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IT'S TIME TO CREATE OUR ASSESSMENT FUTURE

**Jefferson County & Kentucky Schools
October 5, 2009**



Audiences & My Mission

- **Teachers:** Commit to quality assessment
- **School Leaders:** Commit to balanced assessment
- **Policy Makers:** Understand and guide sound assessment practice
- **Community:** Trust the faculty



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Enduring Understandings:

1. Assessments must yield **accurate information** about student achievement.
2. Assessments can be **used effectively** to support student learning and to verify it.

Revolution in Assessment Dynamics #1

**High-quality assessment
used effectively can cause
learning, not merely
monitor and grade it...**

Meet Kris, our little writer...

DEFINING OUR ASSESSMENT FUTURE



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BIG change in the social mission of schools:

Old vision

Weed out the unwilling or unable; rank the rest

Problem

Society needs all students to be lifelong learners

New vision

All students become readers, writers, math problem solvers; and rank them too

Change in the process of mission fulfillment:

Old vision

Create artificial scarcity of success; sort winners

Problem

Society needs academic success for all learners

New vision

All students must meet rigorous standards; all ready for college & work-place

Change in student motivators:

Old vision

**Promise winners & losers;
build anxiety as a sorting
mechanism**

Problem

**Losers give up and don't
become lifelong learners**

New vision

**Rely on continuous
academic success to build
confidence**

Change in faculty motivators:

Old vision

Rely on the intimidation of accountability

Problem

Faculties (teachers) can give up in hopelessness

New vision

Promise success for faculties who strive for it in productive ways

Change in assessment strategy:

Old vision

**Rely on large-scale
summative for
comparison & acc'ty**

Problem

**Fails to meet key
information needs**

New vision

**Balance formative &
summative to meet all
information needs**

Change in assessment strategy:

Old vision

**Low-cost multiple
choice tests**

Problem

**Severely restricts the
learning targets that can
be assessed**

New vision

**Rely on all available
methods to cover
diverse standards**

Change in assessment strategy:

Old vision

**Little concern for
assessment quality**

Problem

**Undependable evidence
yields poor decisions &
harms learning**

New vision

**Quality is crucial
throughout the system**

Change in strategy for communicating results:

Old vision

Communicate summary judgments only

Problem

Such gross judgments cannot support learning

New vision

Balance descriptive feedback to support learning & judgment to report ultimate success

Remember the new social mission of schools:

Old vision

**Weed out the unwilling or
unable; rank the rest**

Problem

**Society needs all to
become lifelong learners**

New vision

**All students become
readers, writers, math
problem solvers; and rank
them too**

DEFINING SOUND ASSESSMENT PRACTICE



Think of a time when you
were assessed that was a
negative experience for you.
What made it negative?



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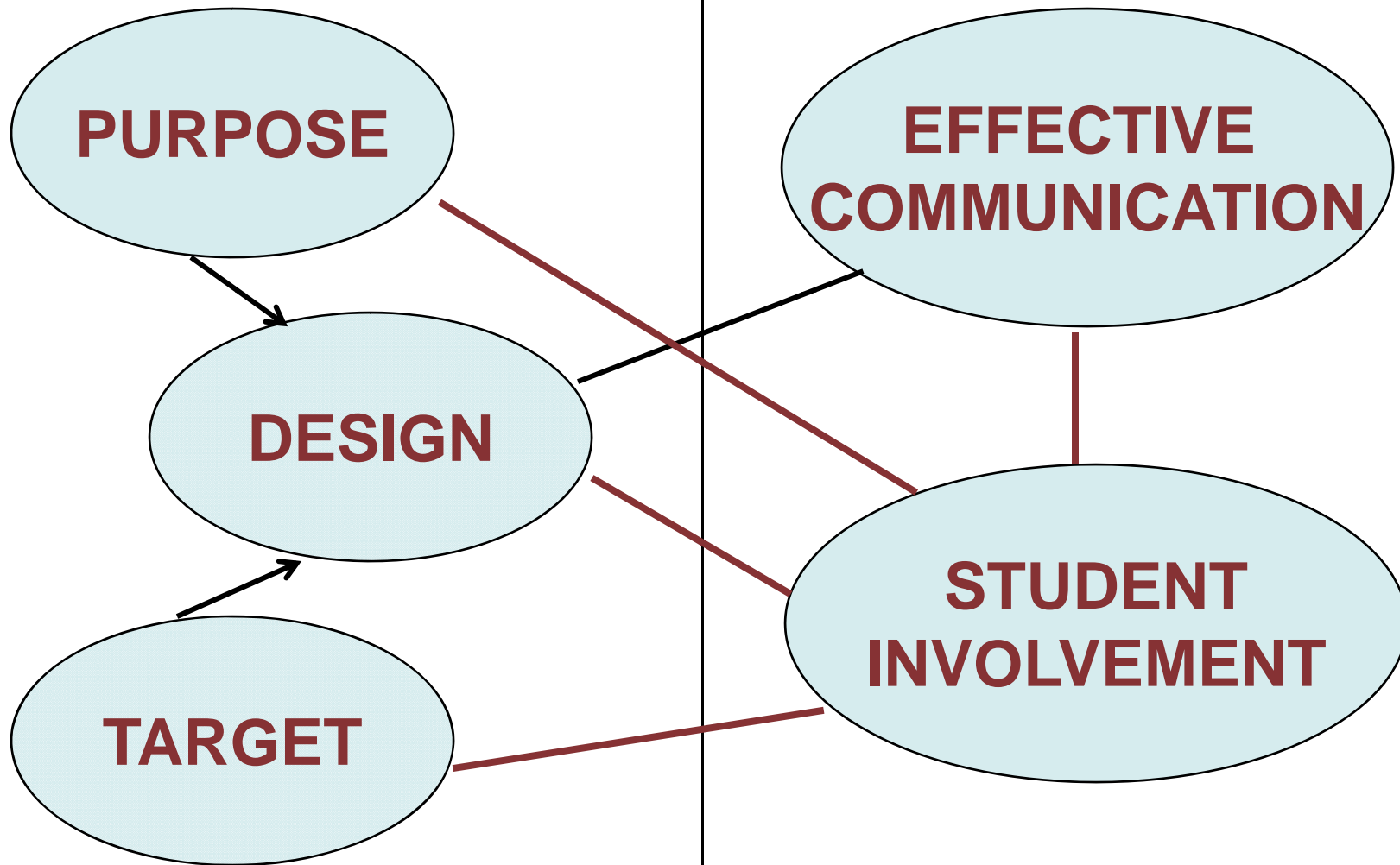


