, can I not demonstrate mastery via a homework assignment? I mean it isn't just for practice? In EBR can't we use homework as evidence of proficiency?

Mr. Keane: Probably not, because you wouldn't know they did it if it wasn't done in class.

Mr. Baig: So then why would I give homework to my students? We practice in class.

Mr. Clagett: Well in some classes it sets up the next day's lesson so students aren't doing it to necessarily practice but to prepare to show evidence on targets the next day in class.

Ms. Allison: So, homework then is optional?

Mr. Baig: Can I get my kids to do optional homework?

Mr. Keane: If there's a purpose.

Mr. Clagett: Ok say I give math problems and they've already shown mastery in the skill, then probably no real purpose in the student's mind.

Mr. Baig: But there might be, if some kids need the practice to show mastery. And they don't all need the same support at the same time.

Ms. Allison: What if you switch that and say, this homework is not practice but an initial assessment. I'm going to have you try it, because I want to see where you're at. In this manner homework is not necessarily practice. It's initially assessing.

Mr. Baig: So if you're back to homework being practice for your assessments, then you would say, gosh, I

want to do this, because I feel like I need to do it for my assessment.

Mr. Keane: Or as a result of your assessment. I just got the assessment back and didn't do so well and now need to do homework to polish up.

Mr. Clagett: Or, I've got this thing figured out, I don't need to do it. I've self-assessed and said, I'm in, I can do this so homework can wait.

Mr. Baig: Agreed. I feel when I was in school when we had the unit tests and all homework, and then the teacher gives you the review guide that has everything that you should have been learning, etc. It was just tons of busy work I really didn't need. It was nice to know it was there if I did need it though.

Ms. Allison: We can actually personalize homework, so when a student actually struggling, they can do it.

Mr. Clagett: So we should let them choose when to do homework? For example there are three learning targets on the next big assessment, which one do you need to do the most work on. Right?

Ms. Allison: That is what I think.

Mr. Baig: You may need to help students with being aware of when

choose to do homework, because sometimes they're may not be able to recognize the need to do it.

Mr. Keane: Yes, like helping them see that these are the learning targets that they are not as strong in.

Mr. Keane: Now the other challenge is, if a student doesn't know how to do it, how are they going to do it on the homework?

Mr. Keane: Can we just say that homework is unnecessary and be done with it?

Mr. Baig: If the teachers or team are not providing homework that is meaningful then, yes, I would say that the homework is unnecessary. And also if the homework is not extending the learning or pushing kids to become better in whatever the skills then, no it's not necessary.

Mr. Keane: And if the kids are able to prove that they have mastered the material on the formative work in class without the homework, then, no don't give it.

Ms. Allison: The homework should be designed to help kids progress in the class. It should be differentiated ideally, so that kids are able to choose the path that helps them along. And if the path for that particular night is to do nothing and work on something else, then that could be okay too.

Mr. Keane: I am not sure I agree. I think it's analogous with practice in sports. I don't really hear a coach saying, you don't have to practice today, because you're good enough. You might do a different type of practice. So I think it's differentiated in the work, so that you're getting what you need out of that homework period. But missing it, like taking a day off and not engaging in something that you're supposed to be progressing in...I don't think our students are self-actualized enough to know when not to do it.

Mr. Baig: For instance say, I didn't do it last night. And then I do the assessment and it's strong. Is that okay? Do we want students to get in that habit?

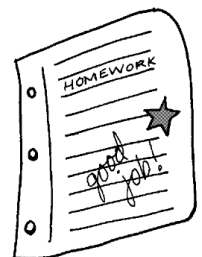
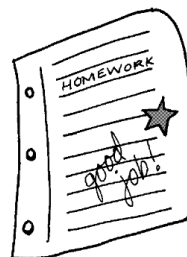
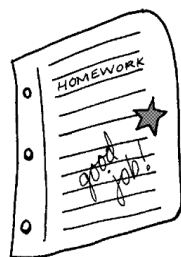
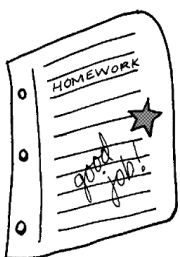
Mr. Keane: I just think that there is a level of practice that needs to happen each night to build towards proficiency.

