Journal Critique:

Using Authentic Assessment to Evidence

Children’s Progress toward Early Learning Standards

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Introduction to Early Childhood Education

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What comes to mind when you think of authentic assessment? Perhaps you make be thinking about types of assessments that are “real” or hands on. If you are thinking about assessments vastly different from typical multiple choice assessments, you are on the right track. Project LINK began with a goal to promote connections between assessment, curriculum, and outcomes, in order to enhance school success for children in Head Start Programs. Their goal was simply to link child assessment and curriculum in order to positively impact the preschool children.

Project LINK believed that authentic assessments must include four important characteristics to ensure its significance. Characteristics include: assessments must be conducted in a normal/natural environment, must be presented in various different methods, there must be a significant connection between the intent and use of the assessment and participation of family members during the assessment process (46).

The most significant assessment that is directly linked to curriculum is authentic assessment. Authentic assessments can vary as vastly as lesson plans themselves. Activities may include: story time, dramatic play, and various uses of manipulatives (48). The goal is for children to be actively engaged with an activity while the teacher is administering the test. Administration of authentic assessments may include: observation, anecdotal notes, interview, work samples or direct testing (48).

Authentic assessments are a form of assessment that meets the needs of students individually. Authentic assessments help to individualize student instruction. Supported
evidence suggests that authentic assessments may increase the attainment of knowledge in children (51).

Project LINK focuses on an authentic assessment referred to as AEPS or The Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming a System. This type of assessment aligns curriculum and assessment with standards and tracks the progression of student growth. It works well in classrooms with diverse abilities. AEPS also provides teachers with information regarding children’s developmental continuum of skills (47). Much like state standards, AEPS provides a goal, and breaks the goal down into smaller objectives that make up a particular goal. AEPS is helpful to teachers as it helps them better understand the sequence in which children learn skills. AEPS can be administered in various ways including: observation, direct testing, and interview (48.)

I found this article to be very significant and beneficial. As I read through the article I kept thinking of various types of authentic assessments. An authentic assessment that I participated with during middle school included taking my knowledge and understanding of volcanoes and constructing a volcano made from a Pringles can and paper mache. We then took materials to bring the volcano to life, and erupt. This was a project in which we talked about our volcano and then had it erupt. This simple project held my attention as I was very much engaged with it, and it provided my knowledge and understanding, all while I was observed and graded by my teacher. My teacher could have taken this same assessment and made it a traditional assessment, in which I would have had to list, explain and circle the right answer, to show my knowledge and understanding.

Authentic assessments offer opportunities to express knowledge without treating it like an actual assessment.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>On time:</th>
<th>Date: 4.1.09</th>
<th>Score: 29/30</th>
</tr>
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**EDUC 130**  
**ARTICLE REVIEW RUBRIC**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comprehension and Articulation</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>0</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clear purpose and summary of main points; Provides interesting and relevant details; significance to teacher</td>
<td>Clear, focused topic; Shows promise; Sketchy development of expected content</td>
<td>No clear purpose or central theme; Reads like a collection of random thoughts</td>
<td>No content knowledge provided; Unclear or confusing</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critique</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>0</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Includes several analyses that relate article to course content; real-life situations; presented in logical organization</td>
<td>Includes some analyses that relates article to course content and/or real-life situations</td>
<td>Includes some analytical statements that relate article to course content or real-life situations</td>
<td>Includes simplistic, general statements that are not substantiated or supported</td>
<td></td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scholarly writing style</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>0</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specific and accurate terms from article; Strong imagery; Striking, yet natural phrasing; Powerful verbs; Incorporates professional jargon</td>
<td>Correct, yet terms not precise; Lacks punch, yet gets message across; Few energetic verbs; May sound verbose</td>
<td>Limited vocabulary; Vague and abstract words used; Incorrectly uses clichés and/or jargon</td>
<td>Inappropriate terms throughout; Predominately slang and informal language</td>
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| Sentence Fluency  
[Ex., Complete sentences; without run-ons] | 5 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
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<tr>
<td>Easy flow; Easily read aloud; Varied sentence structure; Sounds natural; Complex sentence contains closely related ideas</td>
<td>Good control of simple sentence structure; Favors one pattern; Sentences go together</td>
<td>Difficult to follow; Choppy, rambling, or incomplete sentences; Not natural sounding; Monotonous</td>
<td>Awkward to read; Incomplete sentences difficult to read.</td>
<td></td>
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| Conventions  
[Ex., Capitalization; grammar; punctuation; spelling; paragraphing] meaning | 5 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grammar usage correct; Smooth punctuation; Correct spelling; Sound paragraphing</td>
<td>Spelling usually correct; Grammar problems not serious; Acceptable paragraphing; Internal punctuation errors</td>
<td>Frequent spelling errors; Incorrect paragraphing; Grammar/usage errors cloud the meaning; Many punctuation errors</td>
<td>Errors distract from content; Need to improve writing skills</td>
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<tr>
<th>Voice</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>0</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writer speaks to reader</td>
<td>Sincere, but not engaged</td>
<td>Distanced from topic</td>
<td>Confusing; Inconsistent</td>
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Comments: