

The Eight Big Ideas of Classroom Assessment by Damian Cooper

1. **Assessment serves different purposes at different times:** it may be used to find out what students already know and can do; it may be used to help students improve their learning; or it may be used to let students, and their parents, know how much they have learned within a prescribed period of time.
2. **Assessment must be planned and purposeful.** Planning must ensure that assessment is aligned with curriculum, instruction, grading, and reporting.
3. **Assessment must be balanced,** including oral and performance as well as written tasks, and be flexible in order to improve learning for all students.
4. **Assessment and instruction are inseparable** because effective assessment informs learning.
5. **For assessment to be helpful to students, it must inform** them in words, not just numerical scores or letter grades, what they have done well, what they have done poorly, and what they need to do next in order to improve.
6. **Assessment is a collaborative process** that is most effective when it involves self, peer, and teacher assessment.
7. **Performance standards are an essential component of effective assessment.**
8. **Grading and reporting student achievement is a caring, sensitive process that requires teachers' professional judgment.**

Cooper, D. (2007). *Talk About Assessment: Strategies and Tools to Improve Learning*. Toronto: Nelson.

Copies of this resource are available from your Learning Coach.