Ms. Allison: Assessments should create a learning need to do the homework regardless of proficiency, then it is up to the students to realize that need and choose to do the homework. If we as teachers do not constantly create that learning need to do homework then homework will continue to have no purpose.

Mr. Keane: In my other EBR course this works well. We have worked so hard on our assessments that our formative assessment creates such a clear learning need to do homework that students know when to do it and when not to.

Mr. Baig: So what did you do with your assessments to create such a clear need.

Mr. Keane: Well for one we made sure we had more "mastery simulation" assessments where the student could fail cheaply, see the reality of their proficiency and thus do homework or more practice if needed.



Question #6

Does the whole body of work or more recent evidence count more?

Mr. Shuer: So we were talking about a preponderance of evidence with consideration of growth. This means you should always be looking at all evidence, but how they trending at the end is important also.

Ms. Boufford: What if this student is some sort of a savant?

Ms. Hooper: Then probably, the course is the wrong placement for that student.

Ms. Boufford: So being able to show that you can ride a bike for one day or even if you come in riding a unicycle, doesn't mean that you can ride that bike for that matter in all of these different contingencies that our course states.

Ms. Hooper: Yeah, contexts that we have deemed appropriate for mastery of our course.

Ms. Boufford: So if the student comes in at the end of semester and does one assessment and says, "Look! I can do this" that's only one piece of evidence that shows that

they can do it. Is that one moment not enough to sway our view?

Mr. Kolb: So I know there are a couple of teams that do like the last three assessments only, right? That one feels funky to me.

Mr. Avant: I feel like you should look at all of the scores.

Mr. Divola: I'm sure the conversation around that, as we got to hold kid's accountable, study, work to the end, like, I get that, but why can't the grade be based on whole body of work, consideration of growth, where growth can also down at the end. That happened last year a number of kids started slacking off the last four weeks, and you can see their scores going down.

Mr. Shuer: So whatever the last score is is where you are?

Mr. Kolb: Well, in our first year with EBR, we took that approach and we're like, oh no, like, no, we can't just look at the last score. And students ended

up with a "vegas" mentality...betting it all on the last assessment.

Mr. Avant: So if it is both body of work and recent evidence then it's up to the teachers. You get to judge, right?

Mr. Kolb: Right.

Mr. Divola: In my other EBR course we've tried to move our thinking on this. It's not where did you start, nor is it where did you finish. No, it's you know, where you finished is going to provide context for your body of work and that perspective will help determine the grade. Not even how much you grew.

Mr. Kolb: So what do you guys do when the student just shows up at the end and can write the perfect paragraph or analyze a piece of literature, whatever, what do you guys do?

Mr. Shuer: Yeah. Right, so again, it's not just the last performance.

Because if it was last performance, then you haven't shown me that you can sustain the proficiency. I mean you need to have that secure grasp of the target for long stretches.

Ms. Boufford: The teacher must watch the student attain and maintain the proficiency over the semester to properly judge the student and feel confident assigning the appropriate grade.

Mr. Avant: The seed of competency needs time to grow for teachers to trust it has actually taken hold. Therefore a student cannot show up at the end of the semester and perform. It must be both body of work and recent scores viewed together.

Mr. Kolb: It still feel so subjective.

Mr. Avant: The evidence whether body of work or recent scores will never lie. The student produced it, the teacher reviewed it against the targets and that's it. No real grey areas.

