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Best practices in assessment and evaluation of literacy at the secondary level

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Best practices in assessment and evaluation of literacy at the secondary level

Abstract

Research over the century has shown that grading practices in schools, especially at the secondary level, are commonly inconsistent, unreliable, and invalid amongst teachers. Grades have a large impact on students' futures, determining scholarships, colleges, and career paths. Therefore, it is important that assessment and evaluation practices are consistent, reliable, and fair. This paper contains a review of research on the reasons for discrepancies in grading practices, followed by what research suggests is best practice for fair and reliable assessment and evaluation practices. Finally, these findings have been combined to develop a presentation on best practices in assessment and evaluation of literacy at the secondary level. The presentation is designed for in-service English Language Arts teachers at the secondary level who intend to improve their assessment and evaluation practices in the classroom. Specific guidelines and handouts are also included.

Best Practices in Assessment and Evaluation of Literacy at the Secondary Level

A Graduate Paper

Submitted to

Division of Literacy Education

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Education

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University of Northern Iowa

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Date Approved   Graduate Faculty Reader

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Date Approved   Head, Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Abstract

Research over the century has shown that grading practices in schools, especially at the secondary level, are commonly inconsistent, unreliable, and invalid amongst teachers. Grades have a large impact on students' futures, determining scholarships, colleges, and career paths. Therefore, it is important that assessment and evaluation practices are consistent, reliable, and fair. This paper contains a review of research on the reasons for discrepancies in grading practices, followed by what research suggests is best practice for fair and reliable assessment and evaluation practices. Finally, these findings have been combined to develop a presentation on best practices in assessment and evaluation of literacy at the secondary level. The presentation is designed for in-service English Language Arts teachers at the secondary level who intend to improve their assessment and evaluation practices in the classroom. Specific guidelines and handouts are also included.

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Introduction

More than ever, grades impact students' futures. They determine scholarships, future career choices, and acceptance into colleges. However, grades at the secondary level have been found to be unreliable for over a century (Brimi, 2011). Researchers have found the discrepancies in grading are due to the unreliable assessment practices amongst teachers, schools, and states (Brimi, 2011; Cizek, 2009; Tierney, Simon, & Charland, 2011; Wiggins, 2004). The need for more validity and reliability in grading practices is essential to help determine an accurate picture of student achievement (Brimi, 2011; Cizek, 2009; Tierney et al., 2011; Wiggins, 2004). For grades to be more valid and reliable, in-service teachers need support from their districts in professional development on best practices in assessment and evaluation (Cox, 2011; Randall & Engelhard, 2010; Tierney et al., 2011).

This paper discusses the development of a presentation on the philosophies, guidelines, and resources for best practices in assessment and evaluation of literacy at the secondary level for in-service English Language Arts teachers. It is based on the latest research in standards-based grading practices (Guskey & Bailey, 2010; Heflebower, Hoegh, & Warrick, 2014; Jung & Guskey, 2012; Marzano, 2011; Wormeli, 2018).

Rationale for Choosing this Topic

The rationale for designing this presentation is based on my personal experiences and frustrations with grading in literacy at the middle school level over a course of nine years. When I began teaching, I found it frustrating to determine an accurate picture of students' achievement in a letter grade based on a quarterly collection of assignments, projects, and assessments. Through research and professional development opportunities

over the years, more reliable and valid practices in assessment and evaluation were

discovered and installed into my literacy classroom.

The need for reform in grading at the secondary level has been realized in many

school districts in Iowa, including my own. Informing all stakeholders about the current

research behind the philosophies, guidelines, and resources in best practices in

assessment and evaluation is important for successful implementation of any grading

reform.

Purpose of a Presentation on Best Practices in Assessment and Evaluation

The purpose of this research paper was to discover the causes for discrepancies in

grading practices, find guiding principles and philosophies of best practices in assessment

and evaluation, and to provide resources for in-service English Language Arts teachers to

begin implementing best practices in assessment and evaluation into their classrooms.

Guiding Research Questions

Based on the purpose of this project, three research questions were formed. These

questions guided the study and provided the key components for the development of a

presentation for in-service English Language Arts teachers.

1. What are the causes for discrepancies in grading practices in literacy at the
   secondary level?

2. What are the key findings on best practices in assessment and evaluation
   of literacy at the secondary level?

3. What is the process for implementation of best practices in assessment and
   evaluation?

In order to answer these research questions, literature was collected and researched. Findings from the research were then analyzed and synthesized to help develop a presentation for in-service English Language Arts teachers that focused on the causes for discrepancies in grading, the philosophies, guidelines, and resources for best practices in assessment and evaluation, and resources for implementing best practices into the classroom.

Review of the Literature

Teachers' decisions regarding grades for classroom performance has been found to impact students (Tierney et al., 2011). In his study, Brimi (2011) noted that grades were used to determine awards, entrance into colleges and universities, and scholarships. As competition increased for scholarships, more discussion occurred about the meaning of grades (Brimi, 2011; Tierney et al., 2011). Was one student's level of learning equal to another student's level of learning in another teacher's class? Another school district? Another state? According to one study, teachers have had different interpretations of levels of learning for over a century (Brimi, 2011).

In 1912, Starch and Elliott found, after distributing the same paper to over 200 High School English teachers, that teachers assigned different grades to the paper. There was no consistency amongst teachers' methods for grading the papers. Almost 100 years later, Brimi (2011) did a similar study, but included a rubric based on the 6 + 1 Traits of Writing to provide guidelines for grades only to discover similar results. Scores varied as much as 46 points on a 100 point scale. According to this study, teachers' grading practices today seemed to be as unreliable as they were in 1912 (Brimi, 2011).

The Causes for Discrepancies in Grading at the Secondary Level

The discrepancies in grading could have been due to a variety of factors. The unclear or uncertain ideas about the purpose of a grade, the lack of valid and reliable assessments, and the lack of knowledge in best practices in grading were three factors research found to cause discrepancies in grades.

The purpose of a grade. One of the reasons why grades were found to vary amongst teachers were the differing beliefs of what a grade should convey. Several studies showed that the criteria used to sum up a student's achievement in a content area varied greatly amongst teachers (Brookhart, 1993; Cox, 2011; Erickson, 2011; Tierney et al., 2011).

In his study on classroom grading practices, when Cox (2011) asked what a grade conveyed in their classrooms, teachers' responses about the percentage of academic achievement and non-academic achievement criteria varied amongst teachers. Similar issues occurred at Minnetonka High School in Minnesota (Erickson, 2011). Minnetonka found the need for grading reform after concerns of grade 'inflation' and 'deflation' (Erickson, 2011). The inclusion of non-academic factors such as attitude, effort, and behavior caused 'deflation' in grades while grading practices like the inclusion of extra-credit, returning permission slips, and bringing tissue boxes to class caused grade 'inflation' (Erickson, 2011).

In another study, researchers found that the inclusion of non-academic factors with academic factors in a grade caused an unclear picture of a students' level of achievement (Tierney et al., 2011). When Tierney, Simon, and Charland (2011) conducted a study of teachers' philosophies regarding grades, they found that around

one-third of the teachers included the non-academic factor of "effort" in a grade. Good

effort usually worked in the favor of a student who struggled academically (Brookhart,

1993; Tierney et al., 2011). Brookhart (1993) also found this result in her study. Students

who performed low on assessments but showed good effort were more likely to "get a

break" than students who performed well on assessments and showed good effort

(Brookhart, 1993).

