Accurate, Ethical, and Equitable Grading

Principles and Myth-Busting

Diocese of Erie
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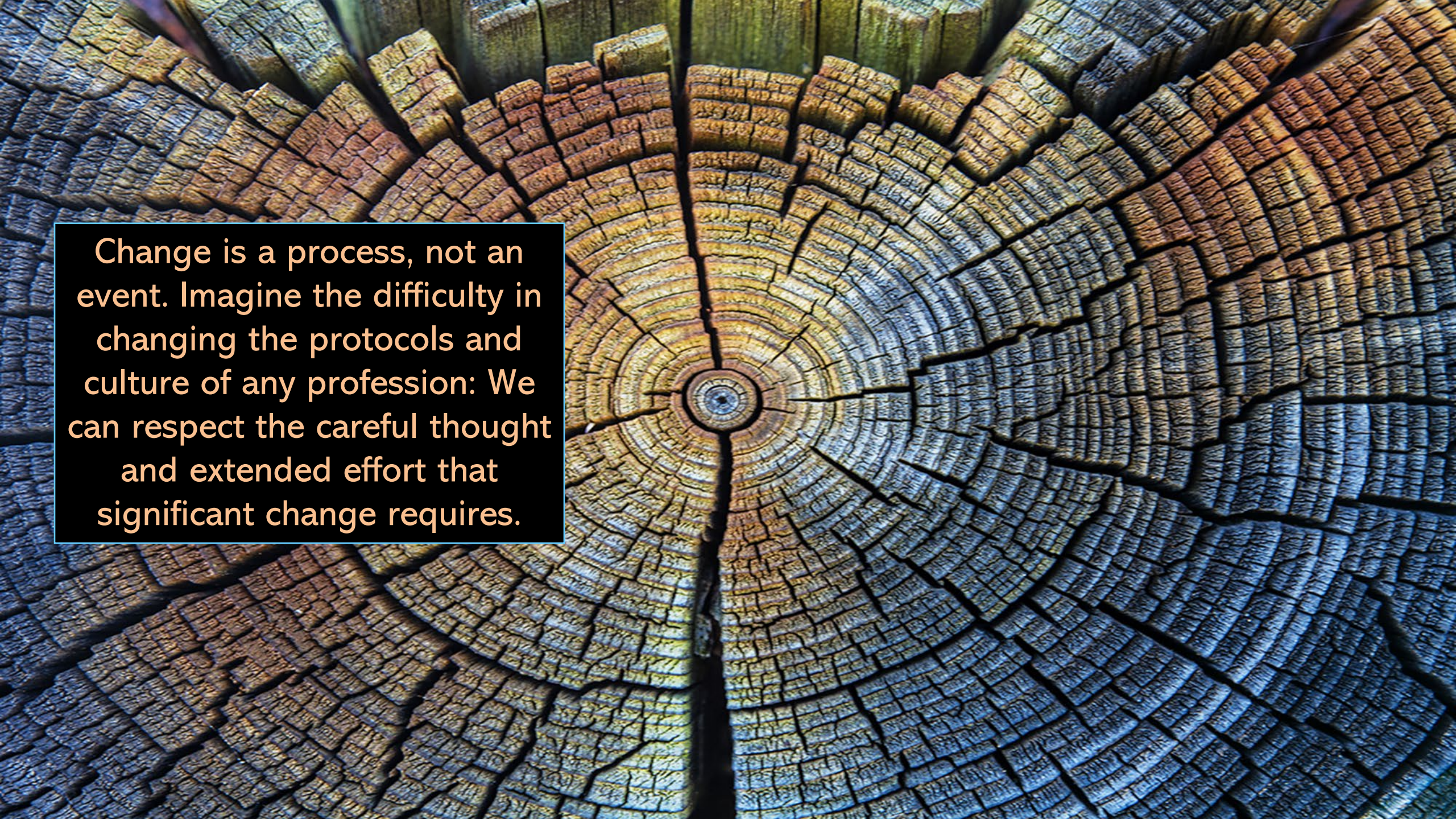
For Further Conversation

