

Learning Experience Design Proposal – Trial and Assessment

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ITEC 5560-40 Development of Instructional Systems

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November 7, 2021

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Assessing student learning in subjects related to the HiSET exam relies primarily on final scores on a practice exam or on the real exam. Their ability to pass a subtest is the ultimate mark of the primary goal of student learning. However, assessments along the way demonstrate their progression of learning and their likelihood of passing their exam, plus the quality of the teaching and learning environment. Additionally, the secondary goal of their learning is to use the skills they learn in a real-world environment; therefore, there are more skills to learn and assess than the ability to pass a test. With that in mind, I developed several formative and summative assessments that not only give evidence for a student's potential to pass their writing subtest, but that also provide evaluation of their skills in future scenarios.

The first question I asked is, "What evidence do I need to assess the learner's knowledge, skills, or understanding" and how will I gather it (Wiggins and McTighe 2005 p. 150)? Knowing my students, there are two main points at which I need to gather this evidence: as they learn the skill and as they apply it. I read Broad-foot et al's 1999 critique of formative assessments and redefined "assessments that promote learning," and while I did like the definition and application, there are times in my students' learning that the most important assessment is a quick and simple one of their comprehension. Therefore, I am technically sticking to formative assessments; however, I am incorporating some of the seven principles of assessments that promote learning, specifically: sharing learning goals with pupils, involving pupils in self-assessment, providing feedback which leads to pupils recognising their next steps and how to take them, and confidence that every student can improve (Broad-foot et al, 1999 p.7) In order to incorporate these goals, I will communicate up front and along the way about "the learning goals, the assignments, the criteria used to assess them, giving them the necessary context in the syllabus, handouts on the policy papers, rubrics with assessment criteria, model papers, and discussions with them as they need to prepare" (Mcdaniel, 1970).

The main, in-the-moment formative assessment I am using is in-video questions via VidGrid. These are questions that pop up at various points in the video lesson and prohibit the student from moving on until the question is answered. Both wrong and right answers receive feedback. Students are able to decide if they understand after the feedback or if they need to review the part of the lesson they got wrong. To make this assessment more in line with promoting learning, I am going to add the objective(s) for the lesson at the beginning and word the pop-up questions in such a way that they address at least part of an objective. In this way, they can connect what they are learning to the objective, even mid-learning. A portion of the course is being able to duplicate the organization of the essay. The final goal will be to write the essay according to the template, however, learners need to be able to generally reproduce the outline. Another formative assessment will be filling in the blank on a graphic organizer and marking errors on organizers with wrong or out of place components. This is a quick assessment of their level of knowledge acquisition and can lead to review lessons as needed.

Toward the end of each lesson, learners will be presented with previous topics used on the HiSET and will write the section of the essay learned in that lesson. Then they will self-grade their writing based on a rubric for that section. Their writing will be evaluated by an instructor for comprehension of the topic and the skill, and for clarity of writing. However, learners will be able to move on without this piece of feedback.

Self-assessment is key to this course because in the performance context - the HiSET - there is pressure from the timer and from the student on themselves; therefore, they must be confident in their knowledge and their ability to apply it. Lessons will end with a quick confidence check, which will be repeated at the end of the course. Ideally, students will gain confidence as they go and will be able to see their own improvement and potential to pass the test. A low confidence ranking will lead to opportunities for either lesson review or more practice.

In order to transfer knowledge to real-world applications, students will be presented a scenario in lesson one that will continue throughout the course. They will add to their response to the scenario according to the skill they learn in each lesson. This will act as a summative assessment in that the goal is to evaluate their ability to apply a learned skill to a situation in another context. The final lesson is on revision, and these responses will not be graded until they have been revised. This allows students to review their work from previous lessons and revise it if new learning has been achieved.

To assess student's grasp of what is expected of them - how they understand the objectives and put them into action - learners will read two prepared essays, score them, and make suggestions for improving them by one level (1-6). The essays will be a level 2 and a 4 to begin with. This will give students more exposure to poorly written essays and passing essays, as well as give them confidence that their own writing is sufficient to pass the test. Their choice of improvements will demonstrate areas of understanding, and perhaps illuminate areas of weakness.

The final summative assessment will be practice HiSET essays. As closely as possible, they will mimic the performance context: timed, isolated, and typed without spelling or grammar check, with no context of or vote on the topic of the passages. Final scores will be determined by trained instructors who follow the rubric laid out by the HiSET. Learners will have interacted with the rubric for the essays they scored and suggested improvements for.

This course is relatively short, especially for students with prior writing knowledge, skill, and confidence, and comes at the end of their learning journey with me. Often the learners are burnt-out and ready to be done and move on. Having well-designed assessments that not only indicate to me their readiness, but also increases their confidence will lead to more passing scores and higher scores overall.

Table 1: Overview of planned assessments

Lesson	Objective	Activities	Method of Assessment/ Evidence	Real World Scenario that runs through the entire class.
Paired Passages	Read the two passages quickly and choose a position(opinion)	Warm-up, Introduction, examples, presentation of skills, guided practice, assignment	In-Video Questions, Discussion about opinions, Practice passages	Read the scenario and write your opinion about how to solve the problem
Central Claim	Turn your position into a thesis statement (central claim)	Examples, non-examples, guided practice	In-video questions, short quiz, Self-Assess Confidence level	Synthesize your opinions into one clear claim
Arguments	Add arguments to your claim	Warm-up, Introduction, examples, presentation of skills, guided practice, assignment	In-video questions, short writing samples	Add two arguments to your claim that will convince your neighbors your solution is best
Organization of Ideas	Map your essay	Introduction, examples, presentation of skills, guided practice, assignment	Fill in the blank, Edit the Graphic Organizers, In-Video Questions	Start your own organizer and fill in what you have done so far.
Introduction	Hook, transition, claim. Write your introduction	Introduction, examples, presentation of skills, guided practice, assignment	In-video questions	Write your introduction, putting your claim at the end.
Body	1 argument per paragraph, 2 proofs - 1 from passages or knowledge, 1 from experience. Write your 2	Warm-up, Introduction, examples, presentation of skills, guided practice, assignment	Fill in the blank (proofs and interactions),	Write 2 body paragraphs, 1 argument per paragraph

	arguments			
Conclusion	Write your conclusion	Introduction, examples, presentation of skills, guided practice, assignment		Sign off in your letter.
Revision	Revise your own paper	Warm-up, Introduction, examples, presentation of skills, guided practice, assignment	In-Video questions, Editing a pre-written essay, both for content and grammar/spelling	Revise your letter.
In-All	Introduce HiSET essay rubric		Read 2 essays, give them a grade and make 2 suggestions of how to improve the score; Timed essay that mirrors the performance environment	n/a

References

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