In addition to these studies, Randall and Engelhard (2010) found that behavior

had a major effect on "borderline" grade in their study. If behavior was good the grade

would increase, and if behavior was poor it would cause the grade to decrease (Randall &

Engelhard, 2010). According to their study, only academic achievement was consistent

with a student's ability level; factors of effort and behavior were inconsistent with

students' academic ability level (Randall & Engelhard, 2010). It was unclear, when a

grade included factors of non-academic achievement, where the student stood in regards

to academic learning (Randall & Engelhard, 2010). When teachers merged academic and

non-academic factors into one grade, it caused an unclear picture of a student's level of

achievement (Cox, 2011; Brookhart, 1993; Tierney et al., 2011).

Validity and reliability of assessments. Besides the unclear or uncertain ideas

about the purpose of a grade, discrepancies in grading also occurred due to the lack of

valid and reliable classroom assessments (Cizek, 2009). Research showed that grades

became invalid or unreliable when assessments were misaligned or unaligned with

content standards, when scoring methods differed amongst teachers, and/or when

individual learners' needs were not addressed (Cizek, 2009).

Heflebower, Hoegh, and Warrick (2014) found that one cause for unreliable grades amongst classrooms was due to the lack of alignment between assessments and content standards. In their research, they found that teachers would often grade according to personal philosophies or individually created rubrics resulting in inconsistent results across classrooms (Heflebower et al., 2014). Unlike large-scale tests, the lack of resources, finances, and support made it difficult for teachers to ensure that their classroom assessments were valid and reliable (Cizek, 2009; Serafini, 2010).

Scoring methods could also cause unreliable results in assessments (Wiggins, 2014). In his research, Wiggins (2014) found that determining what qualifies as "mastery" of a specific skill or knowledge in a certain area varied amongst teachers. In addition, many classroom assessments were found to be subjective, despite a teacher's best efforts to be objective (Cizek, 2009). This was found to especially be an issue in literacy, where rubrics were often used (Wiggins, 2014). Creating rubrics and agreeing on common language could be difficult for content teams (Wiggins, 2014).

Another concern of grading was fairness for individual learners (Jung & Guskey, 2012). Grading struggling and exceptional learners could pose a challenge for teachers (Jung & Guskey, 2012). As discussed earlier, research showed that high levels of "effort" were usually favorable for students' grades despite actual levels of achievement (Brookhart, 1993; Randall & Engelhard, 2010); Tierney et al., 2011). Jung and Guskey (2012) shared that grading adaptations for struggling learners often resulted in higher report grades, but "were not necessarily accurate nor did they offer better information about a student's true academic performance" (p.10).

Another common grading practice current research considered to be unfair was the inclusion of formative assessment in a final grade (Jung & Guskey, 2012; Wormeli, 2016). In Tierney, Simon, and Charland's (2011) research, they found almost half of the teachers in the survey were including all assessment results when calculating grades. Tomlinson (2005), when discussing research in the field of grading, believed formative assessment was essential for feedback in the learning process, but including assessments from the early stages of the learning process caused a misunderstanding of the student's true level of achievement.

While the need for more commonality and consistency among assessments was noted, studies suggested that teachers also needed room for professional judgment (Serafini, 2010; Tierney et al., 2014). An understanding of the principles of best grading practices through professional development could help guide teachers in their decision making and judgment when determining grades (Tierney et al., 2014).

Lack of professional development. Many studies showed that teachers were unaware of the research in best practices of grading at the secondary level (Brimi, 2011; Cox, 2011; Tierney et al., 2011). According to studies, teachers had varying beliefs and methods for determining grades (Brookhart, 1993; Tierney et al.,2011; Randall & Engelhard, 2010). In Tierney, Simon, and Charland's (2011) study, the participants' explanations about how they came to a grade did not always follow a specific formula or principle, but instead used professional judgment and knowledge of their students and their circumstances to come to a decision. Teachers' attempts to be "fair" in their grading practices meant various things, causing discrepancy in grading (Tierney et al., 2011).

For grades to reflect student achievement accurately, teachers needed a clear understanding of principles and definitions of key concepts in best practices for grading (Tierney et al., 2011). Researchers suggested that schools build a knowledge base and philosophical foundation in best grading practices and receive support from professional development through their districts (Tierney et al., 2011). To create the optimal system for innovation, Delorenzo, Battino, Schreiber, & Carrio (2009) suggested schools attempt reform with a "tight-loose" approach, where "shared goals and expectations for students are tight, but there is significant room for instructional innovation and creativity" (p.63).

By providing in-service teachers with professional development on effective methods to assess their students as well as how to accurately communicate through their grades could decrease the amount of discrepancy in grading practices at the secondary level (Randall & Engelhard, 2010).

Best Practices in Assessment and Evaluation

Research showed a few key practices should be in place to ensure validity and reliability of grades when assessing and evaluating literacy at the secondary level.

Separate academic and non-academic factors. In order for grades to be considered accurate, O'Connor and Wormeli (2011) argued that nonacademic factors could not be combined with academic factors in a grade. Wormeli (2006) explained,

> A grade is supposed to provide an accurate, undiluted indicator of a student's mastery of learning standards. That's it. It is not meant to be a part of a reward, motivation, or behavioral contract system. If the grade is distorted by weaving in a student's personal behavior, character, and work habits, it cannot be used to

successfully provide feedback, document progress, or inform our instructional

decisions regarding that student - the three primary reasons we grade. (p.19)

In Heflebower, Hoegh, and Warrick's (2014) research, it was found that teachers

often misused grades to encourage desired behaviors, when in reality it caused students to

become indifferent. This included the use of a zero in the gradebook (Heflebower et al.,

2014; O'Connor & Wormeli, 2011; Wormeli, 2006). This "gotcha!" mentality, as

Wormeli (2006) referred to the recording of zeros for incomplete or late work, only

indicated a student's deficiencies, when the focus should have really been on helping

students learn.

Other behaviors, such as "effort," were often combined with academic factors to

create an overall grade, but Wormeli (2006) argued that, "there is no legally defensible,

objective way to measure a student's effort, integrity, and initiative" (p.22). According to

him, any teacher's assessment of these habits was completely subjective. Wormeli (2006)

supported the idea that teaching students personal accountability was important, but when

it came to grading, behaviors were to be recorded separately from academic achievement

(Wormeli, 2006).

In their study, Randall and Engelhard (2010) concluded that when grades were

assigned by academic achievement factors only, students' knowledge and skills were

more comparable, teachers could make accurate data-based instructional decisions, and

parents and students had a clearer understanding of where they stood on their

understanding of the course (Randall & Engelhard, 2010).

Align assessments with standards. In their research, Guskey and Bailey (2010) found that if assessment scores were based on performance standards, they created an accurate and informative piece of communication between students, parents, and teachers. Standards provided educators with an understanding of what teachers wanted students to learn and be able to do, and what evidence would verify that a student had learned the standard (Wormeli, 2018; Heflebower et al., 2014). In addition, Guskey and Bailey (2010) pointed out that standards were not new, and while specific standards were likely to change as time passes, the process of teaching and learning of standards would not.

Because of this, Guskey and Bailey (2010) recommended that teachers be given time to identify priority standards for their content area with a group of colleagues. Proficiency scales could then be developed amongst common content areas to identify levels of mastery for each standard (Heflebower et al., 2014). Furthermore, in order to decrease the subjective nature of grading, O'Connor and Wormeli (2011) recommended that teachers frequently collaborate to assess student work.