Consider using one of these today:

- “I like, I wish, What if” (p. 121, Seelig)
- “I used to think…, but now I think…”
- So, what these ideas mean for me in my faculty is…
- Five of these principles I want to include in my leadership are…
- Two people with whom I want to discuss this content are…

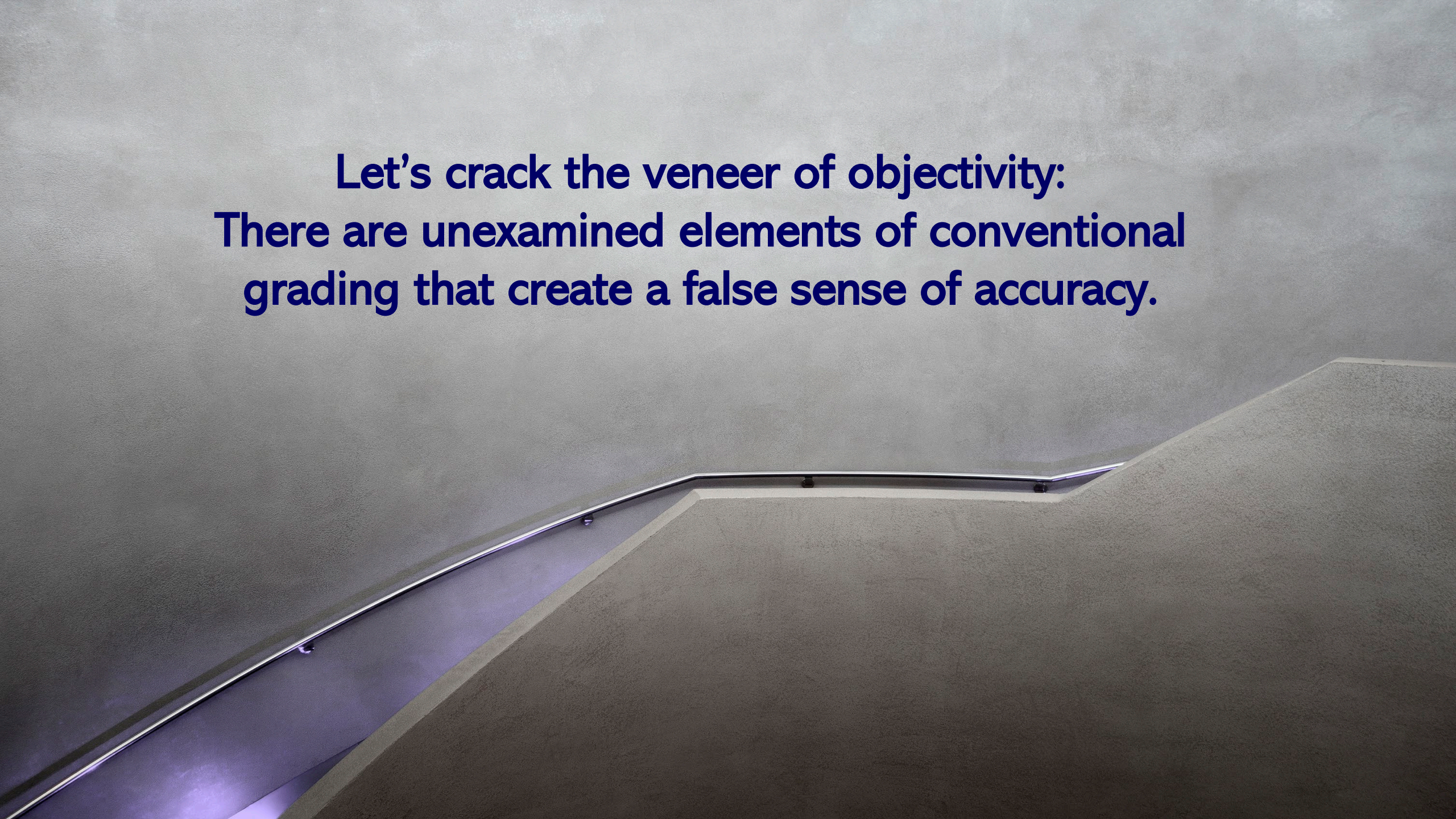
Definitions and Mindset


Change is a process, not an event. Imagine the difficulty in changing the protocols and culture of any profession: We can respect the careful thought and extended effort that significant change requires.

