

“Assessing Student Learning in the School Library Media Center”

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ECU Librarian to Librarian
Networking Summit*

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From the experts at the AASL Fall Forum, Warwick, RI - Oct. 2006

Violet Harada

- Associate Professor LIS Program, University of Hawaii
(numerous articles in SLMAM)
- “Assessing Learning: The Missing Piece in Instruction?” (March, 2006)
- “From Eyeballing to Evidence: Assessing for Learning in Hawaii Library Media Centers” (Nov. 2007)
- “Inquiry Learning through Librarian – Teacher Partnerships” (Linworth Publishing, 2004)
- “Assessing Learning: Librarians and Teachers as Partners” (Libraries Unlimited, 2005)

Allison Zmuda

- Education Consultant for ASCD in Alexandria, VA. She is also the director of the Division of Teaching and Learning for the Capital Region Education Council in Hartford Connecticut.
- “Where Does Your Authority Come From? Empowering the Library Media Specialist as a True Partner in Student Achievement” (SLMAM, Sept. 2006)

Barbara Stripling

- Director of Library Programs for New Visions for Public Schools, New York City, New York
- She is the author or editor of three books:
Brainstorms and Blueprints: Teaching Library Research as a Thinking Process, *Libraries for the National Education Goals*, and *Learning and Libraries in an Information Age: Principles and Practice*
- Along with Judy Pitts developed the REACT Model for higher level thinking strategies.

Major/Essential Questions from the Forum

- What is assessment?
- Who should assess?
- Why?
- How are SLMS assessing for learning?

Quotes

- “True authority does not come from the superintendent, principal, or even the teachers worked with every day; it comes from a very large achievement gap...The chasm between the academic expectations for learners and the current achievement levels of students within the schools.”

Zmuda, 2006

So.....How do we determine if our students are getting it?

From Violet Harada:

- “I don’t have time to give quizzes and tests so I can’t really assess students’ work.”
- “I have to teach the same lessons year after year because the students don’t learn.”

~Harada, AASL Fall Forum,
2006

- Discuss for a moment these two statements and the implications.

Consider these statements:

- Assessment is not my job – it's the teacher's job.
- Assessment is done for a grade.
- Assessment is separate and distinct from learning.

How do you know how you are doing?

Turn and talk.....

What sources do you use for information?

How does information shape what you do more of? Less of? Instead of?

Is assessment done solely for grading purposes?

Is assessment separate from the learning process?

Assessment

- According to Violet Harada assessment is comprised of three parts:
- “Assessment OF LEARNING
- Assessment FOR LEARNING
- Assessment FOR ADVOCACY”

Harada

AASL Fall Forum, 2006

Who Should Assess?

- The experts agree ALL stakeholders are responsible for student achievement.
- Why Media Specialists?

Research shows:

- Assessment for students increases their motivation and “deepens quality of learning.” (Harada, 2006) Assessment makes students more self directed in their learning;
- Assessment for teachers gives direction to teaching and informs purposeful teaching. Assessment also allows for more differentiated instruction and personalized feedback.

A call to action..... (from Allison Zmuda)

- “Grades communicate data about student achievement.
- Student achievement data provides evidence of the success of the school.
- Gaps between current reality and vision of success are the engine of change and the focus of school improvement resources.

Without taking part in the grading of student achievement, the work of library media specialists is relegated to “nice but not necessary.”

~Allison Zmuda, 2006

Get credible evidence

- According to Zmuda “if you don’t have the data, you’re just another person with an opinion.”
- Define measurable and attainable goals for student achievement
- Collaboration: start small, grab opportunities and establish priorities. Work for solutions instead of feeling “helpless” by setbacks/roadblocks. (see great article by Ross Todd in March, 2008 SLMAM “Collaboration: From Myth to Reality: Let’s Get Down to Business. Just Do It”)
- Plan with Intent: Use backward design, use essential questions to guide your teaching, have a clarity of intent but also a mutual plan.

Teacher and Learner Led Assessment

- Formative Assessment pieces – takes place each step along the way; informs and defines the next steps
- Summative Assessment pieces – “the measurement of knowledge and skills at the end of a process of learning in order to determine the amount and quality of learning.” (Barbara Stripling, AASL Fall Forum, 2006)

What does it look like?

- Ungraded exams, exit cards, interviews, journals, progress checks, rubrics, checklists, etc.
- Learning logs, concept maps, KWLs, think alouds, peer reviews and challenges, questionings, checklist, rubrics, reflections (reflects higher level thinking: reflecting, questioning, organizing, sharing, challenging, and evaluating).

Reflection and Discussion

- What are you already doing?
- What questions are going through your mind?
- What connections do you see in your own situation?
- What might be your next steps?

Our Challenges (from Violet Harada)

- “Are we invisible or visible and indispensable teaching partners?”
- Do we view assessment as intuitive and incidental or integral and intentional to learning?
- Do we simply spout rhetoric on the importance of assessment.....or can we demonstrate results?”

- Violet Harada, AASL Fall Forum, 2006.

If you would like more information:

- Go to the North Carolina School Library Media Association website. Go to the Conference presentations and handouts. Print out the original power points and handouts from Violet Harada, Alison Zmuda and Barbara Stripling and the AASL Fall Forum.
- <http://www.ncslma.org/2007Conference/NCSLMAConferenceSessions.htm>

Thank you!

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