

Authentic assessment

What is authentic assessment?

A form of assessment in which students are asked to perform real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills

Jon Mueller, 2014, <http://jfmuellder.faculty.noctrl.edu/toolbox/whatisit.htm>

Purposeful and engaging

Students, teachers and the community should see some real value in working on the task – that is, they want to solve it and see that it is worth the time spent on it.

Models how people solve real problems

The task should involve meetings or other activities that involve negotiation, planning, action, reporting, evaluating and exploring of alternatives.

Puts knowledge to work

The task should draw on a range of knowledge, skills and strategies from different areas of the school curriculum, as well as what is known about the local environment.

Demonstrates what students know and can do

All learners should be enabled to make a start or contribute in some way. However the task should also challenge most learners at some level.

Supports multiple representations and solution strategies

For example, diagrams, stories, graphs, tables, symbolic expressions, written arguments, explanations and/or justifications can demonstrate multiple options.

Offers opportunities for meaningful learning and higher order cognitive thinking

For example, the task should allow for:

- the development of an extended range of problem solving strategies and/or skills
- the construction and evaluation of conjectures, rules and/or generalisations.

Results in some product, presentation or outcome

Ultimately, there should be something tangible that can be 'pointed to' as a result of the deliberations of the group and/or individual.

Taken from the Victorian Department of Education and Training

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/maths/assessment/Pages/authtasks.aspx>

Features of authentic assessment

- Teachers and students focus on communication, not on right and wrong answers
- It involves multi-stage tasks and real problems that require creative use of language rather than simple repetition
- Tasks are built around topics or issues of interest to the students
- The evaluation criteria and standards are known to the student
- It involves interaction between assessor (teacher, peers, self) and person assessed
- It allows for self-evaluation and self-correction as they proceed

Adapted from The National Capital Language Resource Centre

<http://www.nclrc.org/essentials/assessing/alternative.htm>

Examples of authentic assessment

Example 1.

Plan a Pizza Day for all the students in Year 7/8

There are two requirements you must think about:

1. You can only offer two types of pizza topping.
2. You have to make a profit from the pizzas you sell.

Example 2.

A newly established school wants to involve senior students in a sports program with neighbouring schools but is on a limited budget. Football, netball and soccer are the chosen sports.

Develop a plan for a proposed visit from another school remembering the school has no uniforms or equipment but does have the appropriate grounds available.

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