How to Grade for Learning by Using 15 Fixes for Broken Grades

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Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Why Grade?
3. Perspectives on Grading
4. Grading Practices and Issues
5. Fixes for Broken Grades
6. Summary and Reflections
Outcomes/Objectives

Participants will:-
- recognize the need to critically examine established grading practices;
- appreciate the complexity of grading;
- know the meaning of key terms;
- identify the purposes of grading;
- know several basic perspectives on grading;
- identify grading issues which arise from analysis of student grades;
- know how to fix broken grades;
- analyze the value of fixes for grading; and
- consider implications of standards-based grading for reporting student achievement.
“Terms (are) frequently used interchangeably, although they (should) have distinct meanings.”

What Do These Terms Mean?

MARK(S)/SCORE(S) (marking/scoring)
the number (or letter) "score" given to any student test or performance

GRADE(S) (grading)
the number (or letter) reported at the end of a period of time as a summary statement of student performance

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Score/total possible</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tests (50%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Symbols</td>
<td>16/20</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matter</td>
<td>0/68 (absent)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reactions</td>
<td>35/50</td>
<td>70</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Daily Work (25%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td>10/10</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Homework</td>
<td>9/10</td>
<td>90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>9/10</td>
<td>90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Atom quiz</td>
<td>9/10</td>
<td>90</td>
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<td>Moles quiz</td>
<td>5/8</td>
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<td>9/10</td>
<td>90</td>
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<td>MP/BP</td>
<td>18/20</td>
<td>90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Superation</td>
<td>20/24</td>
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<td>70</td>
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<td>Periodicity Check</td>
<td>10/10</td>
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The Essential Question
How confident are you that the grades students get in your school are:
• accurate
• consistent
• meaningful, and
• supportive of learning?

If grades do not meet these four conditions of quality they are “broken,” i.e., ineffective.
How confident are you that the grades students receive in your school/district are:

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Not at all</th>
<th>5 Somewhat</th>
<th>10 Very</th>
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<tr>
<td>Consistent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accurate</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meaningful</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supportive of Learning</td>
<td>1</td>
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Policy + Principles + Practicality = Implementation
“The real voyage of discovery consists not of seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes.”

Marcel Proust
“... (grading) practices are not the result of careful thought or sound evidence, ... rather, they are used because teachers experienced these practices as students and, having little training or experience with other options, continue their use.”

“The grading box is alive and well, and in some schools and classrooms, it is impenetrable.

Patterson, William “Breaking Out of Our Boxes,” Kappan, April 2003, 572
“Why . . . Would anyone want to change current grading practices?

The answer is quite simple: grades are so imprecise that they are almost meaningless.”

Marzano, R. J., *Transforming Classroom Grading*, ASCD, Alexandria, VA, 2000, 1
Underpinning Issue #1: FAIRNESS

“Fair does not mean equal; yet, when it comes to grading, we insist that it does.”

Patterson, William “Breaking Out of Our Boxes,” Kappan, April 2003, 572
Underpinning Issue #1: FAIRNESS

What does FAIR mean?

“All students are given an equal opportunity to demonstrate what they know and can do as part of the assessment process. Adaptations to assessment materials and procedures are available for students including but not restricted to students with learning disabilities, to allow them to demonstrate their knowledge and skills, provided that the adaptations do not jeopardize the integrity or content of the assessment.”

Adapted from Manitoba Education and Training at http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/metks4/curricul/assess/aepolprod/purpos~2.html
Underpinning Issue #1: FAIRNESS

“The power of grades to impact students’ future life creates a responsibility for giving grades in a fair and impartial way.”

Underpinning Issue #2: MOTIVATION

“Drive”
by Daniel Pink

Motivation 1.0 - the ancient drive to survive

Motivation 2.0 - rewarding good work with pay, benefits and promotions
- centres on "Type X behaviour"
where people are motivated mostly by external rewards.
Underpinning Issue #2: MOTIVATION

Pink believes it is time for a "full scale upgrade" to Motivation 3.0 - intrinsic rewards that play to the intrinsic satisfaction of the activity.

Motivation 3.0 is based on what Pink calls "Type I behavior," where the main motivators are the freedom to do what you want, the opportunity to take a challenge and fulfillment by the purpose of the undertaking.

Source- review by Richard Eisenberg in USA Today, January 25, 2010
Underpinning Issue #2: MOTIVATION
“All kids start out as curious self-directed Type I’s. But many of them end up as disengaged, compliant Type X’s. . . . If we want to equip young people for the new world of work - and more important, if we want them to lead satisfying lives - we need to break Motivation 2.0’s grip on education and parenting. . . . Unfortunately, as with business, there is a mismatch between what science knows and what schools do. . . . We’re bribing students into compliance instead of challenging them into engagement.”

Underpinning Issue #2: MOTIVATION
According to Pink the keys to Motivation 3.0 are

Autonomy

Mastery

Purpose
Underpinning Issue #2: MOTIVATION

“Don’t use grades punitively… Without exception, experts in the area of student grading recommend that grades not be used in a punitive sense. When a teacher uses grades as punishment for student behaviors, the teacher establishes an adversarial relationship in which grades are no longer meaningful to students as indicators of their accomplishments. The punitive use of grades only increases the likelihood that students will lose respect for the evaluation system; consequently the appeal to students of subverting such a system will be heightened.”

Source: Cizek, G. J. 2003. Detecting and Preventing Cheating; Promoting Integrity in Assessment, Corwin, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2003, 100 in O’Connor, K., A Repair Kit for Grading, Pearson, Boston, MA, 43
Underpinning Issue #3: OBJECTIVITY AND PROFESSIONAL JUDGMENT

Traditional view

Objective good!

Subjective bad!!

Strive to be objective!
Underpinning Issue #3: OBJECTIVITY AND PROFESSIONAL JUDGMENT

“All scoring by human judges, including assigning points and taking them off math homework is subjective. The question is not whether it is subjective, but whether it is defensible and credible. The AP and IB programs (are) credible and defensible, yet subjective. I wish we could stop using that word as a pejorative! So-called objective scoring is still subjective test writing.”

Grant Wiggins, January 19, 2000 answering a question on chatserver.ascd.org
Why Standards-Based Grading and Reporting?

1. Mandate

2. Supports learning

3. Improves communication

4. Consistency/Fairness
Purposes for Grading

• Communicate the achievement status of students to parents, (students), and others.
• Provide information that students can use for self-evaluation.
• Select, identify, or group students for certain educational paths or programs.
• Provide incentives to learn.
• Evaluate the effectiveness of instructional programs

“the primary purpose for grading . . . should be to communicate with students and parents about their achievement of learning goals. . . .