Assessments should accurately measure mastery. In Marzano's (2000) research, it was discovered that the suitability of an assessment depended on the type of information the teacher was seeking to learn about the student. In a study of seven types of assessments, essay, oral reports, performance tasks, and self-assessment were found to be the most suitable when determining various aspects of grading as seen in Figure 1 (Marzano, 2000). Forced-choice, short written response, and teacher observation were found to be less suitable when it came to various aspects of grading (Marzano, 2000).

Figure 1. Seven Types of Assessments and Their Level of Suitability for Aspects of Grading based on Marzano (2000)

Types of Assessment	Informational Topics	Process Topics	Thinking & Reasoning	Communication	Non-achievement factors
Forced Choice	M	L	M	L	L
Essay	H	M	H	H	L
Short Written Response	H	L	M	L	L
Oral Reports	H	M	H	H	L
Performance Tasks	H	H	H	H	M
Teacher Observation	M	H	L	L	H
Student Self-Assessment	H	H	H	H	H

Based on Marzano (2000)

KEY
H = High suitability
M = Medium suitability
L = Low suitability

When it came to scoring assessments, Marzano (2000) argued that using a rubric approach was more likely to be accurate than using a point or percentage-based system. A rubric score was most successful in representing performance in specific topics within an assessment (Guskey & Bailey, 2012; Marzano, 2000; Wormeli, 2018).

Report progress on standards. Instead of using a traditional, percentage-based grading system, research suggested using a criteria or topics-based system (Guskey & Bailey, 2012; Marzano, 2000; Wormeli, 2018). If possible, the idea of the "omnibus" grade, as Marzano and Heflebower (2011) described the single letter grade that summarized all evidence of a student's learning, should be eliminated. Instead, they suggested replacing it with specific measurement topics (Marzano & Heflebower, 2011). With the focus on specific measurement topics, feedback was more useful and meaningful (Marzano & Heflebower, 2011; O'Connor & Wormeli, 2011). "Averaging muddies the grading waters, particularly with zeroes on the 100-point scale" (O'Connor

& Wormeli, 2011). Providing separate scores for measurement topics created higher accuracy and effectiveness in grading (O'Connor & Wormeli, 2011).

  Design assessments that are fair for all learners. Wormeli (2018) indicated that teachers who collaborated were open to learn more about the ways students learned best and were able to differentiate their instruction. Teachers who differentiated their instruction spent a great deal of time designing pre-assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments to provide feedback to students and inform their instruction (Wormeli, 2018). This feedback then led to higher academic achievement (Wormeli, 2018).

  Wormeli (2018) concluded that in order for differentiation to truly be in place, teachers had to be aware of how to differentiate instruction and assessment for learners. Jung and Guskey (2012) suggested that a high-quality grading system must be in place for *all* learners before schools could implement fair grading practices for exceptional and struggling learners. They developed an Inclusive Grading Model (see Figure 2) that could help teachers determine if an adaptation to a standard was needed, what kind of adaptation was needed, and how to communicate the meaning of the grade to students and parents.

Figure 2. Inclusive Grading Model based on Jung & Guskey's model (2012)

For each reporting standard ask...

Is this an appropriate expectation without adaptations?

| **No.** The student will need adaptations in this area. | **Yes.** The student can achieve this standard without supports or adaptations. | = | **No change in grading** required. |

| **What type of** adaptation is needed? | → | **Accommodation.** The required adaptations do not alter the standard.. | = | **No change in grading** required. |

Modification. The required changes fundamentally change the standard.

| **Determine the modified** expectation. Change the standard to include appropriate skills and criteria for this student. | → | **Grade based on modified** expectation. Use the same grading "ruler" as for the rest of the class, but on the appropriate standard.. | → | **Communicate the meaning of** grades. Add a notation to the report card and the transcript, and connect to a progress report. |

Formative assessments should be used to provide feedback. When it came to assessment purposes, researchers agreed that formative assessments were used differently than summative assessments (Marzano, 2000; O'Connor & Wormeli, 2011). O'Connor and Wormeli (2011) argued that the purpose of formative assessments was to inform students about their progress in learning and should not be used as a part of the evaluation process. Marzano (2000) stated that a grade should reflect a student's true score; "The true score is what the student "should have" received and represents the students' true understanding or skill" (p.71). If a student's grade was averaged, then the score did not truly represent a student's current and complete understanding (Marzano, 2000).

When thinking about formative assessment in today's classroom, Marshall (2016) found that technology could and should play a role. "Apps, when purposefully

implemented based on student needs, can facilitate student learning in multiple ways"
(Marshall, 2016, p.66). The Google Chrome add-on Doctupus and its extension Goobric
were tools identified by Marshall (2016) as apps that English Language Arts teachers
could use to differentiate instruction, monitor student progress, and manage feedback for
student work. The Goobric extension allowed teachers to write or record audio feedback,
used rubrics to assess student work (formative or summative), and tracked student
progress through an attached spreadsheet (Marshall, 2016).

   Provide opportunities for growth. When the purpose of assessment was used to
provide feedback, students had the opportunity to continue learning through revision and
reassessment (O'Connor & Wormeli, 2011). After students received feedback on
assessments, Marzano and Heflebower (2011) suggested that students be given the
opportunity to continually update their scores on specific measurement topics, even
during different grading periods. This was one of the most "transformational"
recommendations suggested by Marzano and Heflebower (2011). Heflebower, Hoegh,
and Warrick (2014) argued that "the goal of quality assessment is to obtain information
from a student about his or her journey toward mastery of prioritized standards" (p.51).
Mastery might take longer for some students; reassessments allowed students to continue
learning, even if they failed to attain mastery on an initial assessment (Heflebower et al.,
2014). However, Heflebower, Hoegh, and Warrick (2014) carefully followed this
statement by adding that before having an opportunity to demonstrate mastery on a
reassessment, students should be required to show evidence of new learning (Heflebower
et al., 2014).

Grades should represent most recent and most consistent learning. When

determining grades, research recommended that teachers should consider student's most

current and consistent evidence of learning (Heflebower et al., 2014; Marzano, 2000;

Marzano & Heflebower, 2011). Measurement error in determining a final score due to

student fatigue, confusion, luck in guessing, or teacher fatigue caused deflation or

inflation to a student's "true" score (Marzano, 2000). This often led teachers to average a

score, but averaging a student's score was also a major misinterpretation of a student's

"true" score (Marzano, 2000). Averaging did not take into account the higher level of

learning a student was likely to demonstrate over their journey of learning on a specific

skill or understanding (Marzano, 2000).

Instead, Marzano (2000) suggested that teachers should examine trends in the

progression of the scores on a topic to determine a final score (Marzano, 2000).

Heflebower, Hoegh, and Warrick (2014) suggested giving more weight to recent

information and if necessary, have a conversation with the student to shed light on his or

her learning process.

Policies should be clearly communicated to all stakeholders. To avoid

incoherent or inconsistent practices amongst classrooms, O'Connor and Wormeli (2011)

suggested that schools have published, public policies that all teachers were expected to

follow. To avoid subjectivity in grading, they also recommended that teachers have

frequent opportunities to collaboratively assess student work in order to develop a

common understanding of performance standards. Finally, when it came to students and

parents, it was also recommended that learning expectations should be clearly outlined in

language that was free of educational jargon (Guskey & Bailey, 2010).

