

WHAT MAKES GREAT ASSESSMENT IN THE CLASSROOM?

A resource guide, from the ASCL assessment conference, in association with Evidence Based Education.



Evidence Based
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ABOUT

"What makes great assessment in the classroom?" was a conference organised by ASCL, in association with Evidence Based Education, in April 2018. In this ebook, you can read a short guide to designing assessments, written by EBE's Director of Education, Stuart Kime, as well as a selection of top assessment tips and resources from our speakers and guests.



STUART KIME
KEYNOTE



DAISY CHRISTODOULOU
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#ASCLassessment



5 MINUTES ON... DESIGNING ASSESSMENTS

Stuart Kime

Director of Education
Evidence Based Education

The design of great classroom assessments is an achievable aim for teachers and school leaders. With a simple framework, assessment training and subject-specific knowledge, the quality of classroom assessment can be improved.

So what are the key elements of this framework? What are the decisions that need to be made?

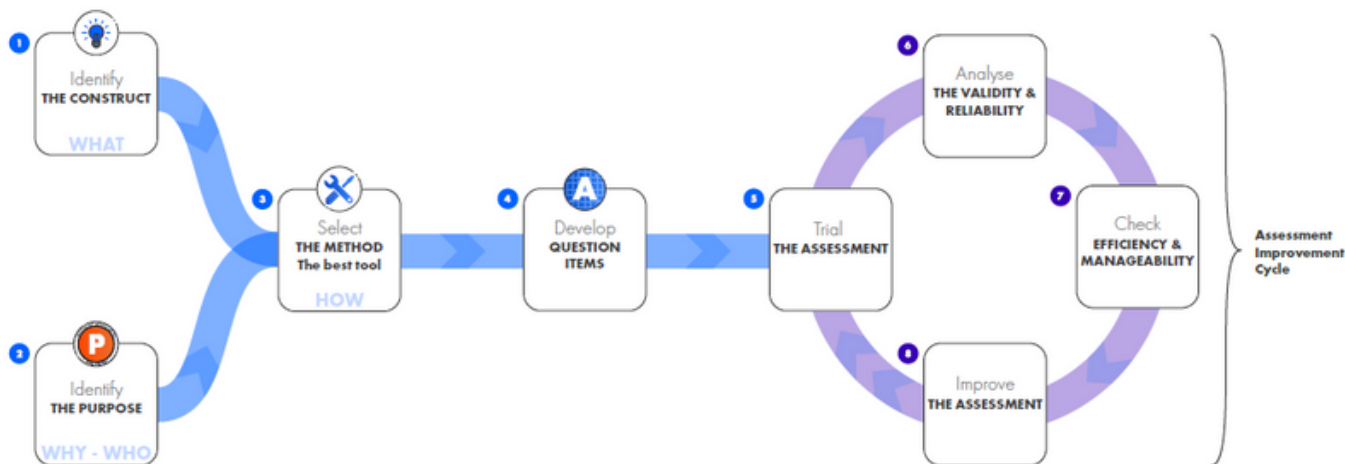
Above all else, the what and the why of assessment process is paramount.

THE WHAT AND THE WHY

What – the target of your assessment (often a specific aspect drawn from the curriculum).

Why – the purpose of the assessment (specifically the uses you want to make of the assessment information).

Put in context, an evidence-based cycle of assessment design and implementation would look like this:



"The principles of robust assessment design": Graphic taken from our Assessment Lead Programme. [Click here to read more about ALP.](#)

THE HOW AND THE WHEN

Having defined and identified the construct (the target of the assessment), and the purpose of the assessment, the next steps involve the selection of the most appropriate **tools** for the job. This decision will be driven by two considerations:

1. Which tool is the most 'fit for purpose' (multiple-choice questions, short answer questions, presentations, performances...)?
2. What is the most efficient way of using the tool well?

Once a decision has been made about the **method and timing** of the assessment, the focus shifts towards either finding existing questions or tasks which are suitable, or **designing** new ones. As curricular changes take place, knowing how to design good items is a useful skill; being able to apply the knowledge of good design to existing tests or ones that you might buy in is also valuable.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Having created a set of questions (generally more than you think you will need), you need to think about how much time you have available for students to take the assessment, and then **trial** the questions or tasks with a group of students. It's in this trialling phase that you will discover the unforeseen surprises: the language that confuses some children, the content that is unnecessary; the fact that there wasn't enough time for the children to complete the assessment.

HOW WELL DOES IT WORK?

Trialling also generates data which can be **analysed**. In the Assessment Lead Programme, we provide tools which enable analysis of the reliability of assessment data, and help teachers consider the validity of the interpretations they make having looked at those data. Robust design increases the chances of increased validity of these interpretations.

Analyses of the assessment data will often reveal that some questions are too easy for a certain group of students; it will also point out which questions should be **improved or removed** from the assessment.

FIT FOR PURPOSE

Good assessments are fit for purpose and they achieve their aims in efficient, fair and precise ways. Above all, however, they generate meaningful, useful information which is interpreted correctly; with the skills of assessment design, a teacher or school leader can create assessments achieve this important aim.



RESOURCES

We asked each of our speakers and experts to offer one or two resources which they find most useful around assessment - required reading, if you like.

Click on the subtitles to be taken directly to them!