Student Name: _____		
Course Name: _____		
Weekly Growth: 66 Missing Evidence: No Behavioral Concerns: _____		
Back to List		
Standard: SDT (Show Don't Tell) Prof Score: 3 -- Raw Counts: 0/0/3/0		
- Target: Show Don't Tell - Prof Score: 3 -- Raw Counts: 0/0/3/0		
Workshop 1 (choice)	Prof Score: 3	3/29/2018
Workshop 2 (choice)	Prof Score: 3	3/29/2018
Scoreplaybookworkshops (Choice)	Prof Score: 3	4/10/2018
Standard: VD (Voice and Diction) Prof Score: 3 -- Raw Counts: 0/0/3/0		
- Target: Voice and Diction - Prof Score: 3 -- Raw Counts: 0/0/3/0		
Workshop 1 (choice)	Prof Score: 3	3/29/2018
Workshop 2 (choice)	Prof Score: 3	3/29/2018
Scoreplaybookworkshops (Choice)	Prof Score: 3	4/10/2018
Standard: ST (Structure) Prof Score: 3 -- Raw Counts: 0/1/2/0		
- Target: Structure - Prof Score: 3 -- Raw Counts: 0/1/2/0		
Workshop 1 (choice)	Prof Score: 3	3/29/2018
Workshop 2 (choice)	Prof Score: 3	3/29/2018
Scoreplaybookworkshops (Choice)	Prof Score: 3	4/10/2018

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The Three Purposes of Assessment

Deliver, Develop, Determine

By Anthony Reibel

It has been well documented that assessment is a process of understanding and communicating learning. While many educators fully embrace this idea, putting this concept into practice can be a bit of a challenge. Without the correct understanding of how assessment works as a process, a teacher can simply default to the traditional product-based assessments.

Assessment essentially is a conversation between mentor (teacher) and mentee (student), where the mentor (teacher) is changing between different stances to ensure learning for the mentee (student). In this process, participants typically shift between three communicative stances: Delivery, Development, and Determination.

- In a **delivery** stance the mentor will introduce material, content and pre-requisite skills that the mentee will need in order to become proficient in a standard or target. In this stance the mentor presents and outlines the data, information, tools, resources, content, etc. that relate to an intended proficiency.
- In a **development** stance the mentor will engage the mentee in the expected proficiency of a standard, but in a manner that is formative with no formal learning consequence. The mentee may receive feedback on whether or not they meet the standard but it does not yet determine their ultimate proficiency.
- In a **determining** stance the mentor engages the mentee in experiences that require the mentee to perform the intended proficiency of a standard, and the resulting evidence is used to judge the mentee's state of proficiency. This evidence is used to evaluate the ultimate reality of a mentee's learning, i.e. "what goes in the gradebook".

We can see parallels to these conversational stances in assessment, where there is assessment on supporting skills and content (Delivery), assessment that provides proficiency experiences (Development), and assessment that evaluates said proficiency experiences (Determination).

While this list is not exhaustive of each of these purposes, it does provide the general attributes of each and acts as a guide on how to use them to interact with students. We must remember while each stance is equally important in the learning process, the development stance is the most crucial to learning.

In the development stance or moments, students become aware of their proficiency numerous times before the teacher determines the ultimate state of their proficiency. The logic in this idea is apparent however many classrooms don't follow this model.

Some classrooms spend too much time in the delivery of each discrete concept or skill of the unit (e.g., lots of worksheets and packets of content). In this scenario students will spend most of their time passively engaging with material and leaving it highly likely that the student will develop only a shallow proficiency.

Some classrooms spend too much time in the determination of everything. In these classrooms it is believed that determination experiences (quizzes and tests) are when a student develops proficiency. This can create assessment fatigue and a high stakes environment for learning.

It would serve our students better if teachers spend the majority of their time in the development stance with students, and providing the critical feedback about their development in a standard. The feedback from this stance is much less threatening to a student and is more readily accepted and used. While each assessment stance is critical in its own right, it is essential to spend the majority of our assessment time with students in the development stance. Below is a chart explaining these three purposes as they pertain to education:

Delivery Purpose	Development Purpose	Determination Purpose
Experiences that are not scored	Experiences may or may not be scored	Experiences are scored
Used to develop pre-requisite skills and content related to a standard	Used to create proficiency in a standard	Used to evaluate proficiency in a standard
Used for preparation (No stakes)	Used for Exploration (No stakes)	Used for Evaluation (High stakes)
Prepares student to perform standard	Creates self and teacher awareness of progress toward proficiency	Creates self and teacher awareness of proficiency
Creates knowledge experiences	Creates active reflective engagement experiences	Creates co-constructed feedback conversations
Used to provide feedback only	Used to provide feedback in relation to growth	Used to provide feedback in relation to a final state of competency.