Provide professional development for teachers on best practice. In order to support district policies and procedures in grading, Tierney, Simon, and Charland (2011) concluded from their study that teachers must have an understanding of the underlying philosophies of best practices in assessment and evaluation. Even though their study was conducted in a standards-based grading educational system, there were several teachers in their study that misinterpreted or did not understand the philosophies behind the system (Tierney et al., 2011). In their conclusion they stated, "Teachers would benefit from, and appreciate, more guidance in their effort to produce fair grades" (Tierney et al., 2011, p. 224).

For many, implementing the ideas outlined above required a considerable change in their current system of practices and beliefs of assessment and evaluation. Heflebower, Hoegh, and Warrick (2014) cautioned that this change "must be handled strategically and collaboratively within a school district" (p.87). Jung and Guskey (2012) added that it was important that administration was knowledgeable on the research behind effective grading and reporting practices, got involved in the change process with teachers, and continued to offer support for implementation.

Implementing Standards-based Grading

Research showed that a standards-based grading system eliminated discrepancies in grading at the secondary level (Guskey & Bailey, 2010; Heflebower et al., 2014; Jung & Guskey, 2012, Marzano, 2000; Wormeli, 2018). Implementing a standards-based grading and reporting system in a school district required significant changes to current systems, beliefs, and practices in the district (Heflebower et al., 2014).

When outlining a plan for the implementation of best practices in assessment and evaluation of English Language Arts at the secondary level through a standards-based grading and reporting system, several components were recommended. To ensure successful implementation, it was suggested that teachers become familiar with content-level standards, had time to set goals and policies, created common assessments, and had resources to overcome obstacles (Heflebower et al., 2014).

Prioritizing standards. The first step in implementation was for standards to be prioritized by teacher teams at the school or district level (Heflebower et al., 2014). Prioritized standards included knowledge and skills that lasted beyond a single class, covered many domains of learning, and were important for future courses (Heflebower et al., 2014). Once teams had prioritized standards, they could begin creating proficiency scales (Heflebower et al., 2014). Proficiency scales described the progression of a student's learning of a topic over time (Heflebower et al., 2014).

After teacher teams prioritized standards, they could then begin developing proficiency scales. A proficiency scale articulated the learning progression of a student for each prioritized standard (Heflebower et al., 2014). Finally, teachers could begin aligning resources, assignments, and assessments to prioritized standards and proficiency scales (Heflebower et al., 2014).

Creating common assessments. After teacher teams had prioritized standards and developed proficiency scales, common assessments could be developed. "Comprehensive assessment of student achievement involves multiple sources of evidence that are fair, valid, and reliable" (Heflebower et al., 2014, p.37). It was recommended that teachers use various types of assessments to collect information about students' understanding of

standards. It was also important to make sure that assessments were valid, free from bias, and reflected appropriate levels of thinking (Heflebower et al., 2014). In addition, it was suggested that teachers allow multiple opportunities for students to reach success by allowing students to redo or retake assessments (Heflebower et al., 2014; O'Connor & Wormeli, 2011).

Communicating clearly. The shift from traditional grading practices to standards-based grading required some educators, students, and parents to reframe their existing beliefs and expectations about grades (Heflebower et al., 2014). Jung and Guskey (2012) found that change could only happen if it started at the classroom level. In order for change to occur, educators also needed to understand and agree on the philosophies behind standards-based grading when assessing and evaluating students (Heflebower et al., 2014).

When communicating student learning progress with students and parents, Guskey and Bailey (2010) found that it was important for educators to understand and agree on the purpose of the report card. Students' growth in learning had to be communicated in a clear and meaningful way (Guskey & Bailey, 2010; Heflebower et al., 2014). It was highly recommended that reporting standards should be written in student-friendly language on report cards and levels of performance should be defined (Guskey & Bailey, 2010).

Overcoming obstacles. In order to prevent wasting time and resources, Heflebower, Hoegh, and Warrick (2014) recommended that educational leaders develop a timeline for implementing standards-based grading. They suggested a four year implementation plan for successful implementation. Within this timeline, districts built

buy-in with staff, students, and community members; prioritized standards, proficiency

scales, and assessments; developed policies and procedures; developed report cards;

developed professional development for staff; and continued to evaluate the effectiveness

of implementation (Heflebower et al., 2014).

Methodology

This section of the paper outlines the process of the collection of literature, the

analysis of the literature, and the key findings. The key findings were utilized for the

development of a presentation for in-service English Language Arts teachers on the

discrepancies in grading, the philosophies, guidelines, and resources for best practices in

assessment and evaluation, and resources for implementing best practices in the

classroom.

Finding Appropriate Literature

Before designing the presentation, the latest research was collected on the topic of

best practices in assessment and evaluation of literacy at the secondary level. Several

search engines were used to find up to date research articles related to this topic. Three

main search engines including Google Scholar, Gale, and EBSCO were used to find

scholarly articles on the topic.

First, studies on the unreliable and invalid practices in grading and assessment

were collected. This collection of literature was intended to answer the first research

question of the study: What are the causes for discrepancies in grading practices in

literacy at the secondary level? The advanced search option was used for each database to

narrow down relevant research. Keywords like 'validity', 'reliability', 'grading',

'assessment', and 'evaluation' helped to narrow down the search. From the results,

articles were selected for preview if they were current, empirical, peer-reviewed, related to literacy, and related to the secondary level. A few more articles were discovered through the reference sections within the selected research. This search process was repeated several times until a variety of authors and studies that were current, empirical, and related to the topic of discrepancies in grading and assessment practices were found (Brimi, 2011; Cizek, 2009; Randall & Engelhard, 2010; Tierney et al., 2011). Six articles were cross-analyzed and coded by key words to find themes on the common reasons for discrepancies in grading practices.

After reading through the research on the common themes for discrepancies in grading practices in literacy at the secondary level, a search for best practices in assessment and evaluation of literacy at the secondary level began. The intention of this search was to find literature to answer the second research question: What are the key findings on best practices in assessment and evaluation of literacy at the secondary level? Using the same process, the three same search engines were used. Keywords from the findings in the discussion and conclusion of the studies on discrepancies in grading were used for this part of the search process including 'academic vs. non-academic', 'standards-based grading', 'formative assessment', and 'feedback'.

Based on the articles found, citations were sifted through for more related published works, specifically ones for literacy and the secondary level. Again, a variety of authors and empirical studies from peer-reviewed journals were selected. Several research-based works on the topic of best practices in assessment and evaluation were found (Guskey & Bailey, 2010; Heflebower et al., 2014; Jung & Guskey, 2012; Marzano,

2011; Wormeli, 2018). Eight published works of literature were cross-analyzed for common themes in best practices in assessment and evaluation.

Data Analysis

There were four recurring themes in the six studies related to causes for discrepancies in teachers' grading practices (see Table 1 and Table 2). The first recurring theme amongst the studies was the inclusion of 'effort' and/or other behavior characteristics with achievement. The second recurring theme was unclear, nonexistent, OR unsupported philosophies and policies for grading in the district. The third recurring theme was lack of training and/or support from administration. The final and fourth recurring theme was inconsistent, invalid, and/or unreliable assessment practices.

Table 1	
The Recurring Themes Found on Discrepancies in Grading Practices	
Themes	Theme Topics
Theme 1	Inclusion of effort and other behavior characteristics with achievement.
Theme 2	Grading philosophies and policies are unclear, do not exist, OR are not supported.
Theme 3	Lack of training or support from administration.
Theme 4	Inconsistent, invalid, OR unreliable assessment practices.