Secondary purposes for grading include providing teachers with information for instructional planning, . . . and providing teachers, administrators, parents, and students with information for . . . placement of students. (5)

“It is very difficult for one measure to serve different purposes equally well.” (21)

“The main difficulty driving grading issues both historically and currently is that grades are pressed to serve a variety of conflicting purposes.” (31)

Brookhart, S., Grading, Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall, Columbus, OH, 2004
“the primary purpose of . . . grades . . . (is) to communicate student achievement to students, parents, school administrators, post-secondary institutions and employers.”

Perspectives on Grading

1. Grading is not essential for learning
2. Grading is complicated
3. Grading is subjective/emotional
4. Grading is inescapable
5. There is not much “pure” research on grading practices
6. No single best grading practice but an emerging consensus
7. Faulty grading damages students - and teachers

See also slides 30-35
Perspective #1 Grading is not essential for learning.

“Teachers don’t need grades or reporting forms to teach well. Further, students don’t need them to learn.”

Perspective #1 Grading is not essential for learning.

Checking is essential

Checking is Diagnostic - Teacher as an Advocate

Grading is Evaluative - Teacher as a Judge

Guskey, T.R. Using Assessments to Improve Student Learning, Workshop Presentation

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Perspective #3 Grading is subjective/emotional.

“What critics of grading must understand is that the symbol is not the problem; the lack of stable and clear points of reference in using symbols is the problem.”

Perspective #4 Grading is inescapable.

“Grades or numbers, like all symbols, offer efficient ways of summarizing.”

Perspective #4 Grading is inescapable.

“Trying to get rid of familiar letter grades . . . gets the matter backwards while leading to needless political battles. . . . Parents have reason to be suspicious of educators who want to . . . tinker with a 120 year old system that they think they understand - even if we know that traditional grades are often of questionable worth.”

Perspective #7 Faulty grading damages students - and teachers.

“... some teachers consider grades or reporting forms their “weapon of last resort.” In their view, students who do not comply with their requests suffer the consequences of the greatest punishment a teacher can bestow: a failing grade. Such practices have no educational value and, in the long run, adversely effect students, teachers, and the relationship they share.”

Grading Issues

• Achievement (only)
• Evidence (quality)
• Calculation
• Learning (support)
# Chris Brown’s Science Class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Lab Reports</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Tests/Exams</th>
<th>Miscellaneous</th>
<th>Final Total</th>
<th>Final Grade</th>
<th>Your District</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Out of</td>
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<td>A</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
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</table>

A = Absent = 0 (for Lab Reports and Tests/Exams)
* Miscellaneous
1-Attendance; 2- Care of Equipment; 3- Attitude/Participation; 4-Notebook; 5-Reading Reports (4x5 marks)
Letter Grade Legend (in Ontario)
A = 80%-100%; B = 70%-79%; C = 60%-69%; D = 50%-59%; F = 0%-49%
Note: This chart was adapted with permission from workshop material presented by Todd Rogers, University of Alberta

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* Figure Into. 8

* How to Grade for Learning: Linking Grades to Standards, Corwin, 2009.28

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### Grading Practices that Inhibit Learning

1. **Inconsistent grading scales**  
   The same performance results in different grades in different schools or classes.

2. **Worshipping averages**  
   All of the math to calculate and average is used, even when “the average” is not consistent with what the teacher knows about the student’s learning.

3. **Using zeros**  
   Giving zeros for incomplete work has a devastating effect on averages and often zeros are not even related to learning or achievement but to nonacademic factors like behavior, respect, punctuality, etc.

4. **Following the pattern of assign, test, grade, and teach**  
   When teaching occurs after a grade has been assigned, it is too late for the students. Students need lots of teaching and practice that is not graded, although it should be assessed and used to enhance learning before testing takes place.

5. **Failing to match testing to teaching**  
   Too many teachers rely on trick questions, new formats, and unfamiliar material. If students are expected to perform skills and produce information for a grade, these should be part of the introduction.

6. **Ambushing students**  
   Pop quizzes are more likely to teach students how to cheat on a test than to result in learning. Such tests are often control vehicles designed to get even, not to aid understanding.

7. **Suggesting that success is unlikely**  
   Students are not likely to strive for targets that they already know are unattainable to them.

8. **Practicing “gotcha” teaching**  
   A nearly foolproof way to inhibit student learning is to keep the outcomes and expectations of their classes secret. Tests become ways of finding out how well students have read their teacher’s mind.

9. **Grading first efforts**  
   Learning is not a “one-shot” deal. When the products of learning are complex and sophisticated, students need lots of teaching, practice, and feedback before the product is evaluated.

10. **Penalizing students for taking risks**  
    Taking risks is not often rewarded in school. Students need encouragement and support, not low marks, while they try new or more demanding work.

11. **Failing to recognize measurement error**  
    Very often grades are reported as objective statistics without attention to weighting factors or the reliability of the scores. In most cases, a composite score may be only a rough estimate of student learning, and sometimes it can be very inaccurate.

12. **Establishing inconsistent grading criteria**  
    Criteria for grading in schools and classes is often changed from day to day, grading period to grading period, and class to class. This lack of consensus makes it difficult for students to understand the rules.

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Figure Intro. 15  
Adapted with permission from R.L Canady and P.R. Hotchkiss, “It’s a Good Score: Just a Bad Grade.” Phi Delta Kappan (September 1989) : 68-71

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“I have become fascinated with the power of storytelling as a form of personal and professional development. . . . People tell stories about events that have left an impression on their lives.

. . .

By listening, one places value in the experience of another.”

Roland S. Barth, Lessons Learned, Corwin, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2003, 2
“War stories are descriptions of practice.

... Craft knowledge is description of practice accompanied by analysis of practice.

... By honoring storytelling in the workplace we can facilitate the revelation and exchange of craft knowledge.”

Roland S. Barth, Lessons Learned, Corwin, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2003, 2
Grades are broken when they -

• include ingredients that distort achievement
• arise from low quality or poorly organized evidence
• are derived from inappropriate number crunching,
and when they
• do not support the learning process.

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Fixes for ingredients that distort achievement

1. Don’t include student behaviors (effort, participation, adherence to class rules, etc) in grades; include only achievement.
2. Don’t reduce marks on ‘work’ submitted late; provide support for the learner.
3. Don’t give points for extra credit or use bonus points; seek only evidence that more work has resulted in a higher level of achievement.
4. Don’t punish academic dishonesty with reduced grades; apply other consequences and reassess to determine actual level of achievement.
5. Don’t consider attendance in grade determination; report absences separately.
6. Don’t include group scores in grades; use only individual achievement evidence.
Fixes for low quality or poorly organized evidence

7. Don’t organize information in grading records by assessment methods or simply summarize into a single grade; organize and report evidence by standards/learning goals.

