



GrowingSuccess

*Excerpts from GROWING SUCCESS |
assessment, evaluation, and reporting in
Ontario schools, 2010*

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A QUICK GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

*“The primary purpose of assessment and
evaluation is to improve student learning.”*

The Seven Fundamental Principles

Notes:

To ensure that assessment, evaluation, and reporting are valid and reliable, and that they lead to the improvement of learning for all students, teachers use practices and procedures that:

- are fair, transparent, and equitable for all students;
- support all students, including those with special education needs, those who are learning the language of instruction (English or French), and those who are First Nation, Métis, or Inuit;
- are carefully planned to relate to the curriculum expectations and learning goals and, as much as possible, to the interests, learning styles and preferences, needs, and experiences of all students;
- are communicated clearly to students and parents at the beginning of the school year or course and at other appropriate points throughout the school year or course;
- are ongoing, varied in nature, and administered over a period of time to provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate the full range of their learning;
- provide ongoing descriptive feedback that is clear, specific, meaningful, and timely to support improved learning and achievement;
- develop students' self-assessment skills to enable them to assess their own learning, set specific goals, and plan next steps for their learning. (Page 6)

Big Ideas:

- “The primary purpose of assessment and evaluation is to improve student learning.”
- Teachers will ensure that student learning is **assessed and evaluated in a balanced manner** with respect to the four categories.
- ...**all categories of the achievement chart are important** and need to be a part of the process of instruction, learning, assessment, and evaluation in all subjects and courses.
- Teachers will obtain assessment information through a **variety of means** - including **conversations, observations and products**.
- As part of **assessment “for” and “as”** learning, teachers provide students with **descriptive feedback** and coaching for improvement. “**Assessment of learning**” or **evaluation** (determining a mark) **focuses on students’ achievement of the overall expectations** and occurs at or near the end of a period of learning.
- Teachers’ **professional judgement** and interpretation of evidence and should reflect the student’s **most consistent level of achievement**, with special consideration given to **more recent** evidence.
- **Seventy per cent** of the grade will be based on evaluation conducted throughout the course. **Thirty per cent** of the grade will be based on a final evaluation administered **at or towards the end of the course** - based on evidence from one or a combination of comprehensive task(s).

It is worth noting, right from the start, that

assessment is a human

process,

conducted by and with

human

beings, and

subject

inevitably to the

frailties of human

judgement. However crisp

and objective we might try to make

it, and however neatly quantifiable may be

our “results”, ***assessment is closer to an***

art than a science. It is, after all, an

exercise in human communication.

(Sutton, p. 2)



The Achievement Chart

The performance standards are outlined in the achievement chart that appears in the elementary and secondary curriculum document for every subject or discipline. **The achievement chart for each subject/discipline is a standard province-wide guide and is to be used by all teachers** as a framework within which to assess and evaluate student achievement of the expectations in the particular subject or discipline.

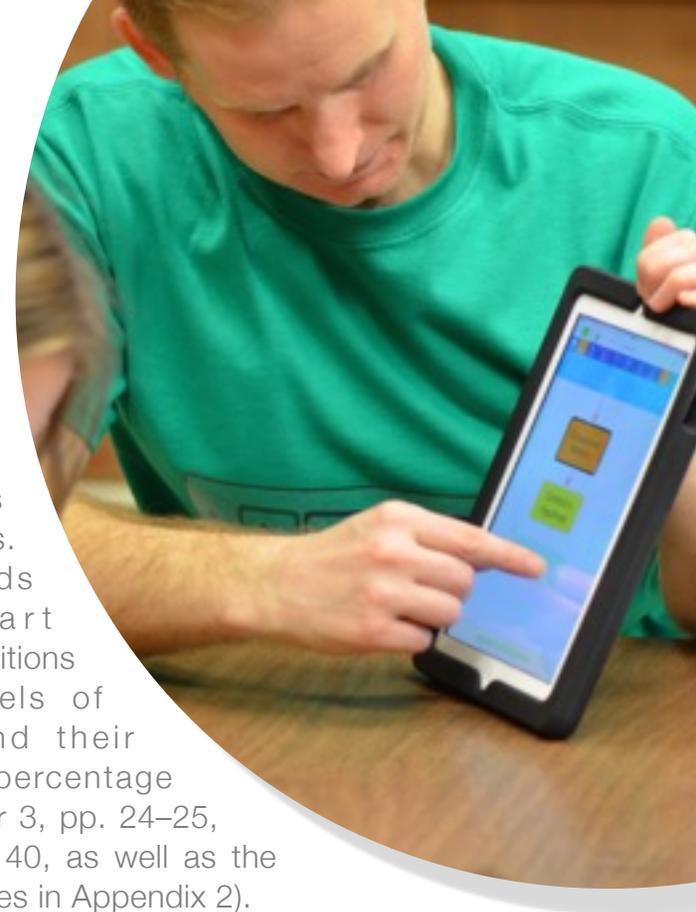
The purposes of the achievement chart are to:

- provide a common framework that encompasses all curriculum expectations for all subjects/courses across grades;
- guide the development of high-quality assessment tasks and tools (including rubrics);
- help teachers to plan instruction for learning;
- provide a basis for consistent and meaningful feedback to students in relation to provincial content and performance standards;
- establish categories and criteria with which to assess and evaluate students' learning.

