



Exercise Four - Design Assessment

Assessment Design as Integrated as Your Definition of Student Success

"Truly, assessment can be a powerful force for knowing our students...We simply have to move past the baggage that comes with the term assessment, and understand that it can mean a lot of things. We can assess for content and skills, yes, but we can also assess for passions, interests, success skills, and the like for the purposes of the right instruction at the right time."

- Andrew Miller, Edutopia blog

What should next gen assessment for broader and deeper competencies look like? The ability to "measure what we value" in a world that has shifted is a mission-critical challenge to next generation educators. There is not yet a finished blueprint for next generation assessment; no glossy catalog of proven assessment tools and methods; no formula for replacing low-cost, narrow accountability testing with thoughtful investments in gauging the progress of the whole learner. On the other hand, there are pockets of extensive research and some developing practice in measuring learning and competency in specific settings and skill areas.

This exercise focuses on assessment, digging into how well your designed assessment activities support and gauge student progress on the broader competencies you're focused on. The tools in this exercise will help you (and, ultimately, the students as participants themselves) answer this crucial question:

How do we gauge students' progress in developing richer competencies?

Here are two tools that can help you get there:

- [Assessment Strategy Analysis Worksheet](#) - This tool helps you map assessment of individual projects to the five MyWays assessment strategies: Performance Assessment, Formative Assessment, Quality Reviews, Badges and Micro-credentials, and Multiple Measures.
- [Assessment Competency Correlation Worksheet](#) - This tool asks you to map your use of the five assessment strategies to the MyWays competencies, which helps you see the big picture of your assessments.

◆ Key Concepts

Before you dive into using the tools, there are some important concepts about next gen assessment to dig into first. As we have mentioned in other exercises, reading the associated reports will be most beneficial to deepen your learning and understanding. But we want you to be able to roll your sleeves up and play with these tools even if you haven't yet read the reports. Understanding these concepts will let you do that.

Concept 1 - Why Assessment as It Is Designed Now Just Isn't Working

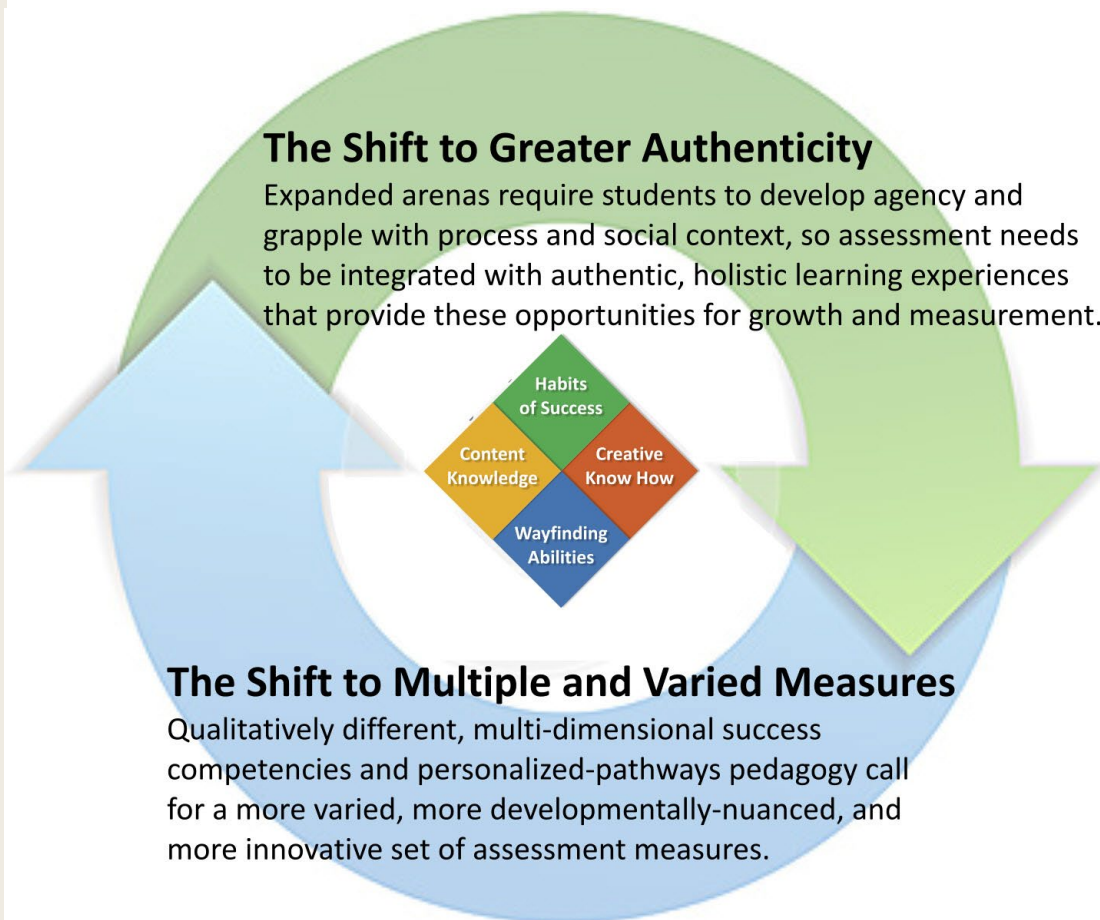
The state of assessment today across the broader competency range is fragmented, uneven, and fails to support the goals of next generation learning. Some of the shortcomings in current assessment practices have to do with the narrow range of what is measured, but much of the challenge arises from the nature of the assessments commonly carried out, even for traditional competencies, due to the ongoing preoccupation with accountability. The graphic to the right illustrates how the MyWays competency arenas are typically assessed, if they are measured at all.