Now think of a time when you
were assessed that was a
positive experience.
What made it positive?



ACCURACY

EFFECTIVE USE





Personal experience counts.

As we proceed, think about these:

- **Which key(s) to quality did the negative experiences violate?**
- **Which key(s) to quality did your positive experience satisfy?**
- **See if you can connect your experiences to the keys to quality.**





Key 1: Clear Purpose



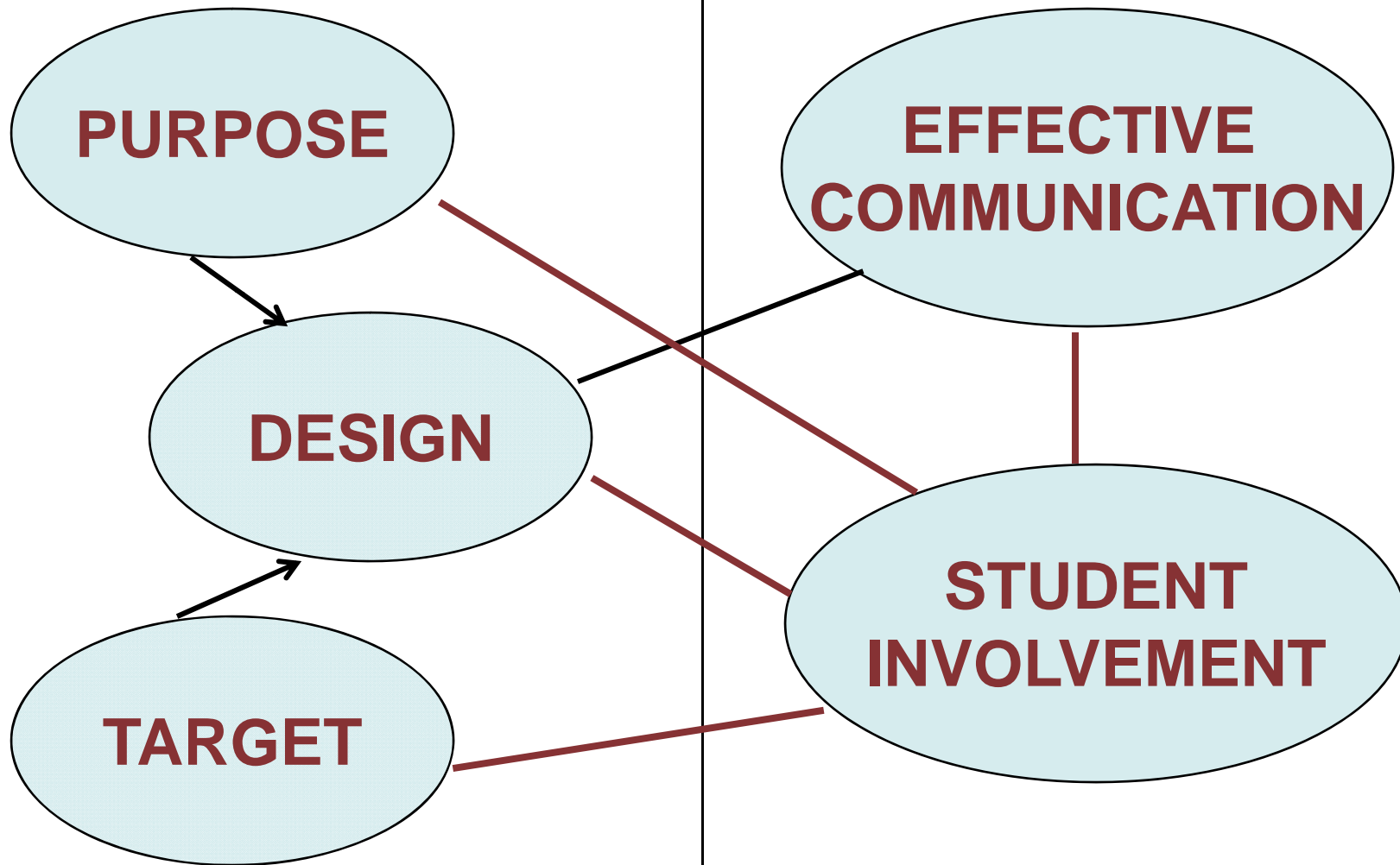
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ACCURACY

EFFECTIVE USE





Key 1: Clear Purpose

- Who's will gather the evidence?
- Who will use it?
- To do what?





Balanced Assessment Systems meet the info needs of all important users:

- **In the classroom,**
- **With interim/benchmark assessments, and**
- **With annual testing**

Balanced Assessment Systems

SUPPORT LEARNING

Assessments *FOR* Learning

- How can we use the assessment process & results to help students learn more?