(Page 16 & 17)

For Grades 7 to 12, achievement of the curriculum expectations for each subject (or strand) or course is reported on the provincial report cards as percentage marks. The report cards provide a chart showing the definitions of the four levels of achievement and their alignment with percentage marks (see Chapter 3, pp. 24–25, and Chapter 5, p. 40, as well as the report card templates in Appendix 2).

- For Grades 7 and 8, teachers will use the code “R”, as defined below on this page, to indicate achievement below 50 per cent.
- For achievement below level 1 in **Grades 9 to 12**, percentage marks below 50 per cent are assigned. **Both “R” and marks below 50 per cent signal that additional learning is required.**
- **For Grades 1 to 10, the code “I” may be used** in a mark book and/or on a student’s report card, including the final report card, to indicate that insufficient evidence is available to determine a letter grade or percentage mark. (Page 56)



Achievement Levels

For Grades 7 to 12, a **student’s achievement of the overall curriculum expectations** will be evaluated in accordance with the **achievement charts** in the provincial curriculum and will be reported using percentage marks. It is expected that both mathematical calculations and professional judgement will inform the determination of percentage marks.

The following conversion chart shows how the four levels of achievement are aligned to percentage marks: (Page 40)

Achievement Level	Percentage Mark Range	VIA Numeric Equivalent
4+	95–100	98
4	87–94	91
4–	80–86	83
3+	77–79	78
3	73–76	75
3–	70–72	71
2+	67–69	68
2	63–66	65
2–	60–62	61
1+	57–59	58
1	53–56	55
1–	50–52	51
R	Below 50	40
I	Insufficient Evidence	No Value

The achievement chart identifies four categories of knowledge and skills that are common to both the elementary and secondary panels and to all subject areas and disciplines.

The categories of knowledge and skills are as follows:

Knowledge and Understanding:	Subject-specific content acquired in each grade/course (knowledge), and the comprehension of its meaning and significance (understanding)
Thinking:	The use of critical and creative thinking skills and/or processes
Communication:	The conveying of meaning through various forms
Application:	The use of knowledge and skills to make connections within and between various contexts

The four categories should be considered as interrelated, reflecting the wholeness and interconnectedness of learning.

In all subjects and courses, students should be given **numerous and varied opportunities** to demonstrate the full extent of their achievement of the curriculum expectations (content standards) **across all four categories of knowledge and skills**.

Teachers will ensure that student learning is assessed and evaluated in a balanced manner with respect to the four categories, and that achievement of particular expectations is considered within the appropriate categories. The emphasis on “balance” reflects the fact that all categories of the achievement chart are important and need to be a part of the process of instruction, learning, assessment, and evaluation in all subjects and courses.

Learning Skills and Work Habits

The development of learning skills and work habits is an integral part of a student's learning. To the extent possible, however, the evaluation of learning skills and work habits, apart from any that may be included as part of a curriculum expectation in a subject or course, **should not be considered in the determination of a student's grades.**

It is expected that teachers will work with students to help them develop the learning skills and work habits identified in the following table. *The sample behaviours are intended to assist but not restrict teachers in their efforts to help students become effective learners.* (Page 11)

Learning Skills and Work Habits	Sample Student Behaviours (Growing Success, p. 11)
Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">fulfils responsibilities and commitments within the learning environment;completes and submits class work, homework, and assignments according to agreed-upon timelines;takes responsibility for and manages own behaviour.
Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">devises and follows a plan and process for completing work and tasks;establishes priorities and manages time to complete tasks and achieve goals;identifies, gathers, evaluates, and uses information, technology, and resources to complete tasks.

Determining a Report Card Grade: Grades 1 to 12

Teachers will take various considerations into account before making a decision about the grade to be entered on the report card. The teacher will consider all evidence collected through observations, conversations, and student products (tests/exams, assignments for evaluation).

Determining a report card grade will involve teachers' professional judgement and interpretation of evidence and should reflect the student's most consistent level of achievement, with special consideration given to more recent evidence.

