

Assessment Design Considerations—The Definite Dozen

Consideration	Additional Information
1. All questions align to one or more standards.	Selecting specific standards that the assessment addresses dictates the types of questions to ask and the skills on which to focus. If content is not specific in the standards, identify the focus.
2. Assessment has a clear focus, topic, or purpose.	Identify a clear purpose. What will this assessment accomplish? What do we want to know? The identified purpose is reflective of the standards we have selected.
3. All questions and statements are clearly written and in full sentences (except completion items).	Questions should be clear and free from any confusion that could cause students to answer incorrectly.
4. Assessment contains higher-level thinking opportunities.	The purpose is to ensure that students have a true understanding of the concepts and can apply them to new or unique situations.
5. Questions match the intended targets and content.	Consider the desired outcome of the question and match it to the question design. A task, project, or open-ended question can be beneficial when asking students to analyze information.
6. Two to three questions address the same skill to ensure students can repeat the expected performance.	If students are able to apply a skill and get the correct answer once, can they repeat it? A second similar question will provide an additional opportunity, and a third can validate if the skill can be repeated at least two of three times.
7. Assessment provides opportunities for students to apply knowledge and skills to realistic situations.	When students are given the opportunity to apply what they know to real-life situations, they better understand the purpose of what they are learning.
8. Point value is clear for each question if questions have varied point levels.	When questions have different values, identifying the value helps students to know where additional time and effort may be required.
9. Success criteria are defined. (What do students need to do to earn a 1, 2, 3, or 4?)	When different values are assigned to questions, students will perform better if they understand the requirements to achieve the levels.
10. A rubric is available for essay and performance-based items.	A rubric provides descriptors of quality. The rubric clearly defines the level of achievement required to earn a top performance.
11. A system is in place to collect, record, and analyze data.	The goal of the assessment is to evaluate the strengths and challenge areas of students. Have a defined way to collect, record, and analyze the data.
12. Successful completion of the assessment will show that students know and understand the concepts being tested.	After writing the assessment, compare the finished product to the intended targets. If students do well on the assessment, will that also indicate that they have the expected knowledge and skills?