CERTIFY LEARNING

Assessments *OF* Learning

- How much have students learned as of a particular point in time?

Classroom Level

Support Learning

- Continuous
- For student & teacher
- Progress toward each relevant standard

Certify Learning

- Periodic
- For teacher use
- To assign report card grades or report standards mastered



Interim/Benchmark Level

Support Learning

- Periodic
- ID standards our students struggle to master
- For immediate program improvement

Certify Learning

- Periodic
- Evaluate program effectiveness:
decide to continue or discontinue a particular program



Annual Testing

Support Learning

- Once a year
- ID standards student struggle to master
- Improve program next year

Certify Learning

- Once a year
- To hold schools accountable for learning





Revolution in Assessment Dynamics #2:

The path to truly effective schools is not paved with more and better annual tests...

History of Annual Testing

- 1960s** • **District-wide testing**
- 1970s** • **State-wide testing**
- 1980s** • **National assessment**
- 1990s** • **International assessment**
- 2000s** • **National every pupil**
- 2010s** • **Multi-year data systems**





Effects of Using CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT To Support Student Learning:

.4 to .8 s.d. Gain

Largest Gain for Low Achievers



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Understand the effect!

.7 Standard Deviation Score Gain =

- ❑ **25 Percentile Points on ITBS (middle of score range)**
- ❑ **70 SAT Score Points**
- ❑ **4 ACT Composite Score Points**



High-Impact Practices

- Increased classroom assessment quality (accuracy)
- Increased descriptive feedback, reduced evaluative feedback
- Increased student self-assessment
- Increased opportunities for students to communicate about their evolving learning during the teaching



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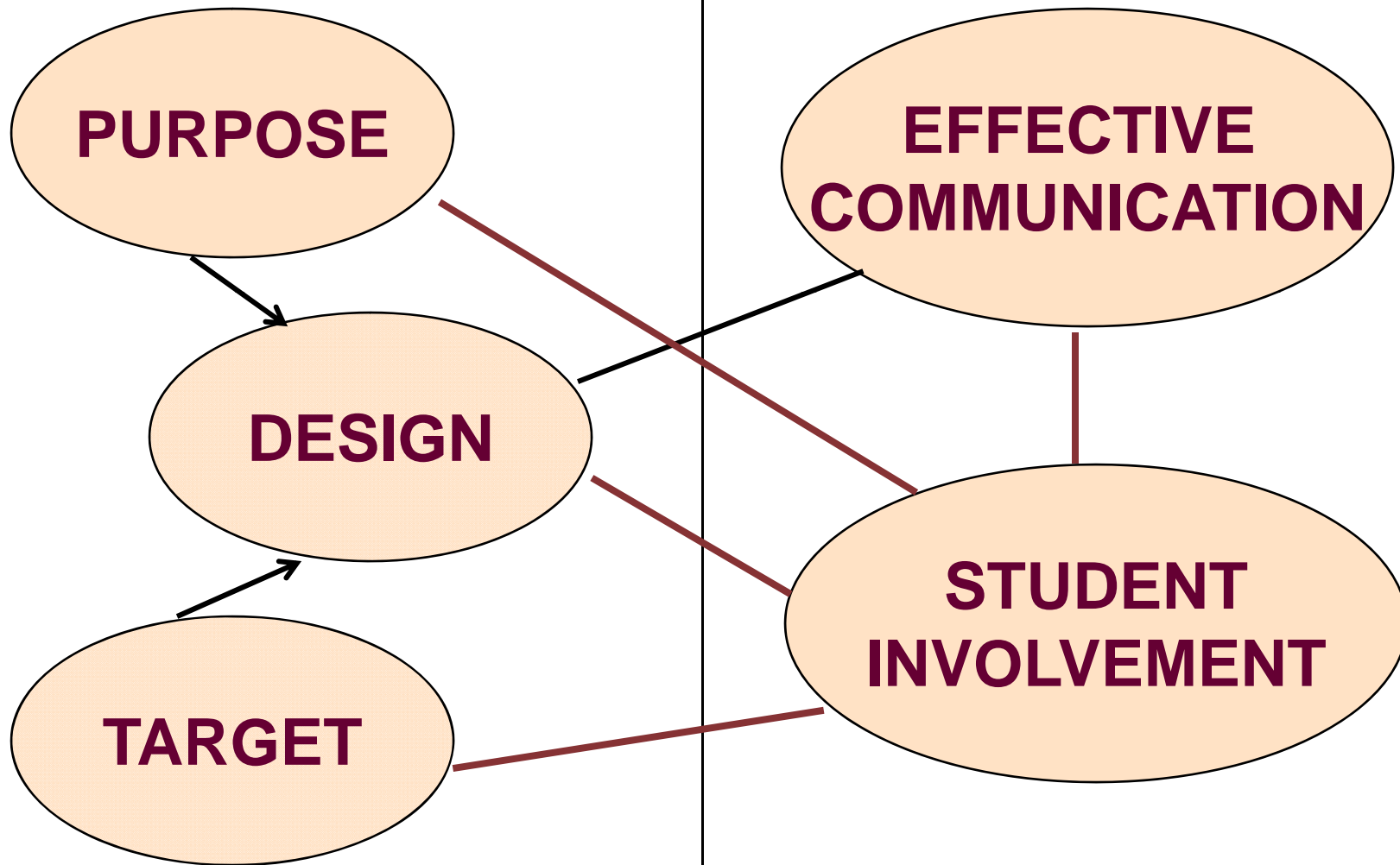




**Key 2:
Clear and Appropriate
Learning Targets**

ACCURACY

EFFECTIVE USE



Learning Targets

- **Achievement expectations**
- **Statements of what we want students to learn**