8. Don’t assign grades using inappropriate or unclear performance standards; provide clear descriptions of achievement expectations.

9. Don’t assign grades based on student’s achievement compared to other students; compare each student’s performance to preset standards.

10. Don’t rely on evidence gathered from assessments that fail to meet standards of quality; rely only on quality assessments.
Fixes for inappropriate number crunching

11. Don’t rely on the mean; consider other measures of central tendency and use professional judgment.

12. Don’t include zeros in grade determination when evidence is missing or as punishment; use alternatives, such as reassessing to determine real achievement or use “I” for Incomplete or Insufficient evidence.
Fixes to support the learning process

13. Don’t use information from formative assessments and practice to determine grades; use only summative evidence.

14. Don’t summarize evidence accumulated over time when learning is developmental and will grow with time and repeated opportunities; in those instances emphasize more recent achievement.

15. Don’t leave students out of the grading process. Involve students - they can - and should - play key roles in assessment and grading that promote achievement.
For each Fix

• What do you think? – PMI (+ - Interesting)

• Where are you/school/district now?

• Where do you want to go - you/school /district?
Fix #1

Don’t include student behavior (effort, participation, adherence to class rules, etc) in grades; include only achievement.
Fix #1

“... grades often reflect a combination of achievement, progress, and other factors.

... this tendency to collapse several independent elements into a single grade may blur their meaning.”

Nick Olson was fed up; . . . fed up with acing exams but getting C’s at the end of the trimester because he refused to do the worksheets assigned in order to help students study so they could ace exams.”

Burkett, E., Another Planet: A Year in the Life of a Suburban High School, Perennial, New York, 2002, 124
Fix #1

“Reports on student progress and achievement should contain . . . information that indicates academic progress and achievement for each course or subject area separate from . . .

punctuality, attitude, behaviour, effort, attendance, and work habits;”

“By . . . offering separate grades for different aspects of performance, educators can provide better and far more useful information (than single grades that include achievement and behaviors).

Guskey and Bailey, Developing Grading and Reporting Systems for Student Learning, Corwin, 2001, 82
**Fix #1**

Shorewood, WI. Standards-Based Expanded Format Report Card

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**Achievement Key:**
- M—Meeting: The student is meeting a standard.
- P—Partially Meeting: The student is not meeting a standard.
- N—Not Meeting: The student is not meeting a standard.

**Language Arts**

**Reading**
- **Level**
- Comprehension strategies
- Vocabulary development
- Decoding strategies
- Oral reading

**Writing**
- Process (pre-writing, first draft, editing, revising, publishing)
- Style
- Mechanics
- Grammar
- Spelling/application
- Penmanship

**Research/Inquiry**
- Organization

**Oral Communication**
- Listening
- Speaking

*Generally students in the following grades fall within these reading levels:
- R—Kindergarten—readiness
- P—Beginning: 1st Grade—Pre Primer 1, 2, 3
- M—Middle 1st Grade—Primer
- 1—End of 1st Grade—1st Reader
- 2—1st to 2nd Grade
- 3—2nd to 3rd grade
- 4—4th grade or 4+—above 4th grade

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**Mathematics**

- Number relationships
- Computation
- Measurement
- Geometry
- Algebra/Patterns
- Data Analysis
- Probability
- Problem-solving/Communicating

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**Science**

- Physical Sciences
- Earth and Space Sciences
- Life and Environmental Sciences
- Science Processes
- (Connections, nature of science, inquiry, applications, social and personal perspectives)

* Grade includes science lab work

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**Social Studies**

- Geography
- History
- Political Science
- Economics
- Behavioral Sciences

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**Social Skills**

- Shows respect for: Adults, Peers, Property
- Follows rules
- Accepts responsibility for own actions
- Cooperates and communicates
- Develops successful peer relationships
- Uses self-discipline
- Resolves conflict peacefully

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**Work/Study Skills**

- Uses time wisely
- Asks for help when needed
- Works independently
- Stays on task
- Produces quality work
- Completes and returns homework assignments on time
- Organizes work and belongings
- Uses technology effectively

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### The Winnipeg School Division
**Student Effort & Behaviour Report**

**Grade 7 - 8**

**Home Room Teacher:**

**Grade:** 07

**Student Name:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key to Terms</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational Skills</strong></td>
<td>Consistently acts goals. Collects and organizes information and uses time effectively.</td>
<td>Usually acts goals, collects and organizes information and uses time effectively.</td>
<td>Frequently needs assistance in setting goals, organizing information and using time effectively.</td>
<td>Rarely sets goals, information disorganized and frequently wastes time.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Homework</strong></td>
<td>Consistently completes homework.</td>
<td>Usually completes homework.</td>
<td>Frequently does not complete homework.</td>
<td>Rarely completes homework.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Assignments</strong></td>
<td>Consistently brings materials and completes assignments.</td>
<td>Usually brings materials and completes assignments.</td>
<td>Frequently needs to be reminded to complete assignments.</td>
<td>Rarely brings materials and completes assignments.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Citizenship</strong></td>
<td>Consistently respects the rights of others.</td>
<td>Usually respects the rights of others.</td>
<td>Frequently needs teacher guidance in appropriate behavior.</td>
<td>Rarely demonstrates respectful behaviour.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Teamwork</strong></td>
<td>Consistently participates well in class/group activities.</td>
<td>Usually participates well in class/group activities.</td>
<td>Sometimes participates well in class/group activities.</td>
<td>Rarely participates in class/group activities.</td>
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<td><strong>Interpersonal Skills</strong></td>
<td>Consistently resolves conflict in a respectful manner.</td>
<td>Usually resolves conflict in a respectful manner.</td>
<td>Frequently needs reminder on how to resolve conflict.</td>
<td>Rarely resolves conflict appropriately.</td>
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**ART 7**

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**ENGLISH 7**

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**MATH 7**

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**MUSIC 7**

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O’Connor, K. *A Repair Kit for Grading*. Pearson, Boston, MA, 2011. 19
Fix #1

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<tr>
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<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Organization</th>
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<th>Initiative</th>
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RESPONSIBILITY
WORKS INDEPENDENTLY
INITIATIVE
ORGANIZATION
COLLABORATION
SELF-REGULATION

To parents/guardians and students: This copy of the report should be kept for reference. The original or an exact copy has been placed in the student's Ontario Student Record (OSR) folder and will be retained for five (5) years after the student leaves school.

To view provincial curriculum documents, visit the Ministry of Education's website: www.edu.gov.on.ca.
Fix #2

Don’t reduce marks on “work” submitted late; provide support for the learner.
Problems with penalties

Distortion of:-

• Achievement
• Motivation

and

• most often Ineffective, i.e., they don’t change behavior.
“Warm demanders first establish a caring relationship that convinces students that the teacher believes in them and has their best interests at heart. . . .