Table 2

The Frequency of Recurring Themes Within Each Study

Study	Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4
Brookhart (1993)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Brimi (2011)		✓	✓	✓
Cizek (2009)				✓
Cox (2011)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Randall & Engelhard (2010)	✓	✓	✓	
Tierney, Simon, & Charland (2011)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Frequency	67%	83%	83%	100%

When analyzing the works of literature on best practices in assessment and evaluation, ten recurring themes were present. First, academic and non-academic achievement should be recorded and reported separately (Guskey & Bailey, 2012; Heflebower et al., 2014; Jung & Guskey, 2012, Marzano, 2000, O'Connor & Wormeli, 2011, Wormeli, 2006; Wormeli, 2018). Assessments should be aligned with content standards and classroom instruction (Guskey & Bailey, 2012; Heflebower et al., 2014; Jung & Guskey, 2012; Marzano, 2000; Marzano & Heflebower, 2011; O'Connor & Wormeli, 2011; Wormeli, 2018). Assessments should be accurate when measuring a student's level of mastery (Heflebower et al., 2014; Jung & Guskey, 2012; Marzano, 2000; Marzano & Heflebower, 2011;Wormeli, 2018). Reports on progress should be based on standards and learning objectives rather than point-based or percentage-based scores (Guskey & Bailey, 2012; Heflebower et al., 2014; Jung & Guskey, 2012; Marzano, 2000; Marzano & Heflebower, 2011; O'Connor & Wormeli, 2011; Wormeli, 2006; Wormeli, 2018). Assessments should be differentiated based on students'

individual learning needs (Guskey & Bailey, 2012; Heflebower et al., 2014; Jung & Guskey, 2012; Marzano & Heflebower, 2011; Wormeli, 2006; Wormeli, 2018). Formative assessments should be used for for feedback purposes (Marzano & Heflebower, 2011; Wormeli, 2006; Wormeli, 2018). Teachers should provide opportunities for retakes so students can show growth (Heflebower et al., 2014; Marzano & Heflebower, 2011; O'Connor & Wormeli, 2011; Wormeli, 2006; Wormeli, 2018). Grades should represent a student's most recent and most consistent level of learning (Heflebower et al., 2014; Marzano, 2000; Marzano & Heflebower, 2011). Policies for grading practices should be clearly communicated with all stakeholders (Guskey & Bailey, 2012; Heflebower et al., 2014; Jung & Guskey, 2012; O'Connor & Wormeli, 2011). Finally, professional development should take place in districts in order to implement best practices in assessment and evaluation with fidelity (Guskey & Bailey, 2012; Heflebower et al., 2014; Jung & Guskey, 2012).

Table 3

The Recurring Themes Found on Best Practices in Assessment and Evaluation

Themes	Theme Topics
Theme 1	Separate academic and non-academic factors.
Theme 2	Align assessments with learning objectives.
Theme 3	Assessments should accurately measure level of mastery.
Theme 4	Report progress on standards/learning objectives rather than point-based/percentage-based scores.
Theme 5	Differentiate assessments based on learning needs.
Theme 6	Formative assessments should be used to provide feedback about progress.
Theme 7	Opportunities for growth should be provided (retakes).
Theme 8	A grade should represent most recent and consistent progress in learning.
Theme 9	Policies for assessment and evaluation should be clearly communicated to all stakeholders.
Theme 10	Provide professional development for teachers on best practice.

Table 4

The Frequency of Recurring Themes Across the Literature

Study	Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4	Theme 5	Theme 6	Theme 7	Theme 8	Theme 9	Theme 10
Guskey & Bailey (2010)	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓	✓
Heflebower, Hoegh, & Warrick (2014)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Jung & Guskey (2012)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
Marzano (2000)	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		
Marzano & Heflebower (2011)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
O'Connor & Wormeli (2011)	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	
Wormeli (2006)	✓			✓	✓		✓			
Wormeli (2018)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Frequency	88%	88%	63%	100%	75%	38%	63%	38%	50%	38%

Design of the Presentation

  The design of this presentation is based on Heflebower, Hoegh, and Warrick's (2014) timeline for implementing standards-based grading in the classroom. Before discussing steps for implementation, audience members should have an understanding of *why* the change in assessment and evaluation is needed. Research on the discrepancies found in grading practices in English Language Arts classrooms at the secondary level will be shared (Brimi, 2011; Brookhart, 1993; Cox, 2011; Randall & Engelhard, 2010; Tierney et al., 2011).

  Next, research in best practices in assessment and evaluation will be shared (Guskey & Bailey, 2010; Heflebower et al., 2014; Jung & Guskey, 2012; Marzano, 2011; Wormeli, 2018). The philosophy behind standards-based grading practices will be discussed along with studies showing the positive changes occurring with the switch from traditional-based grading to standards-based grading (Guskey & Bailey, 2010; Heflebower et al., 2014; Jung & Guskey, 2012; Marzano, 2011; Wormeli, 2018).

  Finally, some resources for making feedback easier with digital technology will be shared. The online feedback tool, Google Chrome add-on Doctopus and its extension Goobric make differentiated instruction more manageable and accessible for English Language Arts teachers (Marshall, 2016).

  The presentation will also include a handout over the ten best practices in assessment and evaluation along with a brief summary of how to begin implementation of standards-based learning practices into a school district (Guskey & Bailey, 2010; Heflebower et al., 2014; Jung & Guskey, 2012; Marzano, 2011; Wormeli, 2018).

Results

This presentation will be shared with in-service English Language Arts teachers at

the *2019 Minnesota Council of Teachers of English Conference: Reaching and Teaching*

ALL Students on May 2nd and 3rd and the *2019 Iowa Reading Association and Iowa*

Association of School Librarians Conference: Reading Rockstars on June 25th and 26th.

See appendix D for more information about the conferences. The presentation is based on

research found in the review of the literature. The first part of the presentation will focus

on research on the discrepancies in traditional grading practices. The second part of the

presentation will focus on what research suggests is best practice in assessment and

evaluation of literacy at the secondary level. Then, resources on how to make assessment

easier through digital technology will be modeled for teachers. Finally, audience

members will walk away with a handout of resources on how to begin implementing

elements of standards-based learning in their classrooms.

Discrepancies in Grading

The presentation will begin by discussing the studies on teachers' various beliefs

on what a grade should convey (Cox, 2011). It will follow with research studies on the

confusion caused by the combination of academic and non-academic factors in grades

(Brookhart, 1993; Erickson, 2011; Randall & Engelhard, 2010; Tierney et al., 2011). The

misalignment of assessments with content, the inclusion of formative and summative

assessment in one grade, inconsistent scoring methods, and the debate of what's fair for

all learners in assessments will also be discussed (Cizek, 2009; Heflebower et al., 2014;

Jung & Guskey, 2012; Wiggins, 2014). Finally, the lack of professional development will

be discussed, transitioning into the next part of the presentation.

Best Practices in Assessment and Evaluation

In the second part of the presentation, audience members will learn about standards-based philosophies, guidelines, and resources (Guskey & Bailey, 2010; Heflebower et al., 2014; Jung & Guskey, 2012; Marzano, 2011; Wormeli, 2018). This part of the presentation will focus on solutions that will address the issues in assessment and evaluation of literacy at the secondary level presented in the first part of the presentation. Best practices will include separating academic and non-academic factors in a grade, aligning assessments with standards, using accurate assessments that measure level of mastery, reporting progress on standards, designing assessments for feedback, providing opportunities for growth, reporting most recent and consistent learning, clearly communicating policies, and seeking support from administration (Guskey & Bailey, 2010; Heflebower et al., 2014; Jung & Guskey, 2012; Marzano, 2011; Wormeli, 2018). See appendix A for the presentation slides.