**THAT WHICH IS TO BE
ASSESSED...**



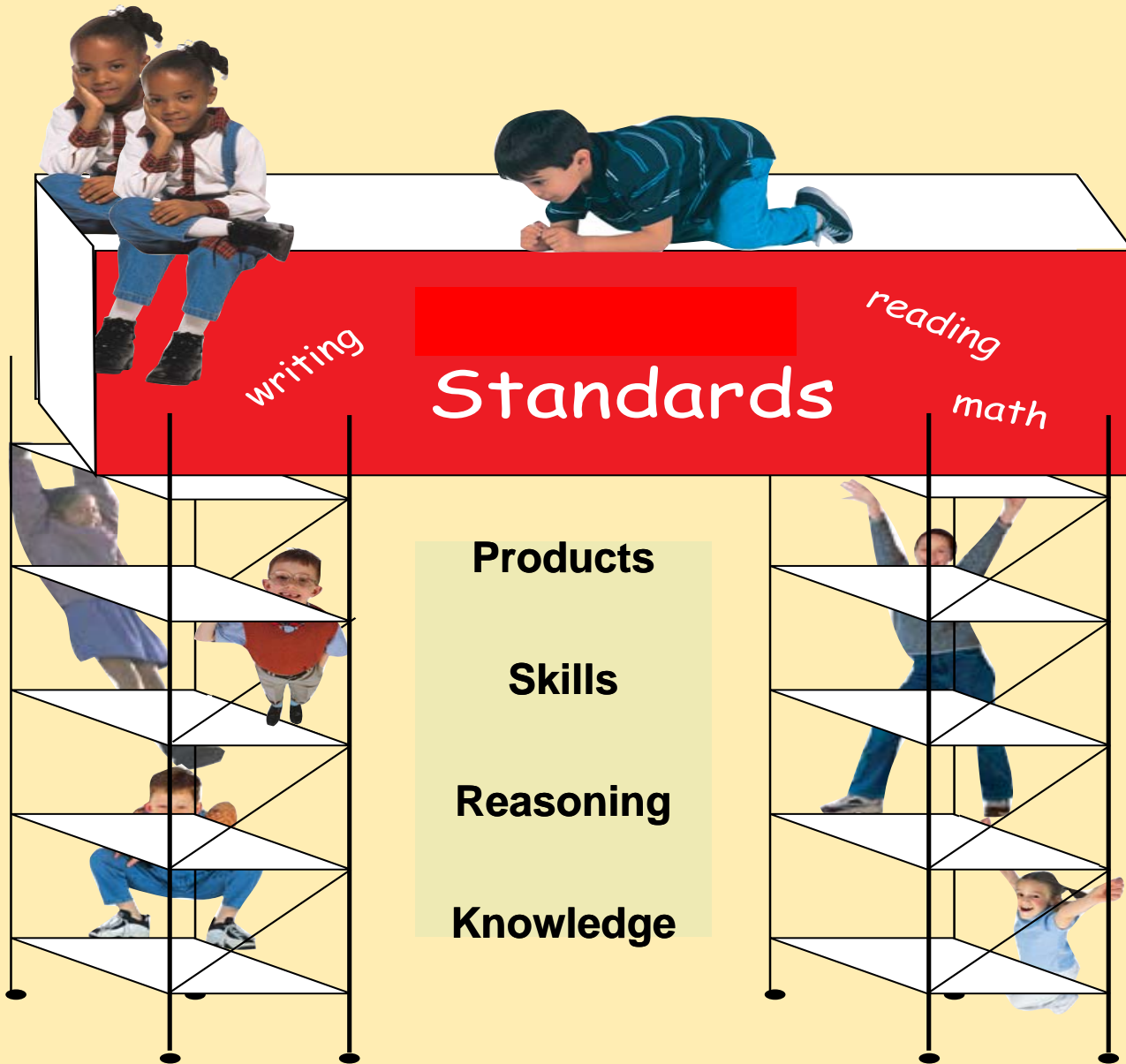
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Attributes of quality achievement expectations

- Reflect **most current thinking** in that field of study
- Sufficiently clear for **uniform interpretation by all users**
- Arrayed in **learning progressions**
- **Appropriate in number** given available resources
- **Mastered by those who are to help students master them**



Revolution in Assessment Dynamics #3:

We cannot accommodate differences in student learning needs (RTI...) if we have no sense of the learning progression or continuum along those differences exist...

**Consider this example—
notice who's in touch with the
learning progression!**



Key 3: Sound Assessment Design



DESIGN FEATURES

- **Select a proper method**



AVAILABLE ASSESSMENT METHODS

- **Selected Response**
- **Written Response (Essay)**
- **Performance Assessment**
- **Direct Personal Interaction**



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Essential Truths:

- **Method of choice must be a function of the learning target ONLY**
- **None of the available methods is inherently superior to the others**
- **Each has strengths and weaknesses**

WE NEED TO KNOW WHAT METHOD TO USE WHEN, AND HOW TO USE IT WELL...



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DESIGN FEATURES

- **Select a proper method**
- **Built of quality ingredients**
- **Sample appropriately**
- **Prevent bias**



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Revolution in Assessment Dynamics #4:

One cannot create a quality assessment without clear criteria by which to judge and achieve quality...





Revolution in Assessment Dynamics #5:

We cannot accommodate differences in student learning needs if we lack dependable evidence of those differences...



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Assessment FOR Learning FOR PRACTICE

What the teacher does:

- **Identifies learning target covered by each test item**
- **Fills out the first two columns of the form “Identifying My Strengths and Areas for Improvement.”**

Identifying My Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Problem	Learning Target	Right	Wrong	Simple Mistake	Don't Get It
1	Write numerals in expanded...				
2	Put numbers in order...				
3	Subtract 3-digit numbers...				