On the basis of this relationship, warm demanders relentlessly insist that all students perform required academic work and treat the teacher and their peers with respect.”

Fix #2 Getting Work In On Time

1. Set clear and reasonable timelines with some student input.

2. Ensure that the expectations for the task/assignment are clearly established and understood.

3. Support the students who will predictably struggle with the task without intervention

4. Find out why other students’ work is late and assist them.

5. Establish the consequences for late work, e.g.,
   - After school follow-up
   - Make-up responsibility within a supervised setting
   - Parent contact
   - Notation in the mark book for each assignment which is late
   - “Grades” on a learning skills/work habits section of the report card
   - Comments on the report card that reflects chronic lateness

6. Provide the opportunity for students to extend timelines:
   - Student must communicate with the teacher in advance of the due date
   - Student must choose situations carefully as this extension may only be used once/twice per term/semester

How to Grade for Learning: Linking Grades to Standards, Corwin. 2009.102

Figure 3.6 Adapted from Creating a Culture of Responsibility, York Region District School Board, 1999
Fix #2

Dealing with Late Work

1. Support not penalties

2. Behaviors/Learning Skills

3. Clarity/Communication

4. Consequences
Fix #3

Don’t give points for extra credit or use bonus points; seek only evidence that more work has resulted in a higher level of achievement.
Recently it was “Dress like an Egyptian Day” at my school. If we dressed like an Egyptian we got extra credit. When we didn’t (which the majority of the kids didn’t) our teacher got disappointed at us because we just ‘didn’t make the effort.”

One of the most frustrating things in my mind is that we get graded on something that has no educational value. I would very much like to discontinue these childish dress-up days.

JENNIFER STARSINIC        Hummelstown 62
Fix #3 – Bonus Points

- inappropriately inflate student achievement;
- mathematical distortion, e.g., 115 out of 100;
- bonus questions usually conceptual, higher order thinking questions.
Fix #4

Don’t punish academic dishonesty with reduced grades; apply other consequences and reassess to determine actual level of achievement.
“Words such as lying, dishonesty, misrepresenting, deception, and morality appear in the literature on cheating and may be applied to situations in which students do not realize that they are “wrong” in school terms. The line between helping (an ethical behavior) and cheating (an unethical behavior) is culturally marked and variable. Where the line is drawn is related to cultural differences in the purposes of schooling, notions of how knowledge is constructed, the nature and meaning of assessment, and the relationship between the individual and the group.”

No studies support the use of low grades or marks as punishments. Instead of prompting greater effort, low grades more often cause students to withdraw from learning.”

Fix #5

Don’t consider attendance in grade determination; report absences separately.
Fix #5

“Excused and unexcused absences are not relevant to an achievement grade.

There is no legitimate purpose for distinguishing between excused and unexcused absences.

For educational purposes, therefore, there need only to be recorded absences.”

Fix #6

Don’t include group scores in grades; use only individual achievement evidence.
“Group (grades) are so blatantly unfair that on this basis alone they should never be used.”

Kagan’s 7 reasons for opposing group grades

1. not fair
2. debase report cards
3. undermine motivation
4. convey the wrong message
5. violate individual accountability
6. are responsible for resistance to cooperative learning
7. may be challenged in court.

Fix #6

“No student’s grade should depend on the achievement (or behavior) of other students.”

Source: William Glasser
Fix #7

Don’t organize information in grading records by assessment methods or simply summarize into a single grade; organize and report evidence by standards/learning goals.
Fix #7

Traditional Guideline For Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Category</th>
<th>Expected % Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Quizzes/Tests/Exams</td>
<td>20-30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Written Assignments</td>
<td>15-25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creative or explanatory paragraphs, essays, notes, organizers, writing folios or portfolios</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Oral Presentations or Demonstrations</td>
<td>15-25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brief or more formal presentations or demonstrations, role-playing, debates, skits etc.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Projects/Assignments</td>
<td>10-20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research tasks, hands-on projects, video or audio tape productions, analysis of issues etc.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Co-operative Group Learning</td>
<td>5 - 15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluation of the process and skills learned as an individual and as a group member</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Independent Learning</td>
<td>5 - 15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual organizational skills, contributions to class activities and discussions, homework, notebooks</td>
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<td>70-130%</td>
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### Summary of Evidence for Pilot Certification

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**Comments:**

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**Final Grade**
Common Core Math Grade 5

### Student:

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<th>10/15 PA</th>
<th>11/7 PA</th>
<th>11/18 PA</th>
<th>12/8 PA</th>
<th>12/17 Test</th>
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<th>Summary</th>
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**Comments:**
### Table 9.2  Elementary Gradebook Arranged by Learning Target

#### Number Sense

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#### Computation

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<th>3.</th>
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**Task:**  SR = Selected Response; PA = Performance Assessment; O = Oral; HA = Homework Assignment; Q = Quiz  
**F/S:**  F = Formative; S = Summative

Source: Adapted from the work of Ken O'Connor, Scarborough, Ontario. Personal communication, June 1, 2004. Adapted by permission.
### Table 9.3 Standards-Based Gradebook for Mathematics

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<th>Geometry</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Stats &amp; Prob</th>
<th>Algebraic Rela</th>
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</table>

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Source: Adapted from the work of Ken O’Connor, Scarborough, Ontario. Personal communication, June 1, 2004. Adapted by permission.

Fix #7

PowerTeacher Gradebook: Mark Adams - Apple Grove High School 2

Reporting Term: S2  Mode: Assignments  Final Grades  Student View

ANDERSON, CODY

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<thead>
<tr>
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<td>Letter Recognition: H-N</td>
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<td>Unit Test</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Final Score - most recent - 3

| mean      | 3.7 | 2.3 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 1.2 | S  | E  | E  | S  |
| weighted mean | 3.7 | 2.4 | 2.9 | 2.7 | 1.2 | S  | E  | E  | S  |
| median     | 4   | 2   | 3   | 3   | 1   | S  | E  | E  | S  |
| mode       | 4   | 2   | 3   | 3   | 1   | S  | E  | E  | S  |
| highest    | A   | 4   | 4   | 4   | 4   | S  | E  | E  | S  |
| most recent - 3 | A   | 4   | 2   | 4   | 3   | E  | E  | E  | S  |
| times assessed | 8   | 15  | 15  | 13  | 11  | 9  | 1  | 8  | 6  |

points earned: 82.5/100  percentage: 82.500%  grade: B-
### Fix #7

#### Summative

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Poetry</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Literature</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Editing</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Semester Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Page 1</th>
<th>Page 2</th>
<th>Page 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Period Marks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AP Dog</th>
<th>AP Dog</th>
<th>AP Dog</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Note: "Period distribution" at top reflects grade weighting by Sunshine State Standard Strand for Language Arts.