Resources

The presentation will include a brief demonstration of how to use Goobric, a Google Chrome extension through the add-on Doctopus that makes assessment and feedback easier for teachers to provide to students (Marshall, 2016). These resources are useful for formative assessment and follow Wormeli's (2018) beliefs in providing timely and productive feedback *for* learning. Several other resources from the Osage Community Schools ELA Department will be shared in order to provide authentic evidence of assessment practices that are being used in the classroom.

Finally, audience members will be provided a handout to evaluate their current stance in best practices and allow them to take notes during the presentation. Part of the

handout will include a brief summary on how to begin implementation of stadards-based

grading in a school system (Guskey & Bailey, 2010; Heflebower et al., 2014; Jung &

Guskey, 2012; Marzano, 2011; Wormeli, 2018). See appendix B for the handout.

Feedback

For feedback purposes, audiences will be asked to complete a survey at the end of

the presentation. The purpose of the survey will be to provide the presenter with feedback

on how useful the information shared was for classroom instruction, any comments, and

questions. The survey will include a scale that will allow the audience members to rate

the presentation from 0 to 5 on how useful the presentation was to them. It will also ask

audience members to identify something new they learned, any comments they have, and

any follow up questions that did not get addressed. See appendix C for the survey.

Discussion

Over the past few years of teaching, I have found it frustrating to create an

accurate picture of what my students know in literacy at the middle school level. This

personal frustration has led me to a passionate pursuit for research in best practice in

assessment and evaluation in literacy at the secondary level.

Through this research I have found that unreliable assessment practices can have a

detrimental impact on students' learning (Brimi, 2011; Cizek, 2009; Tierney et al., 2011;

Wiggins, 2004). The following practices should be examined and if possible, eliminated

from the classroom: combining academic factors with non-academic factors, inconsistent

scoring, misalignment of assessment with content, and lack of accommodations and

modifications for individual learners (Brookhart, 1993; Cizek, 2009; Cox, 2011;

Erickson, 2011; Heflebower et al., 2014; Jung & Guskey, 2012; Randall & Engelhard, 2010; Tierney et al., 2011; Wiggins, 2014).

These practices can be avoided by following the philosophies, guidelines, and resources behind standards-based grading (Guskey & Bailey, 2010; Heflebower et al., 2014; Jung & Guskey, 2012; Marzano, 2011; Wormeli, 2018). Academic and non-academic factors should be separated when assessing literacy (Marzano, 2011; Wormeli, 2018). Literacy assessments should be aligned with content and standards (Guskey & Bailey, 2010). Teachers should collaborate to create common assessments and to avoid inconsistent scores (Heflebower et al., 2014). Teachers should also practice adding accommodations and modifications to assessments to make assessment fair for all learners (Jung & Guskey, 2012; Wormeli, 2018).

When designing this presentation, it was important to begin with why standards-based grading practices should be implemented. Understanding why change is needed is essential for audience members to make any changes to their current grading practices (Jung & Guskey, 2012; Heflebower et al., 2014).

To make this presentation useful for audience members, I found it essential to provide actual demonstrations of useful tools they can immediately begin using in their classrooms. This way, audience members walk away with a plan and tools to make some changes in assessment practices.

Research suggests that in-service teachers lack the appropriate amount of professional development in best practices in assessment and evaluation. The purpose of this presentation is to inform practicing literacy teachers at the secondary level about best practices in assessment and evaluation of literacy and share resources that will help them

begin implementing these practices in their classrooms. My hopes are that this presentation will help other practicing literacy teachers begin to make positive changes to their current grading philosophies and practices. When these practices are put into place, teachers, students, and parents will have a more accurate and reliable understanding of students' learning in literacy.

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Appendix A

Conference Presentation

Fair and Manageable

A Presentation on 10 Best Practices in Assessment and Evaluation in Literacy for the Secondary Level and Tools to Help Make These Practices Manageable for Teachers

1

Call me... MOM Mrs. Johnson

2

Can you still have a life outside of the classroom AND implement best practices in assessment and evaluation in literacy ... for ALL learners?

Yes! You can.

(if you beg, borrow, and steal like all good teachers)

When it comes to assessment and evaluation, we want to do what's **fair** for all learners. We also need tips and tools to make assessment and evaluation **manageable**.

5

How would you assess & evaluate these students?

Link

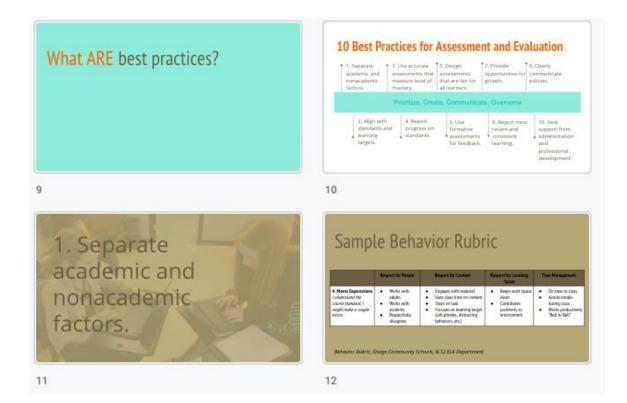Discuss the scenarios with the person next to you.

6

A grade is supposed to provide an accurate, undiluted indicator of a student's mastery of learning standards. That's it.
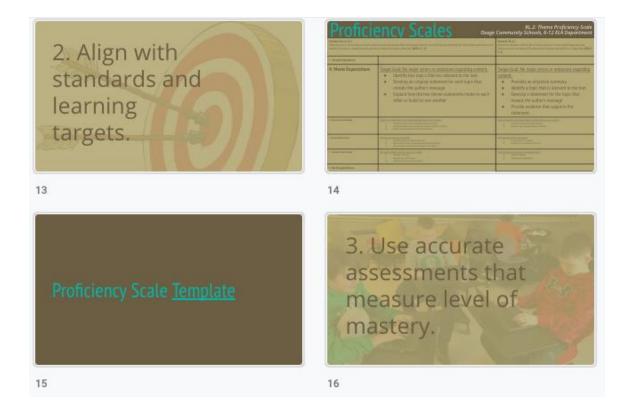- Rick Wormeli (2006)

7

Does a B in my class hold the same meaning in her class?
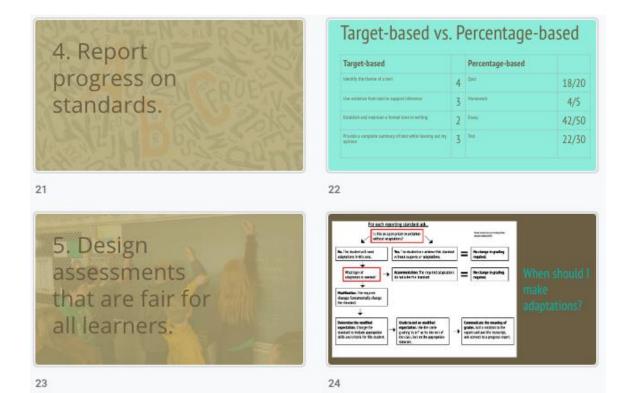
Inclusion of effort with achievement.

Unclear grading philosophies/policies.