PHIL STOCK

DEPUTY HEAD, GREENSHAW HIGH SCHOOL

Phil Stock is Deputy Headteacher at Greenshaw High School, where he leads on Teaching & Learning and Assessment. He also writes about English teaching and education in general, at joeybagstock.wordpress.com

PROF. ROB COE @ RESEARCHED NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2016

This is the video from Rob Coe's fantastic talk on assessment at the national ResearchEd conference in 2016. He covers a range of assessment concepts and discusses some of the issues around the effective use of assessments in schools.

"WHAT TEACHERS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ASSESSMENT"

This online copy of a 2002 book provides a wealth of knowledge about the fundamentals of assessment, including details of different types of instruments, measurement concepts and important issues in the field. There are sections on writing better items, with handy checklists, suggestions and guidelines for improving school tests. It is a very helpful primer designed to help teachers get a better understanding of assessment.

DAISY CHRISTODOULOU

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, NO MORE MARKING

Daisy Christodoulou is the Director of Education at No More Marking, a provider of online comparative judgement. She works closely with schools on developing new approaches to assessment. Before that, she was Head of Assessment at Ark Schools, a network of 35 academy schools. She has taught English in two London comprehensives and has been part of government commissions on the future of teacher training and assessment.



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Daisy is the author of "Seven Myths about Education" and "Making Good Progress? The future of Assessment for Learning", as well as the influential blog <https://thewingtoheaven.wordpress.com>.

STRENGTHENING THE STUDENT TOOLBOX: STUDY STRATEGIES TO BOOST LEARNING

This article by John Dunlosky explains the results of his research into the most effective learning strategies. He reviewed the effectiveness of ten popular learning strategies and found that practice testing and distributed practice were the most effective. Rereading a text and highlighting it were the least effective – but very popular with students!

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LEON WALKER & SARAH CUNLIFFE

MEOLS COP HIGH SCHOOL

Leon Walker is Deputy Headteacher at Meols Cop High School in Southport. He moved to Meols Cop in Easter 2014, where he is currently leading the Research School and facilitating the national trial into assessment and marking in English, FLASH Marking. Meols Cop was recently designated as a research school. **Sarah Cunliffe** is Subject Leader for English at Meols Cop High School. In her role as Specialist Leader of Education (SLE) in English, she has delivered support to English departments in the NW. Sarah is also FLASH Marking Co-ordinator and has recently worked with the EEF to develop a national trial into researching effective feedback strategies into KS4 English.



THE EEF'S IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

A new guidance report from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) aims to give schools the support they need to put evidence to work in their classrooms and implement new programmes and approaches effectively. The report highlights how good and thoughtful implementation is crucial to the success of any teaching and learning strategy, yet creating the right conditions for implementation – let alone the structured process of planning, delivering and sustaining change – is hard.

You can also download a practical checklist document created by the RS Network by [clicking here](#).

@lwalkerleon
@mchsresearch
@FLASHmarking

OURANIA VENTISTA

HEAD OF ASSESSMENT, EVIDENCE BASED EDUCATION



Ourania has taught in primary schools in England and Greece, and this year she is teaching at the School of Education at Durham University. She publishes in the areas of Philosophy for Children (P4C), educational assessment, differentiated instruction, school effectiveness and evaluation of school-based interventions. She holds an MSc in Educational Assessment from Durham University and she is a member of BERA.

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THE FOUR PILLARS OF ASSESSMENT

Previously, on ASCL's blog, EBE has guest-written a series of posts about the four pillars of great assessment - purpose, validity, reliability and value - with some practical takeaways. We republished these, and the link above takes you to a page listing them on our blog.

"WHAT MAKES GREAT ASSESSMENT?": A PANEL DISCUSSION

On the Chartered College of Teaching's YouTube channel, the panel discussion, "What makes great assessment?" is well worth watching. Tim Oates, Daisy Christodoulou, David Weston, Stuart Kime, Alison Peacock, Sarah Lee and Rob Coe joined together to answer three questions and discuss what good assessment practice looks like.



HARRY FLETCHER-WOOD

ASSOCIATE DEAN, INSTITUTE FOR TEACHING

Harry leads the Fellowship in Teacher Education programme at the Institute for Teaching. He has worked in schools in Japan, India and London, teaching history and leading professional development.

"WHY DON'T STUDENTS LIKE SCHOOL?"

Daniel Willingham summarises how we think and learn clearly, succinctly and useably. He describes key experiments, shows the psychological principles at work and demonstrates how teachers can apply them. With this in mind, we can plan: then we can design assessments to see what students have learned.

"EMBEDDED FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT"

For me, Dylan Wiliam's work remains the 'go to' for a clear, concise summary of the research and examples of how it can be put into practice.

IMPROVING TEACHING - HINGE QUESTIONS HUB

I've collected and organised links to every interesting study and blog I've come across about using hinge questions in the classroom here, from the theory behind them to examples of teachers fitting them to their classrooms.

RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Embarrassing as it is, I'll just mention that I've written this book as my attempt to examine the evidence about learning and assessment and provide a practical guide to applying it.

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w: improvingteaching.co.uk

ASSESS BETTER

Join the Assessment Lead Programme and gain the knowledge, skills, resources and support you need to better integrate assessment with curriculum and pedagogy. Improve the quality of information that supports teaching & learning. Better information for better decisions for better learning.

[Click here to find out more.](#)

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