What the student does:

- **Student uses test plans and own performance by item to evaluate strengths and areas of study**

How the student does it:

1. Use corrected test to mark each problem right or wrong on the form
2. Review the wrong problems and decide if the error was due to a simple mistake or to not knowing how to solve the problem

Identifying My Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Problem	Learning Target	Right	Wrong	Simple Mistake	Don't Get It
1	Write numerals in expanded...	X			
2	Put numbers in order...		X	X	
3	Subtract 3-digit numbers...		X		X

Analyzes the information to decide the following:

- Which learning targets s/he has hit already**
- Which learning targets s/he is pretty good at, but which need a little review**
- Which learning targets s/he needs to keep focusing on**

Secondary Practice Test

What the teacher does:

- List of learning targets tested by item
- Create a form on which student marks “Confident” or “Unsure” and “Right” or “Wrong” after each answer
- Correct the test


What the student does:

- **Mark each item “Right” or “Wrong”**
- **Mark wrong answers simple mistake or don’t understand**
- **Focus on “don’t get it” or “unsure” right answers to identify highest priorities for further study**

Remember Revolution in Assessment Dynamics #1

**High-quality assessment
used effectively can cause
learning, not merely
monitor and grade it...**

Meet the Westerville, OH team



Key 4

Effective

Communication of

Assessment Results



Surprisingly, however, feedback is not always or even usually successful. Kluger & De Nisi's (1996) meta-analysis cautions that in one third of studies feedback worsens performance, when evaluation focuses on the person rather than the task. In one third of comparisons there is no difference in outcomes with and without feedback. Only in the one third of studies where the feedback focused on substantive elements of the task, giving specific guidance on how to improve, did feedback consistently improve performance.

--Shepard, 2008, pp. 284 – 285

Productive Feedback?

With a partner, brainstorm what you think to be the characteristics of feedback that is likely to **SUPPORT student learning.**

To Use Feedback to SUPPORT learning:

- **Help learner understand target from outset**
- **Describe, don't judge, practice work during the learning**
- **Direct attention to student's work**
- **Focus on strengths & needed improvements**
- **Help learner see ach. changes over time**
- **Address partial understanding**
- **Limit correctives to amt. student can act on**
- **Judge sufficiency (that is, assign grades) only when essential**

**Expected achievement gains
from effective communication:
.8 standard deviation gain**

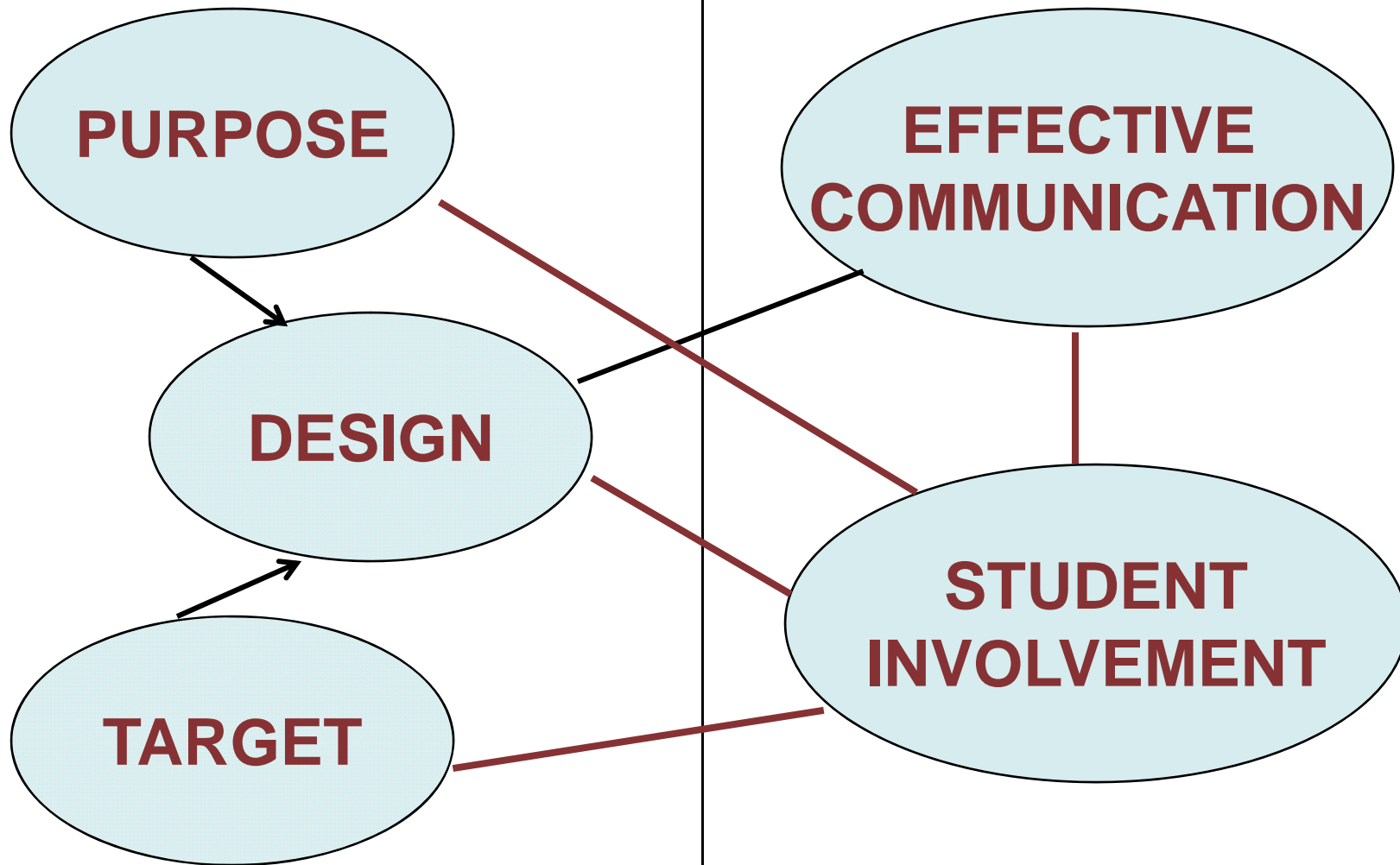


Key 5: Student-Involvement in the Assessment Process



ACCURACY

EFFECTIVE USE



For students to improve, they must:

- **Understand what high-quality work looks like**
- **Be able to objectively compare their work to that standard and see the differences**
- **Have mastered a store of tactics for closing the gap between the two**
 - **Sadler, 1989**

Assessment *for* learning meets students' information needs:

- **Where am I going?**
- **Where am I now?**
- **How can I close the gap?**

Where am I going?

- 1. Share a student-friendly form of the learning target from the outset**
- 2. Accompanied by examples and models**

Where am I now?

- 3. Offer regular descriptive feedback**
- 4. Teach students to self-assess and set goals**

How can I close the gap?

- 5. Design focused lessons**
- 6. Teach students focused revision**
- 7. Engage students in self-reflection; help them keep track of and share their learning**

Conclusions

- **Ideas are not new—they have been part of good teaching all along**
- **Progression of strategies builds success intentionally (e.g., strategies 1, 2, & 3 are necessary for success of strategy 4)**

Note the emotional dynamics:

**We must assess accurately,
and use results effectively
in order to make sure
students react productively
to the assessment results.**

**The student's emotional
reaction to results will
determine what that
student does in response.**

PRODUCTIVE RESPONSE TO ASSESSMENT RESULTS:

- I understand these results.
- I know what I need to do next.
- I'm OK.
- I choose to keep trying.

THE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE HOPELESS RESPONSE:

- **I don't understand.**
- **I have no idea what to do next.**
- **I'm no good at this stuff anyway.**
- **I give up.**

REVOLUTION IN ASSESSMENT DYNAMICS #6:

**What STUDENTS think about
and do with assessment results
is as important as what adults
think about and do with them...**



CALIFORNIA

I went down to my Grandma's house in California and I got to ride horses, I swam, went to a party, I went shopping, saw old friends, I went to the new Merine World, and I had a lot of fun.


I drove down there in a car with my uncle and drove back with him. He went down to visit his mom and dad so it worked out pretty good.

I use to live in California till a year ago. it was a 30 min. drive away from San Francisco I live in Walnut Creek. I went to school at Walnut Acres—for 4 years, sense 2 grade. Then moved to Oregon and we bought a gas station. When I got to go I was glad and happy my mom let me. I HAD FUN!

Grade 6



A LITTLE MOUSE STATUE

Every time I walk in my room, or pass my dresser, I see something that's very special to me. It is a little statue of a mouse. His tiny hands are expanded as far apart as they allow themselves to be. And, at the bottom of the statue, it reads, "I love  you this much."

I believe I was four years old when my grandma took me over to her bedroom closet one day and got my statue off the very top shelf. Then with extreme care, she unwrapped a small object and handed it to me. It was the mouse statue.

Ever since then, even now, I have him placed on my dresser to admire. Every time I pass my dresser, or stand next to my dresser dressing or putting on earrings, I think of my grandma.



I think of the way my grandma always expanded her arms and said, “I LOVE YOU THIS MUCH” just like the little mouse statue does. And I’d do the same. Then we’d hug each other followed by enormous kisses. Her gentle and kind smile, the glitter in her eyes and the way she always stuck up for me if I was in a fight with my mom are all things I remember about her. Today, she still takes me special places, and she’s always there if I need someone to talk to or get advice from.

I will always treat my statue with the most of respect, just like my grandma asked me to. And, I will always treasure its unique way of making me feel close to my grandma, even when she’s not around, every time I glance at him. And who knows, maybe one day I’ll be giving him to my granddaughter!!!

Grade 6



REFLECTION

I have become a better writer this year. I have learned to put more focus in my writing and stick with one topic. I think about my topic before I write, and I share my writing in a writing group. That is something I did not like to do at first, but now I do.

I think my writing has a lot more voice now. Voice is the part of your writing that shows how you feel about your topic because the thoughts and feelings come from your heart. This year we read *Charlotte's Web*, and that is a book that I think has a lot of voice. I try to find just the right word to say what I mean and not just the first word that comes into my mind.

The way I have grown the most is that I like to write a lot more than I used to, especially poems. I think I could be a poet if I wanted to, and I think my writing shows that.

Assessment FOR Learning: a GPS for student success

- **Teacher** maps the destination & the route
- **Student** follows way points
- **School leader** clears the way
- **Policy maker** assures resources for system dev & use

Revolution in Assessment Dynamics #7:

**We must stop believing that
assessment is merely
something we adults do to
students...**

**Students assess their own
achievement and make key
decisions too!**

Students get to make their data-based instructional decisions first...

Students decide:

- **Can I learn this or am I just too slow, dense...stupid?**
- **Is the learning worth the energy I must expend to attain it?**
- **Is trying to learn worth the risk that I might fail...again...in public?**

If students make productive decisions, then our data-based instructional decisions can support their learning.

Can we help them?

