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# MODULE 9: ESTABLISHING MASTERY OF STANDARDS



◀ **VIDEO 9.1 Module 9 Overview**  
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Summative assessment is the link between teaching and learning. It is not sufficient to say that by virtue of the fact that we have taught something, students have learned it. On the other hand, it is also unacceptable to blame students for *not* learning. Summative assessments give students information about their learning, and they give teachers feedback about their teaching.

## PURPOSES OF SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS

End-of-unit and end-of-course assessments are used for awarding grades and reporting achievement on report cards and transcripts. In addition, they provide information about the knowledge and skills acquired by the student. Summative assessments include tests, projects, writing assignments, and performances. As noted previously, assessment should occur throughout the unit (formatively), not just at the end. However, end-of-unit summative assessments are important because they provide a measure of student performance against an exemplar—the standard. These are sometimes referred to as criterion-referenced assessments because the criteria for success have been identified. These differ from norm-referenced tests that compare the performance of an individual or group against a larger population. Everyone can theoretically earn an A on criterion-referenced assessments; only a fixed portion of students could do so on a norm-referenced exam. But criterion-referenced assessments have shortcomings, as they are

dependent on how well the standard is written and how well the assessment item measures it. To develop a sound summative assessment that measures the standard, return to the process you used to design your instruction in the first place.

1. **Return to the concepts and skills outlined in the standard.** Reexamine the concepts (nouns) and skills (verbs) featured in the standard. Make sure that they are clearly present in the assessment you are designing.
2. **Let the learning progressions guide your assessment.** Remember all that work you did in figuring out what the learning progressions would be for your unit? Here's where they pay off. The learning progressions, which are the tent poles for instruction, are also the tent poles for assessment. You will recall that the learning progressions are those big-bucket concepts and skills students must acquire to master the standard. The half dozen or so learning progressions you developed for the unit represent key elements of the standard being measured, including underlying background knowledge. Make sure each is represented in your assessment.
3. **Consult your daily learning intentions for further detail.** The learning intentions expand each of the learning progressions into daily statements of purpose for students. While some will be too fine-grained to be of use in your summative assessment, others may stand out in importance. Revisit your learning intentions to see if there are any that would be of use on your assessment.
4. **Refer to success criteria to show students the link between what is being measured and what has been learned.** The success criteria

should guide the item development of the specific assessment tool. Some teachers list success criteria statements directly on the assessment to strengthen ties between mastery and demonstration of learning. Rubrics or checklists used during the unit should be employed on the assessment.

5. **Match language expectations to assessment types.** Your language learning intentions provide direction on the design of the assessment. Student demonstration of mastery in the assessment should be consistent with the ways they did so during the unit of study. The use of writing prompts and exit slips, for instance, means that students should be completing constructed written responses. Performance-based demonstrations of skills during the unit should likewise be assessed through similar channels.
6. **Cross-check for relevance.** Throughout the unit you have made it a point to ensure that students would be able to see the relevance to what they

were learning. Ask yourself, has your assessment expressed relevance of learning?

Taken together, this process allows you to determine which students have mastered the standard(s) and which need additional instruction to be successful. This completes the teaching and learning cycle and signals the start of a new unit, as well as potential interventions for students who still need it.

## PLC CONVERSATIONS

1. What challenged you in this module?
2. What does it mean to have really learned something at a deep level?
3. What will we do if students do not master the standards?

