

**Using at least three research articles about authentic assessment, begin to develop a personal philosophy regarding the value of authentic assessment, both as formative and summative evaluations of learning. Briefly define authentic assessment, describe why you believe it would be beneficial to student learning, and how it could be helpful in achieving educational standards such as the common core.**

## Module 2

An authentic assessment mirrors a real-world application of knowledge and directly assesses skills that are deemed important. It is valid and reliable in assessing skills and measures ability to use knowledge in new and complex situations rather than ability to regurgitate facts (Frey, Schmitt, & Allen, 2012). Authentic assessment can sometimes be observation-based or a performance task rather than a traditional test (Bagnato, McLean, Macy, & Neisworth, 2012). They can involve a task that requires intellectual, physical, and social skills and processes to solve (Azim & Khan, 2012). Since authentic assessments commonly revolve around real-world problems and skills, I believe that they are more beneficial to teachers and students than traditional tests. By putting students in a situation that they may see outside of the classroom, students and teachers will be able to judge more accurately how prepared a student is to use their knowledge in a real-world situation. This will make the assessment more critical in evaluating instructional practices, and it will help students see the areas that they will need to work on. In ED 615's reflective essay responses, our cohort discussed how standardized tests often assess guessing or memorization skills, but a more authentic assessment will give a test more validity in assessing skills that align better with the common core standards. Using authentic assessments in class and for standardized testing would better determine if common core standards are being met or exceeded.

## Module 5

Since writing the above paragraph in Module 2, I have gotten a better feel for assessments through making one of my own and observing several assessments in my field experience. I still believe that making an assessment authentic by using realistic applications is beneficial to both the students and the teacher, but I am noticing that there is not such a large gap separating authentic assessments from traditional assessments. Using authentic scenarios on a traditional test can still utilize students' problem-solving skills. Obviously, you wouldn't find a performance task or an observation-based assessment in a traditional test, but I believe that there are ways to make a test more authentic. In my field experience, the teacher uses questions from previous AP Biology exams, and even though many of them are multiple choice, they require students to think critically because they apply class knowledge to new, realistic situations. However, a traditional test may still fail to accurately assess students who struggle with testing even after making it more authentic. Therefore, there would still be benefits to using authentic observation or performance assessments.

## Module 8

Since reviewing my philosophy in Module 5, my views have not changed much. However, I have an increased understanding of the difficulties that students may have with traditional tests. My cohort's discussion of students with different learning needs really expanded on the need for more flexible assessments or modifications to traditional assessments. It is important to not only make assessments more authentic, but be aware of your students' individual needs. One group for which this is important pertaining to authentic assessments is students from different cultures. When creating an authentic assessments or making a traditional test more authentic, it is important to reduce any possible bias toward these students. Authentic assessments need to be relatable for all students, not just those from one specific culture. My final thoughts about authentic assessment are this: Authenticity can be used in any assessment format to varying degrees. Authentic assessments need to be created and formatted in a way that will benefit students with special learning needs. I am sure that my views on authentic assessment will change and evolve over time, but I believe that, If used mindfully, authentic assessments are a great tool to build critical thinking and problem-solving skills while reliably assessing skills and knowledge.

## References

- Azim, S., Khan, M. (2012). Authentic assessment: An instructional tool to enhance students learning. *Academic Research International*, 2(3), 314-320.
- Bagnato, S. J., McLean, M., Macy, M., & Neisworth, J. T. (2012, January 4). Identifying Instructional Targets for Early Childhood via Authentic Assessment: Alignment of Professional Standards and Practice-Based Evidence. *Journal of Early Intervention*, 33(4), 243-253.
- Frey, B. B., Schmitt, V. L., & Allen, J. P. (2012, January). Defining Authentic Classroom Assessment. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, 17(2), 1-18.