As discussed in earlier exercises, the expanded arenas of MyWays require students to develop agency within all the competencies, and grapple with process and social context, so assessment needs to be integrated with authentic, whole learning experiences that provide opportunities for growth and measurement across multiple competencies at once.



Concept 2 - Greater Authenticity & Multiple, Varied Measures

Measuring broader and deeper competencies comprised of both capability and agency (since, MyWays researchers have found, that can be understood to equal competence) requires new approaches to assessment. Not only must we begin to assess hard-to-measure competencies like creativity, social skills, and wayfinding abilities; we must also gauge how well students “own” these competencies and apply them in real-life settings. To do this, we believe the crucial first step for next gen educators is to adopt these two paradigm shifts in assessment practice, highlighted in the visual below:



The shift to greater authenticity is what you learned and practiced when it came to Whole Learning in Exercise Three. The learning design needs to be holistic and authentic *and* so do the ways we measure it. Assessment needs to move away from poor proxies, like measuring a single competency via a multiple choice test, to, instead, measuring competencies in the big, real, wild and crazy world in which our students live and spend their time. Currently this is not how assessment typically looks. You can see in the table below, traditional assessments, especially most state testing, focuses on performance on non-authentic measures like multiple choice questions. Better state tests and Advanced Placement assessments include essays that enable students to construct responses at higher orders of thinking, but do not incorporate more complex, authentic contexts or

implementation against defined learning objectives and a logic model of how those objectives can best be met. In many cases, quality reviews can be informed by excellent, established quality standards based on longstanding real-world practice such as those for internships in places like [Big Picture Learning](#) and career exploration at [Linked Learning](#). Reviews can focus on user experience and learning design, the school climate and culture likely to support competency development, and educator expertise in human development and brain science. While essential for hard-to-measure competencies, quality reviews can also complement assessment of any student competency and foster program improvement.

Great tool alert! Check out Pages 15-23 in [Assessment Design for Broader, Deeper Competencies](#) for two-page primers on each of these assessment strategies.

◆ Dig Deeper

The MyWays website is rich with information for you to explore. We recommend taking a look at Report 12 [Assessment Design for Broader, Deeper Competencies](#) as you work through the exercises.

◆ Putting Concepts to Work: Download Tools

Now that you have explored the key concepts, it's time to start playing, practicing, inventing and applying. When you download the tools, you will find the tool itself, along with a deeper description of its purpose and simple instructions for use.

Assessment
Strategy
Analysis
Worksheet

Assessment
Competency
Correlation
Worksheet