Teachers often to do not get a lot of tools or insights into accurate, ethical, and equitable grading in schools of teacher preparation. Until that's changed, it's up to in-service training to provide it.

Our assessment and grading practices reveal our true teaching colors. They imbue almost every facet of our instruction with students. They are a big part of our identity as educators.

We have curriculum overload. We can't do these practices with every standard in our curriculum, but we can do it with the most pivotal and leveraging.


Let's crack the veneer of objectivity:
There are unexamined elements of conventional grading that create a false sense of accuracy.

Every day we negotiate with ourselves for what level of hypocrisy we will tolerate this day – And some days we are more tolerant than we should be.

- Are we concerned about grades becoming so transactional?
- Has the definition of fairness been corrupted?
- Is there unrecognized bias in assessment and grading?
- Do grades reflect compliance with tasks or evidence of learning?
- How do we report lateness and teach responsibility?
- Are we conflating the report of one thing with the report of something else?
- Are assessment formats getting in the way of accurate expressions of proficiency?
- What is the role of agency and student self-monitoring of academic progress?
- What leads to real learning and success for every one of our students?

When our actions/practices align with our values, we're on fire: We get out of bed eagerly, we find meaning in the work, and we have energy at the end of the day.

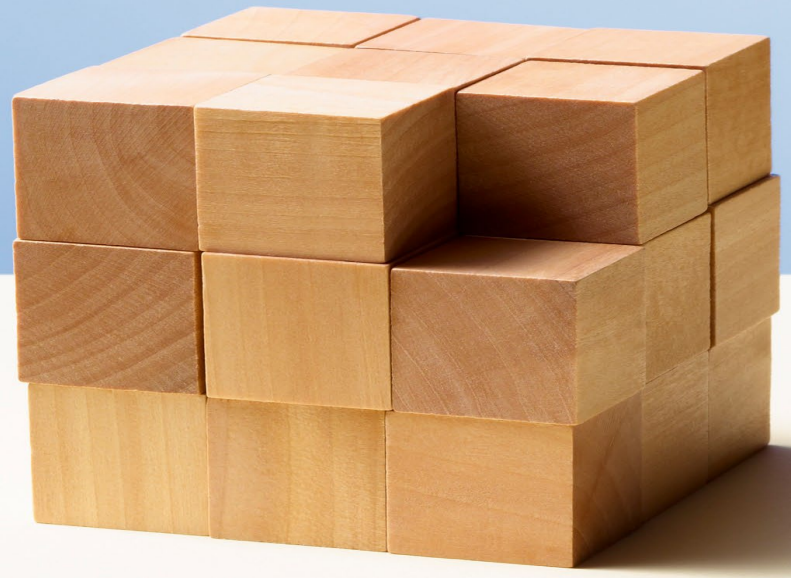
When we our practices are out of alignment with our values, we dread the day, and we are exhausted by day's end.

To what extent, then, do we minimize our hypocrisies?

Education is a moral, ethical profession.
Absent a moral imperative nothing in education changes (Doug Reeves).
Aligning with our professional ethics summons courage of conviction – and the stamina needed to see our way forward.

