Innovative assessment tools in education

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ABSTRACT

Innovative approaches to assessment can help learners to demonstrate skills for society, employment and education. Mobile technology means that many learners now have direct access to handheld computing. As a result, different types of assessment can now be produced and applied. You'll move on to investigate what skills are needed by learners in today's society and how innovative approaches to assessment might help educators to help learners demonstrate these skills. You'll also look at how innovative assessments can be used to more closely reflect what is taught and how learning can be more closely aligned to the skills required for employment and access to higher education.

Keywords: Traditional education, formative and summative assessment, skills, innovative assessment, creating assignments

Introduction:

To achieve these learning outcomes the educator must make some deliberate attempts to impart information to a learner. This can involve using tutorials, lectures or perhaps even books to read or study notes. The focus of the constructively aligned curriculum is to help the learner acquire information about the subject. The learner is subsequently evaluated on their understanding of this information using a variety of assessment techniques including assignments, examinations, presentations or a written essay, amongst others. As a result, within a curriculum that is constructively aligned, learning and assessment should:

- have clearly defined learning outcomes
- demonstrate teaching and learning activities and methods that lead to the achievement of the defined learning outcomes
- objectively assess what learners have learned against the outcomes

- enable arriving at a grade based upon standardised assessment (assessing a learner's understanding of a subject area which results in a formal grade being given is known as 'summative assessment').

Formative assessments are assessments that do not contribute towards the mark or award achieved in the course of study. Nonetheless, formative assessments provide a useful opportunity to determine assessment for learning. Formative assessments can be something as simple as asking a class question and determining what they understand by the responses. It might also involve learners engaging in a group discussion regarding a topic

Summative assessments are used to determine what has been learned. For example, a summative assessment could be an exam where the mark achieved determines the grade a learner is awarded in a subject. Or, an assignment submitted by a learner that

contributes towards the grade achieved in the course of study.

An easy way to separate formative assessment from summative assessment is to think of it this way:

Formative assessment is **for learning**

Summative assessment is assessment **of learning**.

What skills are needed in today's society?

Sir Ken Robinson challenges current education practices. He advocates a culture of creativity and awareness of multiple intelligence types. In the following activity you'll watch a video in which he asks what education actually does for learners.

Today, knowledge and skills in mathematics, science and English are still important, and they should be. However, the Industrial Revolution required learners with these skills because the focus of employment during this period was to expand mechanically, technically and scientifically and this required the knowledge and skills required from these subjects.

To make learning and assessment easier, where assessment of learning was concerned, learning was standardized. Additionally, academic ability in several key areas became the focus of attention – mathematics, science and English were among these subjects. This was because success and employment were predicated upon a society where 'the idea of academic ability' formed the basis for most types of learning as well as a measure of intelligence.

What is innovative assessment and why is it useful?

Figure 4 presents the skills and competencies a learner could demonstrate alongside innovative assessment ideas that could be used to develop these skills and also help the learner develop knowledge. For example, in the bottom left quadrant, learners can demonstrate their reflection skills by using a reflective log or portfolio of evidence to show how they applied

their skills and knowledge to a real world scenario. For the purposes of this course, the use of innovative assessment is defined as something that enables the learner to transfer knowledge, skills, competencies and dispositions between learning and assessment. The transference between learning and assessment should be, where possible, seamless. The premise behind this approach is to ensure that the learner can see a clear connection between what they are learning and how that learning will be applied in any or all of the following areas:

- the real world
- a work environment
- as they progress onto a higher level of education.

Creating assignments

'Creative swiping' is a term coined by management expert Tom Peters (1989, p. 228) and refers to the notion that, in management, a professional could borrow an idea from someone else and adapt it for their own use. In the following two activities you will be encouraged to creatively swipe ideas and thus adapt them for your own professional environment. You also thought about what you would need to do if you were to use a mobile device to enact assessment based on what you had learned. To identify what can enable innovative assessment and act as barriers to its success. Some of the barriers to success are also some of the enablers. For example, a barrier to using mobile devices for assessment may be that a learner can't download an app on their device because it's not compatible, whereas another learner in the same class is enabled as they can download the app.

Pedagogical and technical design principles and apps

Hustinx *et al.* (2019) as part of the Tablio project, in an evaluation report titled 'Realising Classroom Differentiation and Inclusion with

Tablets', described a number of examples of best practice from classrooms across Europe ranging from primary schools to secondary schools and higher education. The report produced a number of case studies that examined how mobile devices could be used for teaching, learning and innovative assessment. This included formative and summative assessments.

By now you have defined the context and challenge of your project. You are fully equipped to start designing your innovation. Moving your innovative assessment idea from your thoughts to paper requires you to storyboard the idea. As part of storyboarding, it is important to consider the concept of learning design. Learning design involves providing a context or a background that will support a learning experience. It involves the educator making some clear and deliberate choices about what, when, where and how to teach. It also involves giving thought to things like:

- resources a learner may require for learning
- the amount of time needed for progression
- sequence of activities.

It might also involve considering the types of technology used to enable learning and assessment.

Educators from all backgrounds such as teachers, lecturers, professional trainers or even sports coaches use learning design to structure lessons. Sometimes these are called lesson or coaching plans. Learning design is an iterative and communicative process. In order to get the best results, you will want to share and synergise your ideas as soon as possible. A storyboard represents a design from the perspective of the user's experience, describing the expected flow of activity. Storyboards are common in media production and software design. They have also been adopted and adapted as a tool for learning design. There is no strict format for storyboards – the key criteria are that they are quick to produce and convey the core features of a design, arranged in the sequence the user will follow. They are not judged on their artistic merits.

Conclusion.

Following this you provided a description of the context under which this problem could be resolved and following that presented a solution.

An important aspect of the process of creating an innovative assessment was to consider how this would be experienced by the learner. Therefore, you completed a storyboard of a learner who participated in the activity and considered what it would be like from their perspective.

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SAMPLE   ASSESSMENT   MATERIALS:
Pearson Edexcel International