Regardless of how you currently view assessment, the fact remains that assessment is communication (student to teacher, and teacher to student), and we must use these three purposes effectively to support students in their learning. You can also think about these three purpose like this:

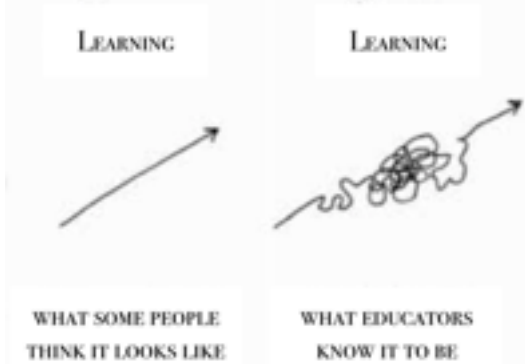
Deliver	Develop	Determine
Tour Guide	Cool Aunt/Uncle/Close Friend	Mom/Dad Guardian

The most effective assessments are essentially the cool Aunt or Uncle that puts their arm around you and says, “Hey, you probably shouldn’t do it that way again, this way is better... and don’t worry, I am not going to tell your mom or dad or guardian.”

Creating Competence in The Classroom

By Darshan Jain and Anthony Reibel

When reflecting on students' learning, teachers typically identify that learning is a messy, non-linear, iterative process. However, our educational system does not embrace nor support this idea. The current system promotes the idea that learning is an orderly acquisition of ability or knowledge where competency development is reinforced as linear and predictable.



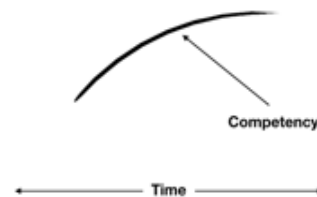
Source:
<https://www.conferencesthatwork.com/index.php/learning/2012/04/learning-is-messy/>

When instructional design is based on learning being orderly and predictable, then students may lose out on opportunities to experience productive dissonance and understand that temporary “failure” is a normative state of learning.

Worse still, this misunderstanding of learning can even confuse competence for mere compliance. For example, a world language teacher can ask students to create a presentation and it may appear that the student is fluent. However, they may have simply memorized the lines and thus did not fully develop the ability to speak. Or a social studies student may simply cycle dates, people, and events through short-term memory. In isolation the student can accurately produce them but never fully develop the ability to create a historical narrative. In mathematics, a student may sufficiently sketch a multitude of graphs, but lack adaptive reasoning to amend these representations given changes to key features.

This potential “competency confusion” further entrenches the belief that learning has a destination rather than inviting the understanding that learning in fact is a cyclic process of competency development. The image below represents competency development as a form of accretive learning.

Accretive learning is safe, observable, and easily organized into segmented cognitive spaces for efficient delivery by a teacher and short-term digestion by the student. In *Make It Stick* Brown (2014), Roediger, and McDaniel state: “[This model] gives us the warm sensation of [competency] because we’re looping information through short term memory” (p.82).

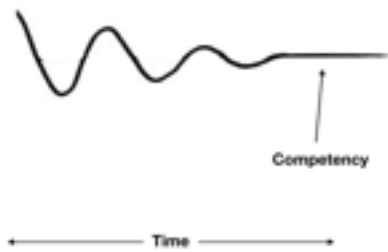


When we as teachers apply this faulty understanding of competency to our lessons and teaching, students only develop a veil of competency and not the real thing. This veil can negatively impact students in the following ways:

Potential Personal Implications	Potential Academic Implications
Overconfidence in Competence	Low Feedback Acceptance
Low Reflective Stamina	Misconceptions
Low Motivation	Evidence Bias
Incomplete Perspective of Self	Compliance Focus

Our experience in teaching informs us that competency does not develop in the manner described above. In reality, during the learning process a student will constantly fluctuate between states of competence and not-yet competence until their newly acquired transferable skill settles into a valid and developed state.

That is, until it becomes what we refer to as “rooted competence.” Rooted competence is when competence is fully matured and developed, and the student can apply this flexibly and confidently. The image below represents this idea:



Rooted competence develops in a generative manner. Meaning, a student must experience the natural fluctuation between states of competency and incompetency until the student can use said competence confidently and effectively in any setting.