- **A - Reading**: 20%
- **B - Writing**: 30%
- **C - Listening/Speaking/Viewing**: 10%
- **D - Language**: 20%
- **E - Literature**: 20%

#### Assessments that involve more than one strand are split, such as:

- **SL/EE Test between reading and literature**
- **SL presentation between 1/5/v and literature**

Developed by Kara Davis, Arnold High School
Fix #7
“The use of columns in a grade book to represent standards, instead of assignments, tests, and activities, is a major shift in thinking . . . Under this system, when an assessment is designed, the teacher must think in terms of the standards it is intended to address. If a (test) is given that covers three standards, then the teacher makes three entries in the grade book for each student - one entry for each standard - as opposed to one overall entry for the entire (test).”

Marzano, R., and J. Kendall, A Comprehensive Guide to Developing Standards-Based Districts, Schools, and Classrooms, McREL, Aurora, CO, 1996, 150
Fix #7

“Systems that are aligned - curriculum, teaching, and assessment - have a greater chance of success for students.”

“The principal limitation of any grading system that requires the teacher to assign one number or letter to represent . . . learning is that one symbol can convey only one meaning. . . . One symbol cannot do justice to the different degrees of learning a student acquires across all learning outcomes.”

Tombari and Borich, Authentic Assessment in the Classroom, Prentice Hall, 1999, 213
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fix #8

Don’t assign grades using inappropriate or unclear performance standards; provide clear descriptions of achievement expectations.
Fix #8

“Performance standards specify ‘how good is good enough.’ They relate to issues of assessment that gauge the degree to which content standards have been attained. . . . They are indices of quality that specify how adept or competent a student demonstration should be.”

Fix #8

**Performance Standards**

How good is good enough?

**Traditional School approaches**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100%</td>
<td>Outstanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-89%</td>
<td>Above Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-79%</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69%</td>
<td>Below Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;60%</td>
<td>Failing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Standards-based approaches**

(Should be described by levels and linked to a symbol)

- **Advanced**   Above standard
- **Proficient** Meets standard
- **Developing** Below but approaching standard
- **Beginning**  Well below standard
Fix #8

For classroom assessment

Performance Standards = OVERALL performance descriptors
(school, district, state or provincial
e.g., A B C D; 4 3 2 1; E M N U)

TASK/ scoring tools (rubrics, etc)
SUBJECT + SPECIFIC work samples (exemplars)
+ commentaries on the work samples

Adapted from New Standards Sampler, National Center on Education and the Economy, www.ncee.org
### LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT

**Edmonton Catholic Elementary Schools**

#### LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT COMMENT CODE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acceptable Performance</th>
<th>Demonstrates Excellent Achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This level of achievement describes assessment evidence that demonstrates exemplary performance in relation to the learner outcomes from the Alberta programs of study. The evidence is characterized by an in-depth understanding of subject-area content, and it demonstrates excellence in the knowledge and skills at this grade level at the time of the report card.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proficient Achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This level of achievement describes assessment evidence that demonstrates skilled performance in relation to the learner outcomes from the Alberta programs of study. The evidence is characterized by a solid understanding of subject-area content, and it proficiently demonstrates the knowledge and skills at this grade level at the time of the report card.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimal Achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This level of achievement describes assessment evidence that demonstrates limited performance in relation to the learner outcomes from the Alberta programs of study. The evidence is characterized by a basic understanding of subject-area content, and it demonstrates minimally acceptable knowledge and skills at this grade level at the time of the report card.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Insufficient Achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This level of achievement describes assessment evidence that demonstrates unsuccessful performance in relation to the learner outcomes from the Alberta programs of study. The evidence is characterized by an inadequate understanding of subject-area content and it demonstrates insufficient knowledge and skills for this grade level at the time of the report card.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**The purpose of a report card is to show how each of the key learner outcomes selected for a subject area has been assessed for a student.**

**Assessment is based on a level of achievement and measured against a standard of performance for that particular key learner outcome.**

---

Fix #8

“We found parents generally interpreted the labels according to their personal experiences with grading . . . . . . certain labels were singled out by parents as confusing or meaningless. Parents were especially baffled by the labels “Pre-Emergent” and “Emerging.” . . . Another label parents found puzzling was “Exceeds Standard.”

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Avoid comparative language, e.g. “average”;
2. Provide examples based on student work;
3. Distinguish between “Levels of Understanding” (quality) and “Frequency of Display.” (quantity)
4. Be consistent (across grade levels).

Fix #8

Wow!

Got it!

Nearly there!

Oh no! Oops!
Fix #8

Achievement

“the act of achieving or performing; an obtaining by exertion; successful performance”

measured as an absolute, e.g., “he/she . . . is 4 feet 6 inches tall”

. . . “is reading at grade 2 level”

“achievement at . . .”

Sources: Dictionaries and the wisdom of Grant Wiggins
### III. Academic Achievement

- The Academic Achievement grade is an indicator of a student’s mastery of grade-level Power Standards. Students demonstrate what they know, understand, and can do as measured through multiple assessments and observations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 <strong>Exemplary</strong> (exceeds)</td>
<td>The student demonstrates mastery, with excellence, of the grade level standards with relative ease and consistency, and often exceeds the cognitive level of the standards. The student applies and extends the key concepts, processes and skills. The student is working at grade level yet at a higher level of Bloom’s Taxonomy. There is no mark of 4+ or 4_.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 <strong>Proficient</strong> (meets)</td>
<td>The student demonstrates mastery of the grade level standards at the cognitive level the standard is written. The student consistently grasps and applies key concepts, processes and skills with limited errors. There is no mark of 3+ or 3_.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 <strong>Partially Proficient</strong> (approaching)</td>
<td>The student demonstrates mastery of some grade level standards. The student inconsistently grasps and applies some of the key concepts, processes and skills with significant errors. There is no mark of 2+ or 2_.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 <strong>Non-Proficient</strong> (below)</td>
<td>The student has not demonstrated mastery of grade level standards and is not yet performing at grade level. There is no mark of 1+ or 1_.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Fix #8

Growth

“the process of growing: increase in size, number, frequency, strength, etc.”

measured against where a child was, e.g., “he/she . . . grew three inches since last measurement”

. . . “has moved from grade 1 level in the last month”

“growth from . . . “

Sources: Dictionaries and the wisdom of Grant Wiggins
Fix #8

Progress
“movement, as toward a goal; advance.”

Relative achievement measured against a goal, standard, e.g., “he/she . . . to one inch above average height for age”
. . . to two grade levels below expected level for age”

“progress to . . .”

Invariably involves a professional judgment

Note - It is possible to make significant personal growth while making limited progress at a (relatively) low level of achievement.

