

Book Review: “Assessing Student Learning by Design” by Jay McTighe and Steve Ferrara (2021)

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The book “ assessing student learning by design” is intended for preschool and graduate teachers. They can immensely benefit from it by checking out various methods for effectively and purely assessing their students’ achievement and performance. Educational assessment is a multidimensional process. If we see a part “ by design” from the title of this book, it is meant to suggest effective assessment results from good planning and clarity about educational goals, various assessment purposes, diverse audience for assessment, information and types of assessment tools. We seek this justification from the entire book, which comprises seven chapters. In each chapter, Jay and steve provided well-grounded information about particular assessment methods that vary according to the nature and purpose of the assessment.

Both authors have not just mentioned random information but made an effective **framework** for the assessment process that anyone can follow as a ladder for completing the assessment process. The first step suggested by them is “to make principles about assessment” this means that before judging any student/curriculum, one should make some specifications, the criteria according to which one will assess the students/curriculum. Secondly, “Do Planning” after taking steps provided by the principles. The assessor should properly plan the whole assessment process. Thirdly, an assessor has to go through the “assessment method ” and assimilate and internalize it properly. It means one should focus on how the assessment will be done. Fourthly assessor has to go through the “evaluate student performance” process by following previously discussed steps. Assessors have to check students based on assessment requirements. Fifthly, assessors must “communicate assessing results” after judging a student’s performance. One should politely discuss the result with students so they can reformulate their learning goals and make motivated efforts to overcome those deficiencies. This re-advising should be polite rather than sarcastic so

students can correct their errors positively. The sixth step that both authors assigned is “to make strategies for teachers”. By doing this, teachers will also be more self-aware. This will again have a positive effect on students indirectly. In the end, Jay and Steve wind up this framework with a seventh step of “tips for school leaders”. If one wants to do a systematic assessment, he/she should get guidance from the book, be the leader first and be on track to coming out of assessment illiterates in the teaching field so that the whole process can be done leniently without any disturbance.

The whole book addresses specific principles of assessment in a systematic, structured and organized way. It examines the strength and limitations of various assessment methods, gives graphic examples, and builds a comprehensive framework and a set of guiding questions to use in planning classroom and school-level assessments to improve teaching and learning. In this book, assessment refers to “any systematic basis for making suggestions about characteristics of people, usually based on various sources of evidence, global process of making information about individuals to understand & narrate them in a better way.” This assessment highlights two critical points regarding the content of this book. **One** is that educators sometimes loosely refer to an assessment as valid and reliable. **Second** is recognizing that all assessment forms are open to measuring error.

Furthermore, Jay & Steve also mentioned the assessment’s origin in the book's last chapter. Like the term, assessment is derived from the Latin root “assidere”, meaning seems different with images of standardized testing, multiple choice “bubble” sheets, rigid time limits and silent work. But it conforms more closely with a bunch of assessment methods used by teachers for assessing their students. Both authors put some basic terms about assessment like formative assessment, summative assessment, evaluating assessment and diagnostic assessments, which we think helpful for the readers to grasp the concept of these terms.

In “assessing student learning by design “ authors offer teachers clear and practical guidelines for developing assessments that truly inform teaching and improve student learning. This concept makes their book unique as compared to others. Instead of simply describing, what to do, authors explain “why”, which means they give reasons. In this book, they assigned assessments of student learning that also encourage deeper understanding and higher levels of learning success. They use clear, accessible and spare writing throughout the entire book. That makes its reading easy for readers.

Throughout the book, Jay & Steve provided polished and authentic information with definitions (glossary) about assessment. While reading this book, we trust that its ideas will deepen the

coming reader's understanding of effective assessment principles and enhance their concepts about assessment in classroom activities.