This would be similar to adjusting binoculars. Upon first view, the landscape or object may be blurry. As the viewer adjusts the settings the image becomes clearer and clearer until it is in focus.

For example, a science teacher can create rooted competence by having the student graph the trajectory of an object first, and then teach the students about the parts of a graph and the aspects of graphing. The same is true in world languages: A teacher can have the students immediately speak and teach the vocabulary and grammar as they are speaking. Or a social studies teacher can have the students write a short argument using lists with pre-defined terms and facts, and then teach them how to write an argument building on what the student initially produced.

Generative learning may initially slow down the pace of the learning environment but it speeds up competency development and makes skills and knowledge stay longer (Brown et al., 2014). We see this in the tag line of Google’s innovation division, *failing quick, failing cheap and failing often leads to innovation.*

While competence continues to function as the general learning destination for students, there is an important corollary aspect of learning: student growth. We interpret growth not to be the gradual accumulation of increasingly complex content or the gradual release of isolated skill development. Rather we interpret student growth to be the synthesis of

both content and skill to create rooted competence. In a gradebook, growth is typically reported out with codes like AG (adequate growth), MG (minimal growth), FG (failing to grow) and I (Incomplete), and competence is usually reported out with some scale or gradation like the popular 4,3,2,1 scale. To accurately report student growth and competence, a teacher should consider reviewing short term competence, (usually a week’s worth of assessment evidence), in relation to long term competence (typically outlined by a learning target or standard). For instance, if evidence of a student’s short-term competence suggests eventual long-term competence, then AG (adequate growth) should be posted. However, if evidence of a student’s short-term competence suggests minimal long-term competence then an MG (minimal growth) should be posted.

We suggest teachers should view competency building through the lens of growth using this reflective question stem: “How does the local (recent) evidence of student learning impact the global (long term) trajectory of the student’s rooted competency? If the recent evidence impacts suggest that competency will not root, then there may be a need for pause, a need for action or a need for immediate action. For instance, consider a mathematics student’s fluency with identifying parent functions that has been persistently low (based on numerous prior formative assessments), then this will impact long term rooting of this foundational competence. Here, short term growth will impact long term competence. The table below shows how to effectively report out evidence of both short and long-term competence.

		Short Term Competence	
		↑	↓
Long Term Competence	↑	AG	AG or MG
	↓	MG or FG	FG

While this is a paradigm shift that may take some getting used to, we believe that communicating competence in this manner helps students actively learn from the natural variances in their competency as they develop self-efficacy, resilience, and the ability to self-regulate their own growth.



DO YOU KNOW WHAT THESE ARE?

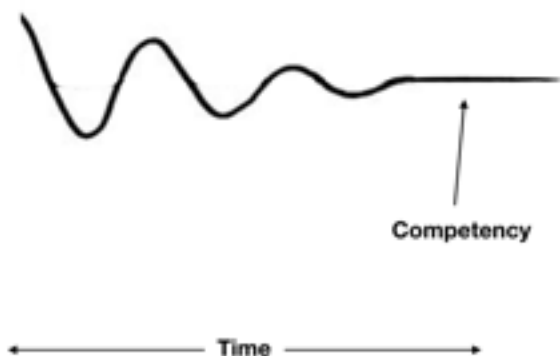
If not, see a
technology coach in room 3024 and find out how they can support
your instruction!

Personal Efficacy in Education

By Anthony Reibel

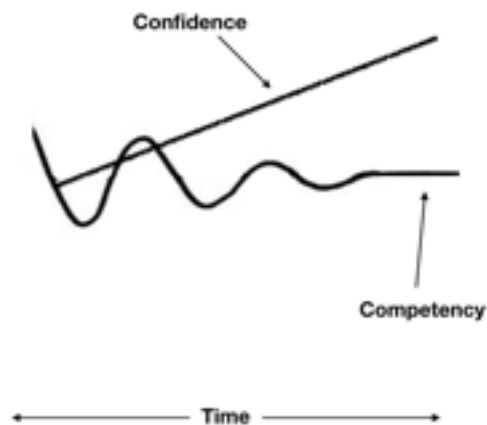
Everyone knows that learning is personal. We can easily see that each person uniquely learns, unlearns, and relearns tasks, skills, and concepts until some state of satisfaction or competency is reached. This unique cycle that people experience may seem to not have a pattern or even be predictable. However, on closer examination this 'messiness' does in fact have a pattern, a very clear one in fact.