Sources: Dictionaries and the wisdom of Grant Wiggins
IV. Progress Toward Proficiency

These marks represent the measurement of a student’s growth toward and attainment of mastery of each district Power Standard in Reading, Writing and Math. Progress is measured by a variety of evidence, which include quality standards-aligned assessments, portfolios and other multiple measures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>√</th>
<th>^</th>
<th>__</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meets Standard</td>
<td>Adequate Progress</td>
<td>Insufficient Progress</td>
<td>Standard Not Assessed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

√  Meets or Exceeds Standard – The student has mastered the entire standard. Unless reassessment indicates otherwise, the √ is repeated in subsequent trimesters.

^ Adequate Progress (Used 1st and 2nd Trimester only) – Based on what has been taught and assessed, the student is on track to master the standard by the end of the year. **This symbol is not used third trimester.**

__ Insufficient Progress – Based on what has been taught and assessed, the student has not demonstrated that s/he is on track to master the standard by the end of the year. **For third trimester, this symbol represents that the student has NOT demonstrated mastery of the standard in its entirety.**

X Standard Not Assessed – (Used 1st and 2nd Trimester only) Standard has not been taught and/or measured to date. **This symbol is not used third trimester.**

Fix #9

Don’t assign grades based on student’s achievement compared to other students; compare each student’s performance to preset standards.
What do you think would happen if you did an outstanding job, all the students in your class did an outstanding job, and all the students received a grade of 90% or higher (or A or 4)?
Fix #9

“grading on the curve makes learning a highly competitive activity in which students compete against one another for the few scarce rewards (high grades) distributed by the teacher. Under these conditions, students readily see that helping others become successful threatens their own chances for success. As a result, learning becomes a game of winners and losers; and because the number of rewards is kept arbitrarily small, most students are forced to be losers.”

Fix #10

Don’t rely on evidence from assessments that fail to meet standards of quality; rely only on quality assessments.
Fix #10

**Accurate Assessment**

- appropriate and clear targets  (*Fixes 7 & 8*)
- clear purpose  (*Fix 13*)
- sound design - right method
  - well written
  - well sampled
  - bias avoided

Adapted from Stiggins et al – *Classroom Assessment FOR Student Learning*, Assessment Training Institute, 2004, 124
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SR</th>
<th>WR</th>
<th>PA</th>
<th>PC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge</strong></td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reasoning</strong></td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skills</strong></td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Partial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Products</strong></td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fix #10

Well Written

Five General Item-Writing Commandments

Thou shall NOT

• provide opaque directions about how to respond
• employ ambiguous statements in your items
• unintentionally provide students with clues
• employ complex syntax in your items
• use vocabulary that is more advanced than required

Popham, J. Classroom Assessment: What Teachers Need to Know, Fix #1 Allyn and Bacon, Needham Heights, MA, 1995, 98
Fix #10

Well Sampled

“Ask: Have we gathered enough information of the right kind so we can draw confident conclusions about student achievement. If the answer is yes, proceed. . . .

Our challenge is to know how to adjust our sampling strategies . . . to produce results of maximum quality for minimum effort.”


© Ken O’Connor, 2012
There are three general sources of assessment evidence gathered in classrooms: observations of learning, products students create, and conversations - discussing learning with students.

When evidence is collected from three different sources over time, trends and patterns become apparent. . . . This process is called triangulation. ”

Bias Avoided

Fix #10

Problems that can occur with the student
Lack of reading skill
Emotional upset
Poor health
Lack of testwiseness
Evaluation anxiety

Problems that can occur with the setting
Physical conditions – light, heat, noise, etc.

Problems that can occur with the assessment itself
Directions lacking or unclear
Poorly worded questions/prompts
Insufficient time

Based on the ideas of Rick Stiggins
Fix #10

“Nothing of consequence would be lost by getting rid of timed tests by the College Board or, indeed, by (schools) in general. Few tasks in life — and very few tasks in scholarship — actually depend on being able to read passages or solve math problems rapidly. As a teacher, I want my students to read, write and think well; I don't care how much time they spend on their assignments. For those few jobs where speed is important, timed tests may be useful.”

Fix #10
“What about using timed tests to help children learn their basic facts. This makes no instructional sense. Children who perform well under time pressure display their skills. Children who have difficulty with skills, or who work more slowly, run the risk of reinforcing wrong learning under pressure. In addition, children can become negative and fearful toward their math learning. Also, timed tests do not measure children’s understanding . . . . It doesn't’t ensure that students will be able to use the facts in problem-solving situations. Furthermore, it conveys to children that memorizing is the way to mathematical power, rather than learning to think and reason to figure out answers.”

Burns, M. About Teaching Mathematics, 2000, 157
Fix # 11

Don’t rely on the mean; consider other measures of central tendency and use professional judgment.
Fix #11

“Averaging falls far short of providing an accurate description of what students have learned. . . . If the purpose of grading and reporting is to provide an accurate description of what students have learned, then averaging must be considered inadequate and inappropriate”.

“Educators must abandon the average, or arithmetic mean, as the predominant measurement of student achievement.”

Whenever I hear statistics being quoted I am reminded of the statistician who drowned while wading across a river with an average depth of three feet.

GORDON McMANN
Campbell River, B.C.
Fix #11

Mean or Average = 75.2

Median = 89

Total 752
"Grading by the median provides more opportunities for success by diminishing the impact of a few stumbles and by rewarding hard work."

Wright, Russell. G., "Success for All: The Median is the Key", *Kappan*, May 1994, 723-725
## Fix #11

**Alberta Written Test for Drivers License**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attempt</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>First attempt</em></td>
<td>17/20</td>
<td>85% required to pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10/20 = 50%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Second attempt</em></td>
<td>10 + 17 = 27 = 13.5 = 67.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20/20 + 40 = 20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Third attempt</em></td>
<td>10 + 17 + 18 = 45 = 15 = 75%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20/20 + 20 = 60 = 20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Fourth attempt</em></td>
<td>10 + 17 + 18 + 19 = 64 = 16 = 80%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20/20 + 20 = 80 = 20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Fifth attempt</em></td>
<td>10 + 17 + 18 + 19 + 20 = 84 = 16.8 = 84%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20/20 + 20 = 100 = 20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sixth attempt</em></td>
<td>10 + 17 + 18 + 19 + 20 + 20 = 104 = 17.3 = 86.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20/20 + 20 = 120 = 20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Richard Brown, Alberta high school teacher*
### Issues with the Mean

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment in Order</th>
<th>Karen</th>
<th>Alex</th>
<th>Jennifer</th>
<th>Stephen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment #1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment #2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment #3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment #4</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment #5</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment #6</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment #7</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment #8</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment #9</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
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<td>Assessment #10</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>63</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6.1

Fix #11

“Data should be used to INFORM *not* determine decisions”

Management Consultant, The Hay Group, personal conversation, January 2002
Fix #12

Don’t include zeros in grade determination when evidence is missing or as punishment; use alternatives, such as reassessing to determine real level of achievement or use “I” for Incomplete or Insufficient evidence.
Fix #12

Problems with zeros

- Philosophical
- Mathematics
- Motivation.
Fix #12

“Most state standards in mathematics require that fifth-grade students understand the principles of ratios - for example, A is to B as 4 is to 3; D is to F as 1 is to zero. Yet the persistence of the zero on the 100-point scale indicates that many people with advanced degrees, . . . have not applied the ratio standard to their own professional practices.”