Lack of training/support.
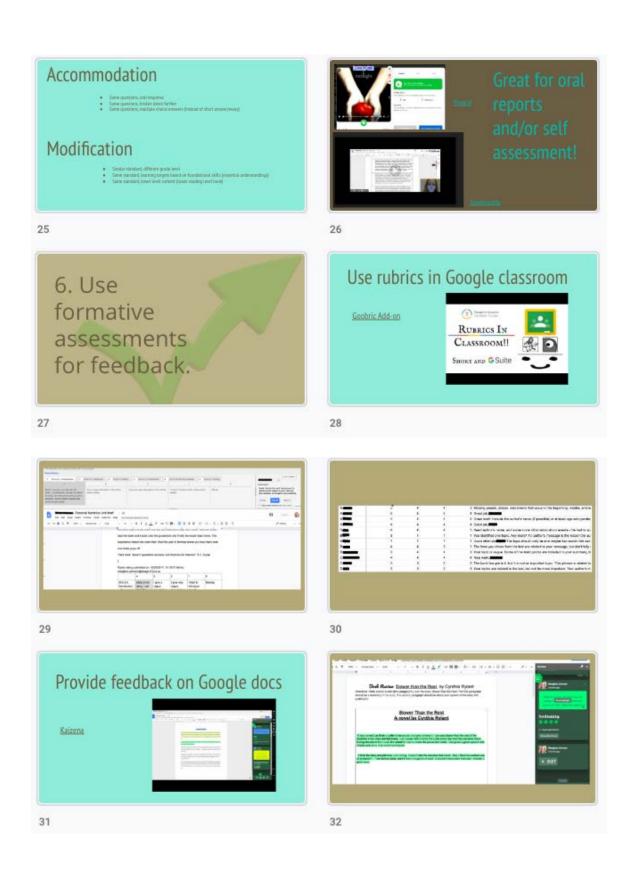
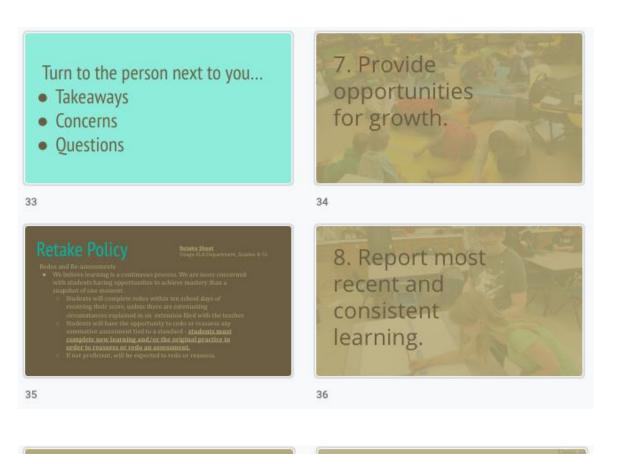Inconsistent, invalid, or unreliable practices.

8

What ARE best practices?

9

10 Best Practices for Assessment and Evaluation

1. Separate academic and nonacademic factors.	3. Use accurate assessments that measure level of mastery.	5. Design assessments that are fair for all learners.	7. Provide opportunities for growth.	9. Clearly communicate policies.

Prioritize, Create, Communicate, Overcome

2. Align with standards and learning targets.	4. Report progress on standards.	6. Use formative assessments for feedback.	8. Report most recent and consistent learning.	10. Seek support from administration and professional development.

10

1. Separate academic and nonacademic factors.

11

Sample Behavior Rubric

12

2. Align with standards and learning targets.

13

Proficiency Scales

14

Proficiency Scale Template

15

3. Use accurate assessments that measure level of mastery.

16

17

18

19

20

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22

23

24

Accommodation
- Same questions, oral response
- Same questions, broken down further
- Same questions, multiple choice answers (instead of short answer/essay)

Modification
- Similar standard, different grade level
- Same standard, learning targets based on foundational skills (essential understanding)
- Same standard, lower level content (lower reading level/text)

25

Great for oral reports and/or self assessment!

26

6. Use formative assessments for feedback.

27

Use rubrics in Google classroom

Goobric Add-on

RUBRICS IN CLASSROOM!!
SHORT AND G Suite

28

29

30

Provide feedback on Google docs

Kaizena

31

32

Turn to the person next to you...
- Takeaways
- Concerns
- Questions

33

7. Provide opportunities for growth.

34

Retake Policy

Redos and Re-assessments
- We believe learning is a continuous process. We are more concerned with students having opportunities to achieve mastery than a snapshot of one moment.
  - Students will complete redos within ten school days of receiving their score, unless there are extenuating circumstances explained in an extension filed with the teacher.
  - Students will have the opportunity to redo or reassess any summative assessment tied to a standard - students must complete new learning and/or the original practice in order to reassess or redo an assessment.
  - If not proficient, will be expected to redo or reassess.

35

8. Report most recent and consistent learning.

36

Figurative Language Assessment

37

9. Clearly communicate policies.

38

Parent Letter
- Standards-based vs. Traditional-based
- Grading Scale
- Homework Policy
- Reassessment Policy
- Resources
- Contact Information

39

10. Seek support from administration and professional development.

40

41

42

Appendix B

Handout for Presentation

10 Best Practices in Assessment and Evaluation

Presented by Meaghan Johnson, Osage Community Schools, meaghan.johnson@osage.k12.ia.us

Practice 10 Best Practices in Assessment and Evaluation of Literacy at the Secondary Level	Self-Assessment 4 - Meeting Expectations 3 - Developing Understanding 2 - Limited Understanding 1 - Attempt at Understanding 0 - No Attempt	Notes Record thoughts and questions about today's presentation here.
1. Separate academic and nonacademic factors.		
2. Align with standards and learning targets.		
3. Use accurate assessments that measure level of mastery.		
4. Report progress on standards.		
5. Design assessments that are fair for all learners.		
6. Use formative assessments for feedback.		
7. Provide opportunities for growth.		
8. Report most recent and consistent learning.		
9. Clearly communicate policies.		
10. Seek support from administration and professional development.		

Begin!

Prioritize
Standards should be prioritized by teacher teams at the school or district level. Once teams have prioritized standards, they can begin creating proficiency scales. Proficiency scales describe the progression of a student's learning of a topic over time. Finally, teachers should begin aligning resources, assignments, and assessments to prioritized standards and proficiency scales (Heflebower, Hoegh, & Warrick, 2014).

Create
"Comprehensive assessment of student achievement involves multiple sources of evidence that are fair, valid, and reliable" (Heflebower, Hoegh, & Warrick, 2014, p.37). Teachers should use various types of assessments to collect information about students' understanding of standards. It is also important to make sure that assessments are valid, free from bias, and reflect appropriate levels of thinking (Heflebower, Hoegh, & Warrick, 2014). Teachers should also allow multiple opportunities for students to reach success by allowing students to redo or retake assessments (Heflebower et al., 2014; O'Connor & Wormeli, 2011). Teachers who collaborate together to create common assessments, discuss student data, and design instruction will see higher levels of student success (Wormeli, 2018).

Communicate
The shift from traditional grading practices to standards-based grading requires some educators, students, and parents to reframe their existing beliefs and expectations about grades (Heflebower, Hoegh, & Warrick, 2014). Change will only happen if it starts at the classroom level (Jung & Guskey, 2012). Educators need to understand and agree on the philosophies behind standards-based grading when assessing and evaluating students (Heflebower, Hoegh, & Warrick, 2014). When communicating student learning progress with students and parents, it is important for educators to understand and agree on the purpose of the report card (Guskey & Bailey, 2010). Students' growth in learning should be communicated in a clear and meaningful way (Guskey & Bailey, 2010; Heflebower, Hoegh, & Warrick, 2014).