As each person learns a task, skill, or concept, they will fluctuate between states of competence and incompetence until they ultimately acquire a fully developed competency (Jain, Reibel 2018). Oscillating between competent and incompetent states is the natural pattern of learning. Whether it is a child learning to ride a bike, a student learning fractions, or an adult composing their first short story, each has to go through periods of attempting, succeeding, failing, and attempting again until eventually competency emerges. This is the pattern of learning and this idea can be seen on the graph below:



(Jain Reibel 2018)

Now it goes without saying that the more competent a person is the more confident in that skill or concept they tend to be. I know from my days as a teacher that as I saw my students become more competent, I typically saw their confidence grow. As my students began to realize more successes (being relative to all people) in a task or learning, they maintained a heightened sense of satisfaction and a stronger sense of control in their learning. We can see how these two concepts interact on the graph below.



Developing the ability to grow one's own competence is essential in the learning process and should be the aim of all instruction and assessment. In fact, there are so many studies that show the correlation between efficacy, achievement, and satisfaction that I am convinced we must begin to embrace efficacy as a primary goal of all education.

The more students can understand how to build their own competence, the more confident

they become in their ability to grow themselves. Personal efficacy can be defined as:

“The confidence or strength of belief that we have in ourselves that we can make our learning happen.” (John Hattie 2012)

Personal efficacy has many documented benefits. Not only does it relate to traits such as work ethic, grit, and resilience but the capacity that one has to grow their own learning and be confident doing so has been shown to correlate to the following health and wellness benefits:

- Healthy Actions & Choices
 - Increased Effort
 - Perseverance
 - Ability to handle adversity
 - Healthy thought patterns
 - Lower stress and depression
 - Increase level of realized accomplishments
- Bandura 1997

In the graph below we see the profile of an efficacious individual. This graph displays the correlation between confidence and competence in a given skill. An efficacious person has realistic confidence, no matter what their state of competence, that they can grow themselves into a competent state.



This confidence is present even though competency has not taken hold yet, or maybe even started to develop. While this correlation may be obvious, as educators we typically do not plan or deliver learning in this manner.

Even with good intentions many classrooms still fail to even try to develop efficacious students. For classrooms that do attempt to develop it, it typically is a small, inconsequential part of the lesson.

The primary question of all educators should be, “Do we want to deliver lessons where the primary goal is to know content or possess isolated skills? Or do we want to deliver lessons that help students gain the confidence and habits they need to grow their own learning? I believe in the latter and I propose that the general goals of all lessons should be as follows:

1. Learn how to create my own competency.
2. Verify the validity of my own competency.
3. Foster the belief in my ability to create, validate and maintain my own competency.

All lessons should aim to create learning experiences that develop a student’s resiliency to the natural fluctuations in their own learning while simultaneously creating a student’s capacity to self-initiate and self-regulate their own growth.

I implore us to remember that teaching is not simply about making a difference in a student’s life, rather it is about helping students make a difference in their own.

How Metacognition Boosts Learning

By Youki Terada
via Edutopia November 2017

Strategies that target students' metacognition—the ability to think about thinking—can close a gap that some students experience between how prepared they feel for a test and how prepared they actually are. In a new study, students in an introductory college statistics class who took a short online survey before each exam asking them to think about how they would prepare for it earned higher grades in the course than their peers—a third of a letter grade higher, on average. This low-cost intervention helped students gain insight into their study strategies, boosting their metacognitive skills and giving them tools to be more independent learners.

Patricia Chen, a postdoctoral researcher at Stanford and the lead author of the study, says she often had students coming to her lamenting their poor test scores. “Many students have come to me after their exams trying to understand why they did not do as well as they had expected, despite their hard work,” she recalls. She suspected that the issue was that they lacked awareness of how ill-prepared they were—metacognitive awareness—and that led to the unexpectedly low scores. They thought they understood the material better than they actually did.

