

Effective proficiency-based summative assessments provide students with an opportunity to clearly demonstrate and provide evidence of their learning against clear expectations, as defined by scoring criteria. Strong summative assessments provide opportunities for authentic demonstration that indicate a student’s ability to transfer their skills and knowledge to novel situations, beyond the specific assessment task provided. Note that the full range of summative assessments, including traditional tests, can be designed to align with the traits below, not only project-based assessments.

This design guide provides criteria that can be used as assessments are created (summative assessment design protocol) or to critique and improve existing assessments (summative assessment tuning protocol). For additional information about how summative assessments relate to the larger proficiency system, and for clarification on the terms and concepts referenced here, see our [framework for proficiency-based systems](#).

TRAITS	ASSESSMENT DESCRIPTORS
<p>ALIGNMENT: How aligned is the assessment task to the learning objectives and performance indicators?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is clear what skills or knowledge students will demonstrate through the task (Learning objectives and performance indicators are clearly identified) Requires students to engage with Depth of Knowledge (DOK) levels 2, 3 or 4 Content knowledge and skills required in assessment task match those identified in the performance indicators
<p>ACCESSIBILITY: How accessible is the assessment task to all students?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expectations of the assessment task are clear to students Options for accommodations for students with special needs are described to ensure all students can achieve proficiency at a rigorous level. Task provides opportunities for student choice Task is written with sensitivity to cultural differences
<p>TRANSFER: How relevant is the assessment task to students’ lives? Does it require students to apply knowledge or create something new using what they have learned? Does the task engage students with relevant content?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task is complex (interdisciplinary, incorporates cross-curricular skills, and/or assesses multiple performance indicators) Task requires the use of multiple sources and/or novel material <p style="text-align: center;">-----Project-based assessments may also include-----</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task may provide opportunity for students to engage with a school, community, or expert audience Task lends itself to creation of an authentic product or performance <p>The task engages students with relevant content by addressing any of these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questions students care about (e.g., justice, fairness, belonging, etc.) Issues of identity (e.g., gender, race, culture, nationality, language, sexual orientation, etc.) Life outside of school, especially relevant issues in the immediate community

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topics personalized to students' interest • Timely (current) issues • Real-world skills required for post-secondary life
<p>RIGOR: How challenging is the task? Does it require students to think critically at the level defined by the performance indicators?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task requires higher order thinking: application, analysis, evaluation or creation in alignment with the performance indicators being assessed, or the use of complex or novel sources or texts • Task requires students to integrate and apply the skills and knowledge described in several different performance indicators • Provides opportunity for independence and productive struggle, not over-scaffolded • Not yet Communicating clear criteria for success that hold all students to high expectations
<p>SCORING: Are the success criteria clearly defined? If the assessment includes a group product, how is the level of individual proficiency determined?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rubric descriptors/scoring criteria clearly define levels of performance • Task allows for individual demonstration of proficiency in the identified performance indicators • Habits of work are assessed separately from academic knowledge and skills • Items are grouped, or clearly identified, by indicator being assessed
<p>STUDENT VOICE:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed around or inclusive of student-generated questions • Gives students opportunities to set goals, monitor their work, and self-assess
<p>AFFIRMS IDENTITY & CULTURE BY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference and/or performance styles of students in service of allowing students to demonstrate their understanding (as appropriate) • Deepening students' understanding of personal (family) background and experiences (when appropriate) • Deepening students' understanding of the background and experiences of other cultures (when appropriate) • Vetting material with 7 forms of bias tool to identify and address forms of bias
<p>ENCOURAGES CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS BY..</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposing and critiquing stereotypes and biases • Requiring students to challenge (critique) the ideas in a text • Exposing students to diverse points of view without validating discriminatory ideas • Supporting students to provide evidence to support their ideas and respond to dissenting ideas • Centering issues of equity, helping students understand past and present imbalances of power and privilege