Overcome
In order to prevent wasting time and resources, educational leaders should develop a timeline for implementing standards-based grading. Heflebower, Hoegh, and Warrick (2014) recommend a four year implementation plan. Within this timeline, districts should begin to build buy-in with staff, students, and community members; prioritize standards, proficiency scales, and assessments; develop policies and procedures; develop report cards; develop professional development for staff; and continue to evaluate the effectiveness of implementation (Heflebower, Hoegh, & Warrick, 2014).

Resources:
https://qrgo.page.link/PHLZ

Appendix C

Survey of Presentation

Feedback on "Fair and Manageable" Presentation

Thank you for coming to this short presentation on "10 Best Practices in Assessment and Evaluation in Literacy for the Secondary Level and Tools to Help Make These Practices Manageable for Teachers". I'd appreciate your feedback.

** Responses are anonymous.

* Required

1. **How satisfied were you with the presentation?** *
   Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not very	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Very much

2. **How relevant and helpful do you think this information was for your instruction?** *
   Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not very	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Very much

3. **What were your key take aways from this event?**

   _____

4. **Any additional comments regarding today's session?**

   _____

5. **Any questions for the presenter?**

   _____

6. **Name & Contact Information (optional)**

   _____

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Appendix D

Conference Information

Spring Conference

MCTE's Spring Conference

May 2-3, 2019
Cragun's Resort
Brainerd, MN

Reaching and Teaching *ALL* Students

featuring **Dr. Robert Petrone**, **Ed Bok Lee**, and **Alexei Moon Casselle**

Click HERE to visit the Registration Page!

TENTATIVE CONFERENCE SCHEDULE
Thursday, May 2
*8:00 – **Registration & Breakfast***
*8:30 – **Welcome & Intros***
*8:45 – **Dr. Robert Petrone:*** **Rethinking the "Adolescent" in Adolescent Literacy**
*10:15 – **Breakout Session #1***
*11:25 – **Breakout Session #2***
*12:15 – **Lunch & Speaker, Ed Bok Lee:*** **Mitochondrial Night & Whorled**
*2:00 – **Breakout Session #3***
*3:45 – **Informal MCTE Board Meeting***
*5:15 – **Dinner on Your Own***
*8:00 – **MCTE Spelling Bee + Karaoke***
Friday, May 3
*6:45 – **1st Annual MCTE Walk/Run 5k***
*8:00 – **Registration & Breakfast***
*8:30 – **Welcome & Introductions***
*8:40 – **Dr. Robert Petrone:*** **Popular Culture and Adolescents**
*10:15 – **Breakout Session #4***
*11:25 – **Breakout Session #5***
*12:30 – **Lunch & Speaker, Alexei Casselle:*** **Kill the Vultures, Mixed Blood Majority, & Roma di Luna**
*2:00 – **Awards & Farewells***

MCTE Proposal Update

Daryl Parks <Daryl.Parks@metrostate.edu>   Mon, Feb 11, 3:16 PM
to me

Meaghan,

Thank you for submitting a proposal for the Minnesota Council of Teachers of English Conference to be held May 2-3, 2019 at Cragun's Resort in Brainerd, MN. We were pleased to receive so many workshop proposals around our topic of *Reaching and Teaching ALL Students*. The committee making the decisions had its hands full.

Congratulations! We are pleased to invite you to present at the conference!

1) 1. All presenters (and attendees) must be fully registered for the conference. Registration is HERE (As a non-profit, volunteer organization committed to providing excellent professional development for ELA teachers, we thank you for sharing your expertise with all. We do not offer reduced registration fees for presenters.)

2) 2. As the schedule is being finalized, we will honor any day/time restraints that you included in your original proposal. You are currently scheduled for Thursday, Session II.

3) 3. Cragun's Resort is providing reduced lodging for our conference. Reservations can be madeHERE:

4) 4. We would like to make your presentation materials available to attendees in advance. Please send your handouts, slides, and other documents to mcteinfo@gmail.com **before April 26.**

We look forward to learning from you! Please confirm your participation by responding to this note.☺ (I had to look to see how far Osage was from Brainerd. I do hope you'll make the drive.)

On behalf of the MCTE Board of Directors,

Daryl Parks, PhD

 Daryl Parks
President-elect, MCTE
Associate Professor of English Education, Metropolitan State University

Daryl Parks, PhD
Associate Professor
St. John's Hall, 308b
Metropolitan State University
St. Paul, MN 55125
651.793.1465
(pronoun: he)

Get ready to ROCK your
READING INSTRUCTION
at the joint
literacy conference of the
Iowa Reading Association
and the
Iowa Association of School Librarians

WHEN: June 25 & 26, 2019

WHERE: Iowa State University, Scheman Building, Ames, IA

WHAT: 2 FULL DAYS of amazing PD opportunities for $195 (members) $240 (nonmembers) - register by 4/1

Attend sessions on

- **teaching with complex text**
- **strategies for teaching writing**
- **classroom management**
- **growth mindset**
- **common core and ELA**
- **RtI and MTSS**
- **classroom literacy work-stations**
- **the latest in technology**
- **reading intervention strategies**
- **AND DOZENS MORE!!**

GRAD/ RECERT CREDIT AVAILABLE

For more information, or to register online please visit:
https://www.iowareading.org/
Iowa_Reading_Associatio /
Conference_Informatio .html

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

⭐ The 2 Sisters (Daily 5/ CAFÉ)

⭐ Tim Shanahan

⭐ Kwame Alexander

⭐ Mr. D (www.mrdtimes3.com)

⭐ Joey Mandel

⭐ Tony Vincent

⭐ Jerry Pallotta

⭐ Katherine Hannigan

⭐ Jeff Anderson

⭐ Paul Gasser

⭐ Dorina Sackman-Ebuwa

⭐ Mary Howard

February 10, 2019

Dear Meaghan,

Thank you for submitting a program proposal for the 2019 Iowa Reading Conference . The conference is a joint venture of the Iowa Reading Association and the Iowa Association of School Librarians. It is a pleasure to inform you that your proposal has been accepted!

The conference will be held on June 25 and 26, 2019 at the Iowa State Center, Scheman Building, Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. This year's conference theme is "Reading Rocks". There will be three concurrent session blocks each day, and we are planning to schedule ten - twelve sessions during each block. Each concurrent session is 50 minutes in length.

Your program:

● "How to Apply Best Practices in Assessment & Evaluation AND Maintain a Life Beyond the Classroom" is **tentatively** scheduled for Wednesday June 26 at 9:40 am.

● A future email will be sent in May confirming the time and room assignment. Please be aware that there will not be remuneration from either Iowa Reading Association nor the Iowa Association of School Librarians for presenting a concurrent session. There is a lower registration fee available. For those planning to register for the full conference and are a concurrent session speaker, the registration fee is $100 instead of the regular $195. For those planning only on attending the day they present, registration is not required. Please contact Clark Goltz (iowareading@gmail.com) f or concurrent speaker registration details. For hotel accommodations during the Iowa Reading Conference, please contact the Gateway Hotel at 1-800-367-2637 or Best Western University Park Inn and Suite at 515-296-2500 and inquire about the group rate. Your presentation is a vital part of the Iowa Reading Conference. We are excited that you are taking the opportunity to share your expertise! For more information about the conference, visit www.iowareading.org . Reading Rocks at the Iowa Reading Conference, Julie Schuller, Iowa Reading Association President 2018-19