For Grades 9 to 12, a final grade (percentage mark) is recorded for every course. The final grade will be determined as follows:

Seventy per cent of the grade will be based on evaluation conducted throughout the course. This portion of the grade should reflect the student's most consistent level of achievement throughout the course, although special consideration should be given to more recent evidence of achievement.

Thirty per cent of the grade will be based on a final evaluation administered at or towards the end of the course. This evaluation will be based on evidence from one or a combination of the following: an examination, a performance, an essay, and/or another method of evaluation suitable to the course content. The final evaluation allows the student an opportunity to demonstrate comprehensive achievement of the overall expectations for the course.

(Page 41)

Evaluation and Reporting

Evaluation refers to the process of judging the quality of student learning on the basis of established performance standards and assigning a value to represent that quality. Evaluation accurately summarizes and communicates to parents, other teachers, employers, institutions of further education, and students themselves what students know and can do with respect to the overall curriculum expectations. Evaluation is based on assessment of learning that provides evidence of student achievement at strategic times throughout the grade/course, often at the end of a period of learning

The primary purpose of assessment and evaluation is to improve student learning.

For Grades 1 to 12, all curriculum expectations must be accounted for in instruction and assessment, but **evaluation focuses on students' achievement of the overall expectations.**

Evidence of student achievement for evaluation is collected over time from three different sources – **observations, conversations, and student products.** Using multiple sources of evidence increases the reliability and validity of the evaluation of student learning.

The evaluation of student learning is the responsibility of the teacher and must not include the judgement of the student or of the student's peers.

Independent Work

- independently monitors, assesses, and revises plans to complete tasks and meet goals;
- uses class time appropriately to complete tasks;
- follows instructions with minimal supervision.

Collaboration

- accepts various roles and an equitable share of work in a group;
- responds positively to the ideas, opinions, values, and traditions of others;
- builds healthy peer-to-peer relationships through personal and media-assisted interactions;
- works with others to resolve conflicts and build consensus to achieve group goals;
- shares information, resources, and expertise and promotes critical thinking to solve problems and make decisions.

Initiative

- looks for and acts on new ideas and opportunities for learning;
- demonstrates the capacity for innovation and a willingness to take risks;
- demonstrates curiosity and interest in learning;
- approaches new tasks with a positive attitude;
- recognizes and advocates appropriately for the rights of self and others.

Self-regulation

- sets own individual goals and monitors progress towards achieving them;
- seeks clarification or assistance when needed;
- assesses and reflects critically on own strengths, needs, and interests;
- identifies learning opportunities, choices, and strategies to meet personal needs and achieve goals;
- perseveres and makes an effort when responding to challenges.

Purpose of Classroom Assessment: **Assessment For, As and Of Learning**

PURPOSE OF CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT

Assessment for learning

“Assessment for learning is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go, and how best to get there.” (Assessment Reform Group, 2002, p. 2)

Assessment as learning

“Assessment as learning focuses on the explicit fostering of students’ capacity over time to be their own best assessors, but teachers need to start by presenting and modelling external, structured opportunities for students to assess themselves.” (Western and Northern Canadian Protocol, p. 42)

Assessment of learning

“Assessment of learning is the assessment that becomes public and results in statements or symbols about how well students are learning. It often contributes to pivotal decisions that will affect students’ futures.” (Western and Northern Canadian Protocol, p. 55)

NATURE OF ASSESSMENT

Diagnostic assessment:

- occurs before instruction begins so teachers can determine students’ readiness to learn new knowledge and skills, as well as obtain information about their interests and learning preferences.

Formative assessment:

- occurs frequently and in an ongoing manner during instruction, while students are still gaining knowledge and practising skills.

Formative assessment:

- occurs frequently and in an ongoing manner during instruction, with support, modelling, and guidance from the teacher.

Summative assessment:

- occurs at or near the end of a period of learning, and may be used to inform further instruction.

USE OF INFORMATION

The information gathered:

- is used by teachers and students to determine what students already know and can do with respect to the knowledge and skills identified in the overall and specific expectations, so teachers can plan instruction and assessment that are differentiated and personalized and work with students to set appropriate learning goals.

The information gathered:

- is used by teachers to monitor students’ progress towards achieving the overall and specific expectations, so that teachers can provide timely and specific descriptive feedback to students, scaffold next steps, and differentiate instruction and assessment in response to student needs.

The information gathered:

- is used by students to provide feedback to other students (peer assessment), monitor their own progress towards achieving their learning goals (self-assessment), make adjustments in their learning approaches, reflect on their learning, and set individual goals for learning.

The information gathered:

- is used by the teacher to summarize learning at a given point in time. This summary is used to make judgements about the quality of student learning on the basis of established criteria, to assign a value to represent that quality, and to support the communication of information about achievement to students themselves, parents, teachers, and others.