

Making the Grade: Current Trends in Music Assessment

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Terms

- Assessment: Gathering information about student learning in a broad manner. Can be organized in portfolios.
- Measurement: Using objective, reliable methodology to observe musical behaviors. Rubrics are measurements.
- Evaluation: Comparing evidence of assessment in relation to a standard. Grading is a form of evaluation.

Adapted from: K. Dirph, "Instituting Portfolio Assessment in Performing Ensembles," NYSSMA Winter Conference, Dec. 2, 1997.

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Changes in Assessment

- Conventional Assessment
- Alternative Assessment
- Performance-Based Assessment
- Student Auditions
- Solo/Ensemble Festivals
- Critiques of Student Compositions
- Coaching Jazz Improvisation
- Playing Checks

From: V. Perrone (Ed.), (1991), *Expanding Student Assessment*, Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

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Forms of Alternative Assessment

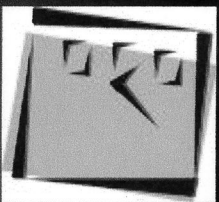
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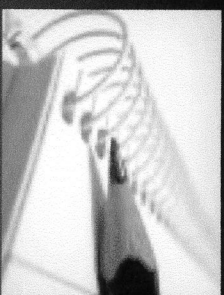
- Criteria-Specific Rating Scales
- Continuous Rating Scales
- Additive Rating Scales
- Rubrics*; should include:
 - points that are equidistant
 - 4 or more rating points
 - descriptors that are valid and reliable



*From: K. Dirth, *Justifying Portfolio Assessment in Performing Ensembles*, NYSSMA Winter Conference, Dec. 3, 1997.

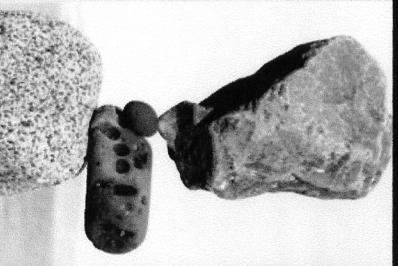
Forms of Alternative Assessment

- Student Writing
- Concert Reviews
- Journal Keeping
- Interviews
- Creative Writing



Assessment Stances

Should Be Operating in Balance



From: V. Brunnett, *Authentic Assessment: Is It Possible in Elementary Music?*, NYSSMA Winter Conference, Dec. 2, 1997.

Seating Chart

M +	M -	M +	M
B -	B -	B -	B
M !	M !	didn't sing at all today	
B -	B -	M +	M !
M +	M	M +	M !
B +	B	B ?	B !

M = melody
B = bass melody

! = excellent
+ = good
- = needs assistance
? = check again

National Standard #7: Evaluating music and music performances.

Rating Scales

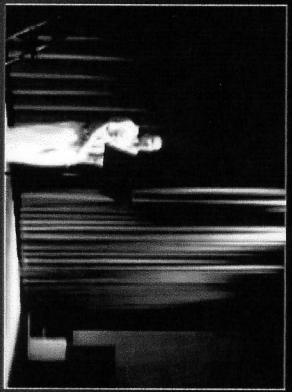
- Should be:
- criteria-specific
- objective
- easy to use
- clear

Playing Check #1		Playing Check #2	
Tone <i>Quality</i> Care of Fingert Breath Support Projection Vibrato Embouchure Posture	0-20 <input type="checkbox"/>	Tonal Accuracy/Intonation (circle the highest level of achievement attained)	0-5 <input type="checkbox"/>
Intonation <i>Tuning</i> Fingering	0-10 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 Accurate and precise pitch and	
Accuracy <i>Accuracy of Notes</i> Accuracy of Rhythms Steadiness of Rhythms Pulse	0-15 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 Impeccate pitch—accurate notes	
		3 Few inaccurate notes	
		2 Performed with an overall sense of tonality	
		1 Performed with a focused tone	
		Rhythmic Accuracy (circle the highest level of achievement attained)	0-5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		5 Accurate and precise tempo, meter, and melodic rhythms	
		4 Mostly accurate, few major rhythmic errors	
		3 Consistent tempo, steady meter, but wrong rhythms	
		2 Partials of consistent tempo and steady meter	
		1 Inconsistent tempo, no sense of meter	
Total Points (0-45)	_____	Total Points (0-10)	_____

Create A Rubric

What does a rubric look like?

- types include holistic (overall performance) and analytic (specific dimensions of performance); both are necessary for student assessment
- the scale includes (preferably) 4 rating points
- the points of the scale are equidistant on a continuum
- the highest point represents exemplary performance
- descriptors are provided for each level of student performance
- descriptors are valid (meaningful) and scores are reliable (consistent)
- scores are related to actual levels of students learning
- can be used by students for self-assessment and to assess the performance of other students



An example...

Create A Rubric

Why Bother?

- Helps plan activities
- Focuses your objectives
- Aids in evaluation and grading
- Improves instruction

Journal Keeping

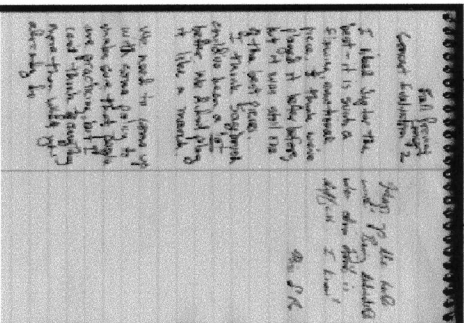
- stenographer's notebooks work best
- younger students need more directed writing assignments
- try to avoid the "pizza & pop" syndrome
- teacher feedback is essential

Student's comments

Full Preview Concert
Concert Evaluation #2

"I liked Jagger the best—it is such a famous emotional piece. I think we've played it better before, but it was still the one of the best pieces. I think Steepmoh could've been a bit better. We didn't play it like a march.

We need to come up with some policy to make sure that people are practicing, but I can't think of anything more than what you already do."



Teacher's response

"Keep up the hard work! Being dedicated when others aren't is difficult. I know!"

Miss R

Types of Portfolios

Portfolio Type

Photographic Analogy

Product/Performance

Class Picture

Uses...

- collects same product from all students at same time
- ranking/sorting instrument for class measurement and evaluation

Types of Portfolios

Portfolio Type

Photographic Analogy

Presentation/Product

Artist's Portfolio

Uses...

- seek admission to school
- interview for a job
- formulate summative (final) grades

Types of Portfolios

Portfolio Type

Photographic Analogy

Program

Formal Portrait

Uses...

- represents best work of a group of students over time
- allows for performance-based assessment of student progress

Types of Portfolios

Portfolio Type

Photographic Analogy

Process

Scrap Book/Photo Album

Uses...

- includes early and perhaps less successful examples of student work
- creative process is clearly seen

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Questions, Comments...

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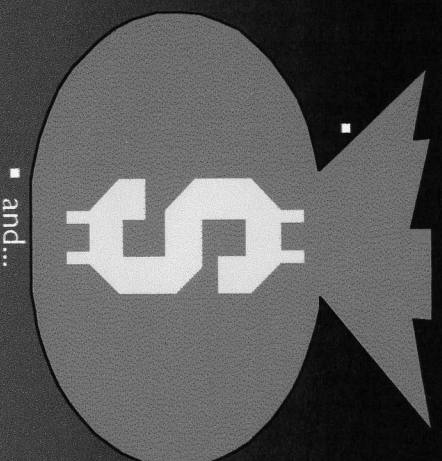
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Limitations



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