The Effect of Zeros

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5 pt scale</th>
<th>101 point scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4  (A)</td>
<td>90-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  (B)</td>
<td>80-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  (C)</td>
<td>70-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1  (D)</td>
<td>60-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0  (F)</td>
<td>&lt;60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  (C)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fix #12

“The use of an I or “Incomplete” grade is an alternative to assigning zeros that is both educationally sound and potentially quite effective.”

Fix #12

The Last Word on Zeros

“A zero has an undeserved and devastating influence, so much so that no matter what the student does, the grade distorts the final grade as a true indicator of mastery. Mathematically and ethically this is unacceptable.”

Rick Wormeli quoted in O’ Connor, K., A Repair Kit for Grading, ETS/ATI, Portland, 2007, 92
Fix #13

Don’t use information from formative assessments and practice to determine grades; use only summative evidence.
Fix #13

**Diagnostic** - assessment which takes place prior to instruction; designed to determine a student's attitude, skills or knowledge in order to identify student needs.

**Formative** - Assessment designed to provide direction for improvement and/or adjustment to a program for individual students or for a whole class, e.g. observation, quizzes, homework, instructional questions, initial drafts/attempts.

**Summative** - Assessment/evaluation designed to provide information to be used in making judgment about a student’s achievement at the end of a sequence of instruction, e.g. final drafts/attempts, tests, exams, assignments, projects, performances.
“The ongoing interplay between assessment and instruction, so common in the arts and athletics, is also evident in classrooms using practices such as nongraded quizzes and practice tests, the writing process, formative performance tasks, review of drafts and peer response groups. The teachers in such classrooms recognize that ongoing assessments provide feedback that enhances instruction and guides student revision.”

“The thrust of formative assessment is toward improving learning and instruction. Therefore, the information should not be used for assigning “marks” as the assessment often occurs before students have had full opportunities to learn content or develop skills.”

Fix #13

Students should be assessed or checked on everything (or almost everything) they do

BUT

everything that is assessed and/or checked does not need a score

AND

every score should not be included in the grade.
Firm evidence shows that formative assessment is an essential component of classroom work and that its development can raise standards of achievement, Mr. Black and Mr. Wiliam point out. Indeed, they know of no other way of raising standards for which such a strong prima facie case can be made.

Black, P. and D. Wiliam, “Inside the Black Box,” Kappan, October 1998, 139
Black and Wiliam identify a number of key factors in using assessment for learning:

- “feedback to any pupil should be about the particular qualities of his or her work, with advice on what he or she can do to improve,” (143)
- “students have to be actively involved” (in their own learning) (141)
- “the results (of assessment) have to be used to adjust teaching and learning,” (141)
- recognition of “the ways in which assessment can affect the motivation and self-esteem of students” (141)
- “self-assessment by pupils, far from being a luxury, is in fact an essential component of formative assessment.” (143)

Black, P. and D. Wiliam, “Inside the Black Box,” Kappan, October 1998, 130
Feedback that Supports Learning

- Focuses on attributes of the work rather than on attributes of the student
- Is descriptive of the work; how to do better
- Clearly understood by the user
- Is sufficiently detailed to be helpful, but does not overwhelm
- Arrives in time to inform the learning

Chappuis, 2009
“There is well-researched evidence that grades on student work do not help in the same way that specific comments do. The same research shows that students generally look only at grades and take little notice of the comments if provided.”

Fix #13

From a presentation by Dylan Wiliam - “Inside the Black Box”

**Kinds of feedback**

- 264 low and high ability year 7 pupils in 12 classes in 4 schools; analysis of 132 students at top and bottom of each class
- Same teaching, same aims, same teachers, same class work
- Three kinds of feedback: marks, comments, marks+comments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback</th>
<th>Gain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>marks</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comments</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>both</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fix #13

Purposes of Homework

PREPARATION - introduces material presented in future lessons. These assignments aim to help students learn new material when it is covered in class.

PRACTICE - to reinforce learning and help students master specific skills.

EXTENSION - asks students to apply skills they already have in new situations.

INTEGRATION - requires students to apply many different skills to a large task, such as book reports, projects, creative writing.

Source: NCLB website - Homework Tips for Parents
Impact Story – Rutherford High School

In a panel discussion of how the grading system has impacted them, the students made the following points:

1. We have to actually learn the material now since there is no extra credit work to bring up the grade in the end. I like it better when I didn’t have to work so hard to learn the material.

2. The tests are less stressful because we have practiced the material until we know it, and we know we know it before the test.

3. We have more fun in class because there is no grade attached to the formative exercises. We are expected to mistakes that help us learn.

4. The formative assessments show us the format the test will take so there are no surprises.

5. Knowing that I can retake the test if I do poorly takes some of the stress away.

6. It is obvious that the teacher wants us to learn.

7. I like the points that are added on at the end as if they are free, even though we earned them ahead of time with the practice work.

8. I always know what I have to do to make my grade better.

Source: Sandy Wilson, Rutherford High School, Bay District Schools, FL
### Sample Assessment Plan

#### Formative Assessment for Unit 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TASK</th>
<th>METHOD(S)</th>
<th>STRATEGY(IES)</th>
<th>SCORING TOOL</th>
<th>ASSESSOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ROLE PLAY Practice(s)</td>
<td>Performance Ass't</td>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>Rubric</td>
<td>self/peer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUIZ(ZES)</td>
<td>Paper and Pencil</td>
<td>Selected Response</td>
<td>Marking Scheme</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BROCHURE Draft</td>
<td>Performance Ass't</td>
<td>Product</td>
<td>Rubric</td>
<td>peer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BROCHURE Near Final</td>
<td>Performance Ass't</td>
<td>Product</td>
<td>Rubric</td>
<td>self/peer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Summative Assessment for Unit 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TASK</th>
<th>METHOD(S)</th>
<th>STRATEGY(IES)</th>
<th>SCORING TOOL</th>
<th>ASSESSOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ROLE PLAY</td>
<td>Performance Ass't</td>
<td>Performance assessment</td>
<td>Rubric</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEST(S)</td>
<td>Paper and Pencil</td>
<td>Selected &amp; Constructed Response</td>
<td>Marking Scheme</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BROCHURE</td>
<td>Performance Ass't</td>
<td>Product</td>
<td>Rubric</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fix #14

Don’t summarize evidence accumulated over time when learning is developmental and will grow with time and repeated opportunities; in those instances emphasize more recent achievement.
Consider this dreary message shared with me by an assistant superintendent:
I was meeting with our high school Advanced Placement teachers, who were expressing concerns about our open enrollment process and the high failure rate. One math teacher said that while a particular student was now (getting marks) in the 80's, she had made a 12 on the initial test, ‘so there is no way she is going to make a passing grade for the first nine weeks’.