Nearly two decades ago, Cornell psychologists David Dunning and Justin Kruger conducted a landmark study looking at this

perception gap. In a series of experiments, they found that many college students who performed poorly on tests of logic and grammar had overestimated their performance, believing themselves to be above average. This phenomenon, the Dunning-Kruger Effect, explains why many students feel confident that they'll pass a test despite being underprepared. Overconfidence leaves students “with the mistaken impression that they're doing just fine,” according to Dunning and Kruger.

More recently, a team of psychologists and neuroscientists published a comprehensive analysis of 10 learning techniques commonly used by students. They discovered that one of the most popular techniques—rereading material and highlighting key points—is also one of the least effective because it leads students to develop a false sense of mastery. They review a passage and move on without realizing that they haven't thoroughly understood and absorbed the material. This has serious implications for learning: It's far too easy for students to overestimate their understanding of a topic simply because they're familiar with it.

Metacognition helps students recognize the gap between being familiar with a topic and understanding it deeply.

But weaker students often don't have this metacognitive recognition—which leads to disappointment and can discourage them from trying harder the next time.

Research shows that even children as young as 3 benefit from metacognitive activities, which help them reflect on their own learning and develop higher-order thinking. To promote students' metacognition, middle and high school teachers can implement the following strategies. Elementary teachers can model or modify these strategies with their students to provide more scaffolding.

METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES TO USE DURING CLASS

The key to metacognition is to encourage students to manage their own learning instead of passively absorbing material. Donna Wilson and Marcus Conyers use the phrase “drive your brain” as a metaphor to explain to students how they can become more aware of their learning. In addition, promoting a growth mindset helps students understand that learning isn't fixed: Through dedication and hard work, they can learn to be more resilient and overcome many challenges that may otherwise feel impossible. Simply being aware that there's a difference between a fixed and a growth mindset is one of the most effective metacognitive strategies that students can benefit from.

During class, encourage students

to ask questions. Keep in mind that struggling students may not know what questions to ask, or may feel too embarrassed to ask any. Don't assume that every student understands the material just because no one asks a question.

Use low-stakes formative assessment strategies like exit tickets, pop quizzes, or the classic "One-Minute Paper" to identify gaps in knowledge and guide future lessons (Heitink et al., 2016; Marzano, 2012; Sundberg, 2010).

During class, students should ask themselves:

- What are the main ideas of today's lesson?
- Was anything confusing or difficult?
- If something isn't making sense, what question should I ask the teacher?
- Am I taking proper notes?
- What can I do if I get stuck on a problem?

METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES TO USE WHEN PREPARING FOR TESTS

To close the gap between what your students know and what will be on a test,

encourage them to quiz themselves instead of just rereading and highlighting a text. This not only boosts long-term retention but also bridges the gap between familiarity with a topic and deep understanding of it (Adesope et al., 2017; Smith et al., 2013).

Before a test, students should ask themselves:

- What will be on the test?
- What areas do I struggle with or feel confused about?
- How much time should I set aside to prepare for an upcoming test?
- Do I have the necessary materials (books, school supplies, a computer and online access, etc.) and a quiet place to study, with no distractions?
- What strategies will I use to study? Is it enough to simply read and review the material, or will I take practice tests, study with a friend, or write note cards?
- What grade would I get if I were to take the test right now?

METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES TO USE TO REVIEW AFTER A TEST

Don't let students receive a graded test and file it away without using it as a tool for further learning. Try using exam wrappers, short handouts that students complete after a test is handed back. These worksheets encourage students to review their test performance and improve their study strategies throughout the school year (Gezer-Templeton et al., 2017).

After a test, students should ask themselves:

- What questions did I get wrong, and why did I get them wrong?
- Were there any surprises during the test?
- Was I well-prepared for the test?
- What could I have done differently?
- Am I receiving useful, specific feedback from my teacher to help me progress?



Do you have a teaching *story* to tell?
Please contact Tony Reibel in 3042 to submit for the next publication of *The Assessor*.



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