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING: Creating a Culture of Confidence

REQUIREMENTS:

- **Assess accurately &**
- **Use results effectively in order to**
- **Elicit a productive emotional reaction to the assessment results from the learner**

Crucial Distinction:

Assessment OF Learning:

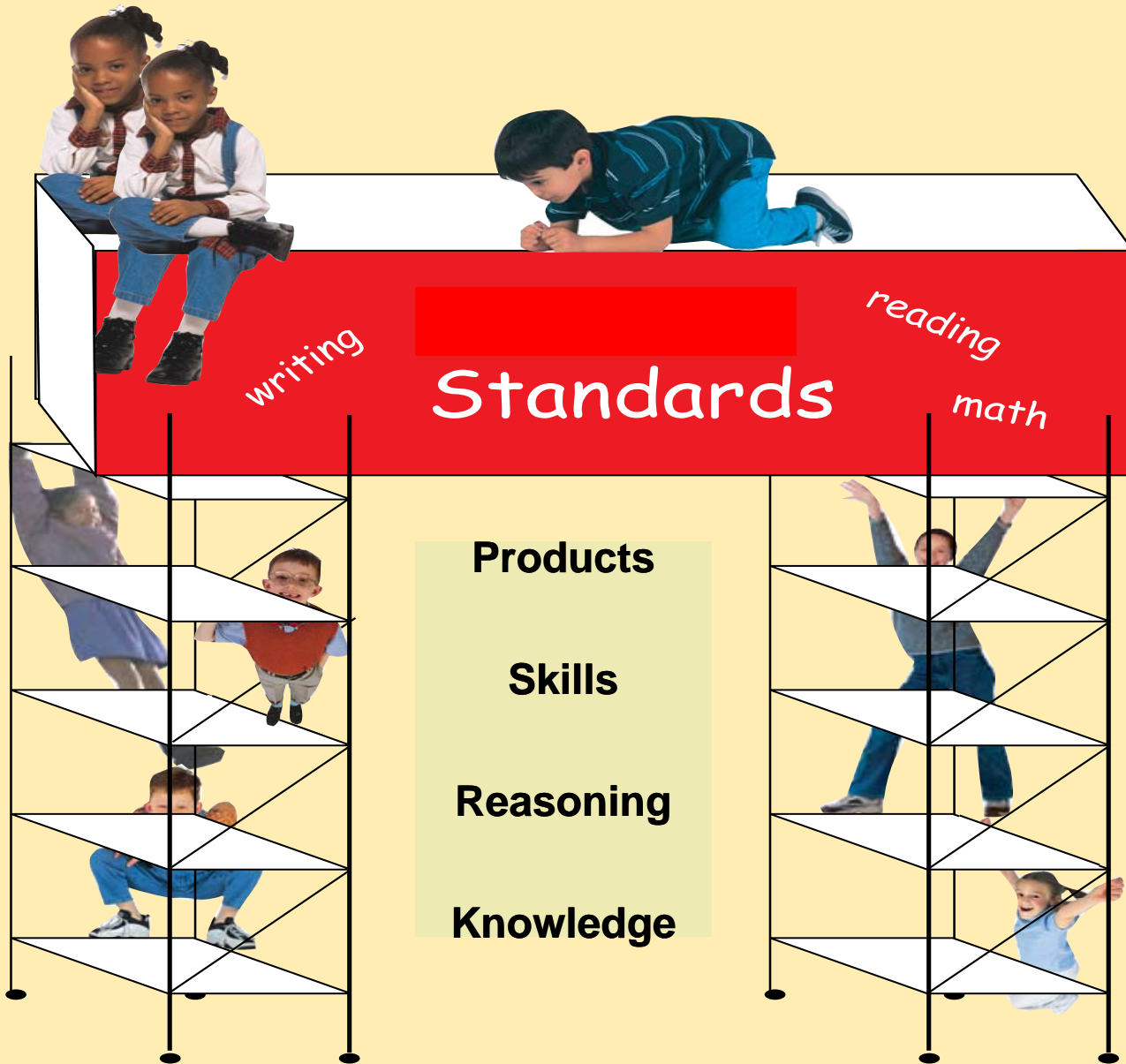
How much have our students learned in the past?

Assessment FOR Learning:

How can we help our students learn more in the future?

Overview

	Assessment OF Learning	Assessment FOR Learning
Reason	Check status	Improve learning
To Inform	Others about students	Students about themselves
Focus	Standards	Scaffolding targets



Overview

	Assessment OF Learning	Assessment FOR Learning
Example	External accountability tests and classroom assessments for grading	Assessments that diagnose needs or help students see themselves getting better
Place in Time	An event after learning	A process during learning

Teacher's Role in Assessment FOR Learning

- 1. Master each assigned standard**
- 2. Deconstruct each into enabling targets**
- 3. Transform into student-friendly version**
- 4. Transform to accurate classroom assessments**
- 5. Use those in collaboration with students to track growth—to promote winning streaks**

Assessment FOR Learning Applications:

- **Student-Involved
Classroom Assessment**
- **Student-Involved Record
Keeping**
- **Student-Involved
Communication**

To improve, students must:

- **Know what good work looks like**
- **Compare their work to that standard**
- **Understand how to close gaps**

Royce Sadler, Australia

THE ULTIMATE ASSESSMENT COLLABORATIVE

TEACHERS

- Make key decisions
- Define targets
- Provide models
- Assess
- Provide feedback
- Promote growth
- Judge sufficiency
- Gain self-efficacy

STUDENTS

- Make key decisions too
- Understand those targets
- Understand the models
- Self-assess
- Generate own feedback
- Understand growth
- Understand judgments
- Gain self-efficacy

Self-Efficacy

Prof. Albert Bandura

Stanford University

“A strong sense of efficacy enhances human accomplishment and personal well-being in many ways. People with high assurance in their capabilities approach difficult tasks as challenges to be mastered rather than as threats to be avoided. Such an efficacious outlook fosters intrinsic interest and deep engrossment in activities. They set themselves challenging goals and maintain strong commitment to them. They heighten and sustain their efforts in the face of failure. They quickly recover their sense of efficacy after failures or setbacks. They attribute failure to insufficient effort or deficient knowledge and skills which are acquirable. They approach threatening situations with assurance that they can exercise control over them. Such an efficacious outlook produces personal accomplishments, reduces stress and lowers vulnerability.”