Fix #14

The key question is, “What information provides the most accurate depiction of students’ learning at this time?” In nearly all cases, the answer is “the most current information.” If students demonstrate that past assessment information no longer accurately reflects their learning, that information must be dropped and replaced by the new information. Continuing to rely on past assessment data miscommunicates students’ learning.

Fix #14

“We know that students will rarely perform at high levels on challenging learning tasks at their first attempt. Deep understanding or high levels of proficiency are achieved only as a result of trial, practice, adjustments based on feedback and more practice.”

Conditions for ‘Second Chance” Assessment

*Always* - evidence of ‘correctives’

*Optional* - opportunity cost
Fix #14

“... final grades should (almost) never be determined by simply averaging the grades from several grading periods (e.g., adding the grades from terms one through three and dividing by three).”

(exception - discrete standards/content)

Fix #14

Fix #15

Don’t leave students out of the grading process. Involve students; they can - and should - play key roles in assessment and grading that promote achievement.
Fix #15  Motivating Students Towards Excellence

Rick Stiggins believes student-involved assessment is the route to follow. It includes:

* student involvement in the construction of assessments and in the development of criteria for success;

* students keeping records of their own achievement and growth through such strategies as portfolios; and

* students communicating their achievement through such vehicles as student-involved parent conferences.
The best resource for student involvement ideas is:

*Seven Strategies of Assessment for Learning: Jan Chappuis, Published by Pearson ATI*
Strategies that teachers can use to involve students

1. Engage students in reviewing weak and strong samples in order to determine the attributes of a good performance or product . . .

2. Students practice using criteria to evaluate anonymous strong and weak work.

3. Students work in pairs to revise an anonymous weak sample they have just evaluated.

Deciding What to Keep Track of, What to Report, and How to Report It

SUM TOTAL OF EVERYTHING STUDENTS DO IN SCHOOL/CLASSROOM

**Diagnostic and Practice Events**
- In-class work: exercises, problems, tasks
- Homework that is for practice
- Trial, feedback, and revision
- Quizzes and other formative assessments

**Track (Teacher and/or Student)**

**SELECTION OF MOST VALUED ITEMS FOR REPORTING PURPOSES**

**Academic Progress**
- Learning gains
- Improvement over time
- Specific strengths and areas needing work

**Skills of Independence and Cooperation**
- Work habits
- Attendance
- Cooperation/Group skills
- Homework completion
- Organization skills
- Behavior
- Academic honesty

**SELECTION OF ACHIEVEMENT ITEMS FOR GRADING PURPOSES**
- Periodic assessments
- Final exams and papers
- Reports/Projects
- Culminating demonstrations of learning

**Record & Grade**


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An ASSESSMENT PLAN should start with the
• *desired results* (learning goals, standards, etc), *then* the
• *summative assessments* that are going to be used to
determine whether the student ‘knows and can do,’ *next* should be the
• *diagnostic assessment(s)* that are going to help to
determine the what and how for teaching and learning,
*then* should come the
• *formative assessments* that are going to help students
achieve the learning goals and that are going to cause
the teacher to adjust teaching and learning activities.

- homework, quizzes → tests
- practices → performances
- first draft, second draft → product(s)
A vital part of the ASSESSMENT PLAN is how much evidence and which assessments are critical to being able to determine student achievement/grades, e.g., there will be 9 summative assessment opportunities, of which at least six, (including the third, fifth and ninth) must be done.
Assessment Plan for ________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Desired Results (standards, gle's, etc.)</th>
<th>Summative Assessments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>8.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>9.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>minum # ____</th>
<th>* critical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diagnostic Assessments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formative Assessments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For grades that are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Fix</th>
<th>Fixes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accurate</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 9 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistent</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11 12 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meaningful</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive of learning</td>
<td></td>
<td>13 14 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Standards-Based Schools/Systems

Givens
- quality assessment (10)
- standards base (7)
- performance standards (8, 9)

Musts
- achievement separated from behaviors (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)
- summative only (13)
- more recent emphasized (14)
- number crunching (11, 12)
- student involvement (15)
Grading

Top Ten + 1 "Reference List (in alphabetical order)

Brookhart, S. Grading, Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall, 2004

Canady, R. and P. R. Hotchkiss, "It's a Good Score: Just a Bad Grade," Kappan, September 1989, 68-71

Cooper, D. Talk About Assessment, Thomson Nelson, 2007


Donen, T. Grades Don't Matter, Fairview High School, TN, 2010


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155
Grading “Top Ten + 1” Reference List (cont.)


Wormeli, R. *Fair Isn’t Equal*, Stenhouse/NMSA, 2006
### Continuums for Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards</th>
<th>Assessment Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achievement separate from work habits/skills</td>
<td>Achievement/ non-achievement factors mixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summative only</td>
<td>Everything ‘counts’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More recent emphasized</td>
<td>All data cumulative/ similar significance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than one opportunity</td>
<td>One opportunity only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional judgment based on evidence related to Published performance standards</td>
<td>Calculation only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High quality assessment</td>
<td>Teachers’ idiosyncratic standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student understanding and involvement</td>
<td>Poor quality assessment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Grading/Reporting Reflections

Reflect on what you have learned and apply it to the grading and reporting practices in your school and/or district.

Practices reinforced:

Possible revisions in grading/reporting practices:

Actions:

Any other comments:
“... the primary purpose of classroom assessment is to inform teaching and improve learning, not to sort and select students or to justify a grade.”

McTighe, Jay and Ferrara, Steven, “Performance-Based Assessment in the Classroom”, Pennsylvania ASCD
Enduring Understandings

1. There are no right grades only justifiable grades.

2. Nothing really changes till the grade book and the report card both change.
Grades

should come from

a 
body of evidence + performance + fixes standards

i.e., professional judgment

NOT

just number crunching
To evaluate or judge is to reach

“a sensible conclusion that is consistent with both evidence and common sense”

Robert Linn, CRESST