WHAT MAKES A HIGH-QUALITY ASSESSMENT?

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WHAT IS EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT?

- Process of gathering data about what students know and can do
- Summative assessments measure to what degree students have learned what they were expected to learn in a target domain
- Test questions can be thought of as a series of probes to locate students on an achievement continuum

Criterion-referenced vs norm-referenced interpretations
A high quality assessment allows valid inferences about student knowledge and skills.

I. **Validity**: Measures what is purported
II. **Reliability**: Test scores are precise
III. **Alignment**: Test content adequately covers domain in its depth and breadth
IV. **Fairness**: Success on test depends on degree of mastery of domain and not on irrelevant factors

High quality assessments also support instruction by:
I. Communicating expectations
II. Providing timely and informative score reports
Each question provides information about how to locate the student’s ability on this continuum.

These questions are outside the range of challenge and provide little information about how to locate a fourth-grader on this continuum:

- $1 + 1 = ?$
- $\int_{-3}^{\infty} x^2 \sqrt{1/y} \, dx \, dy = ?$

The number, nature, and quality of such questions relate to degree of accuracy in locating the student on this continuum.

An assessment that accurately measures what it intends is both \textit{valid} (construct validity) and \textit{reliable} (precise).
II. FAIRNESS

- Does test content enable **ALL** students to demonstrate what they know and can do, regardless of linguistic, communicative, cognitive, cultural, physical or other characteristics?

- Answer depends on:
  - Clear definition of target domain
  - Adoption and use of universal design principles
    - Simple, clear, and intuitive instructions and procedures
    - Maximum readability and comprehensibility
    - Maximum legibility
    - Proper accommodations when needed
III. ALIGNMENT

- Assessment frameworks define the domain
- Blueprints are created to ensure adequate domain coverage and avoid
  - Construct underrepresentation
  - Imbalance in construct representation
- Testing student with material that is completely below or completely above their grade level is not appropriate
SUPPORTING QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION

• Assessments can support instruction by means of:
  • Communicating expectations because what gets assessed gets taught
  • Providing timely and informative score reports