“In contrast, people who doubt their capabilities shy away from difficult tasks which they view as personal threats. They have low aspirations and weak commitment to the goals they choose to pursue. When faced with difficult tasks, they dwell on their personal deficiencies, on the obstacles they will encounter, and all kinds of adverse outcomes rather than concentrate on how to perform successfully. They slacken their efforts and give up quickly in the face of difficulties. They are slow to recover their sense of efficacy following failure or setbacks. Because they view insufficient performance as deficient aptitude it does not require much failure for them to lose faith in their capabilities.”

Most Powerful Ways to Develop Academic Self-Efficacy (in order)

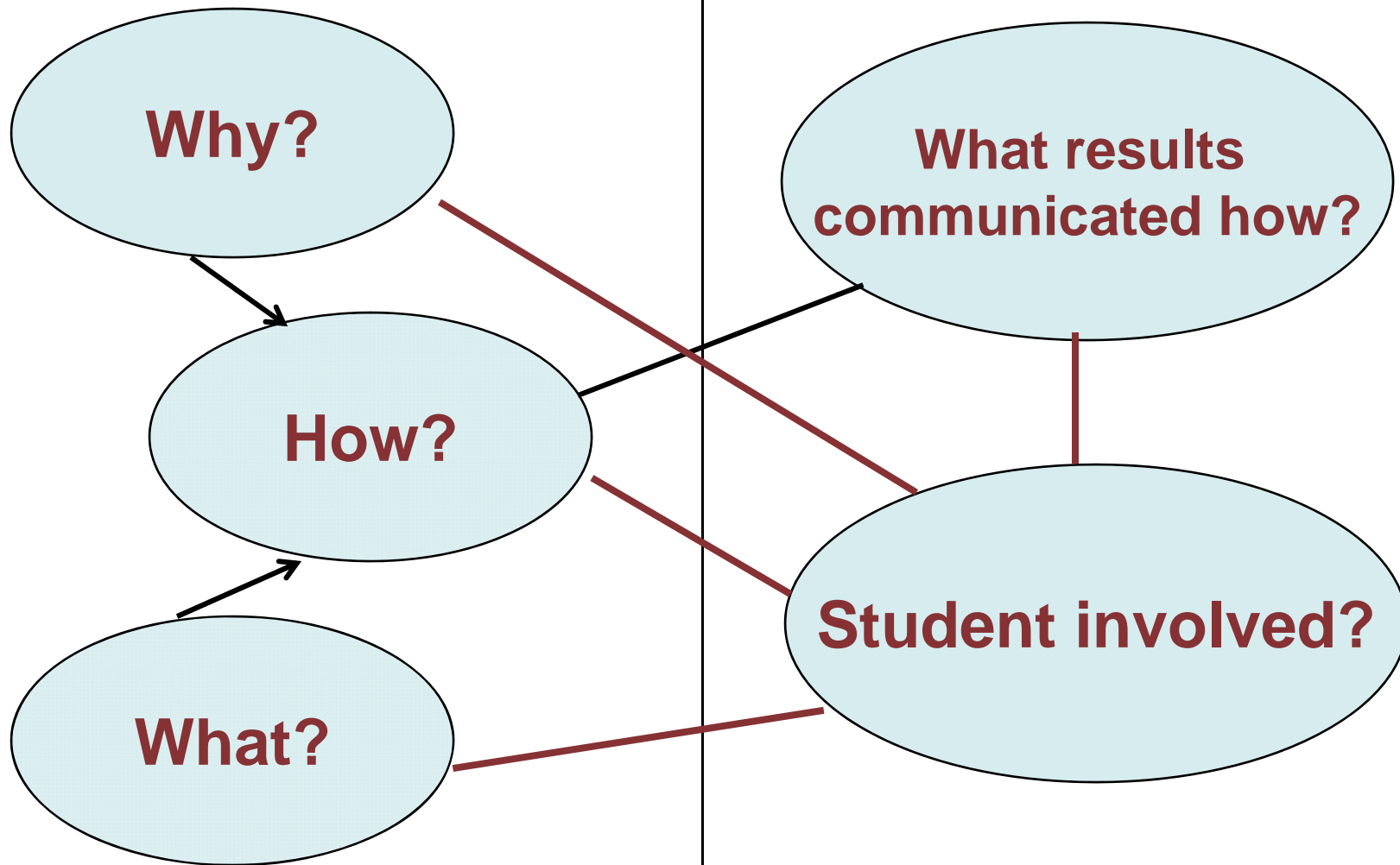
- **Experience real, important learning success**
- **See others who are “like me” experiencing that success**

EXPECTED IMPACT ON STUDENTS:

- **PROFOUND ACHIEVEMENT GAINS FOR ALL STUDENTS**
- **LARGEST GAINS FOR LOW ACHIEVERS—GAP REDUCTION**
- **SOLID FOUNDATION FOR LIFELONG LEARNING**
- **UNPRECEDENTED OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL TO SUCCEED**

ACCURACY

EFFECTIVE USE



This is personal...