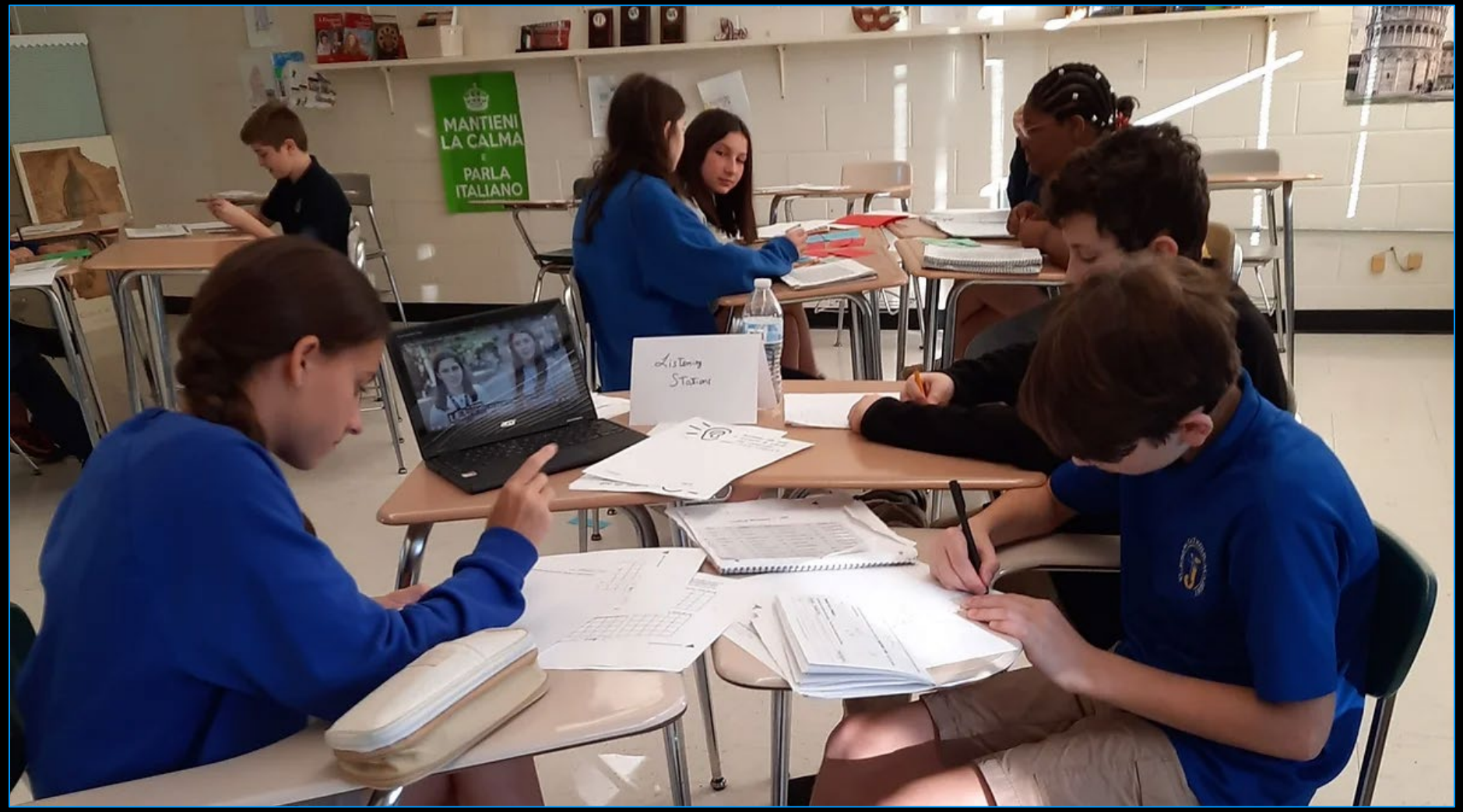
What goes unachieved, then, because we chose not to engage, or in some cases, to rock the boat?

Standards-based or referenced assessment and grading principles and practices apply universally: They are ethical & effective in urban, rural, suburban, affluent, impoverished, faith-based, Department of Defense, international, Tribal Nation, Alaskan native, ivy-league, hetero- and homogenous, low and high-performing classrooms.



Most classes are set up to meet the needs of the student who gets it first or easiest, not for the ones who learn differently.

We teach all students, not just those who fit easily into current classifications, protocols, and our narrative of humanity.

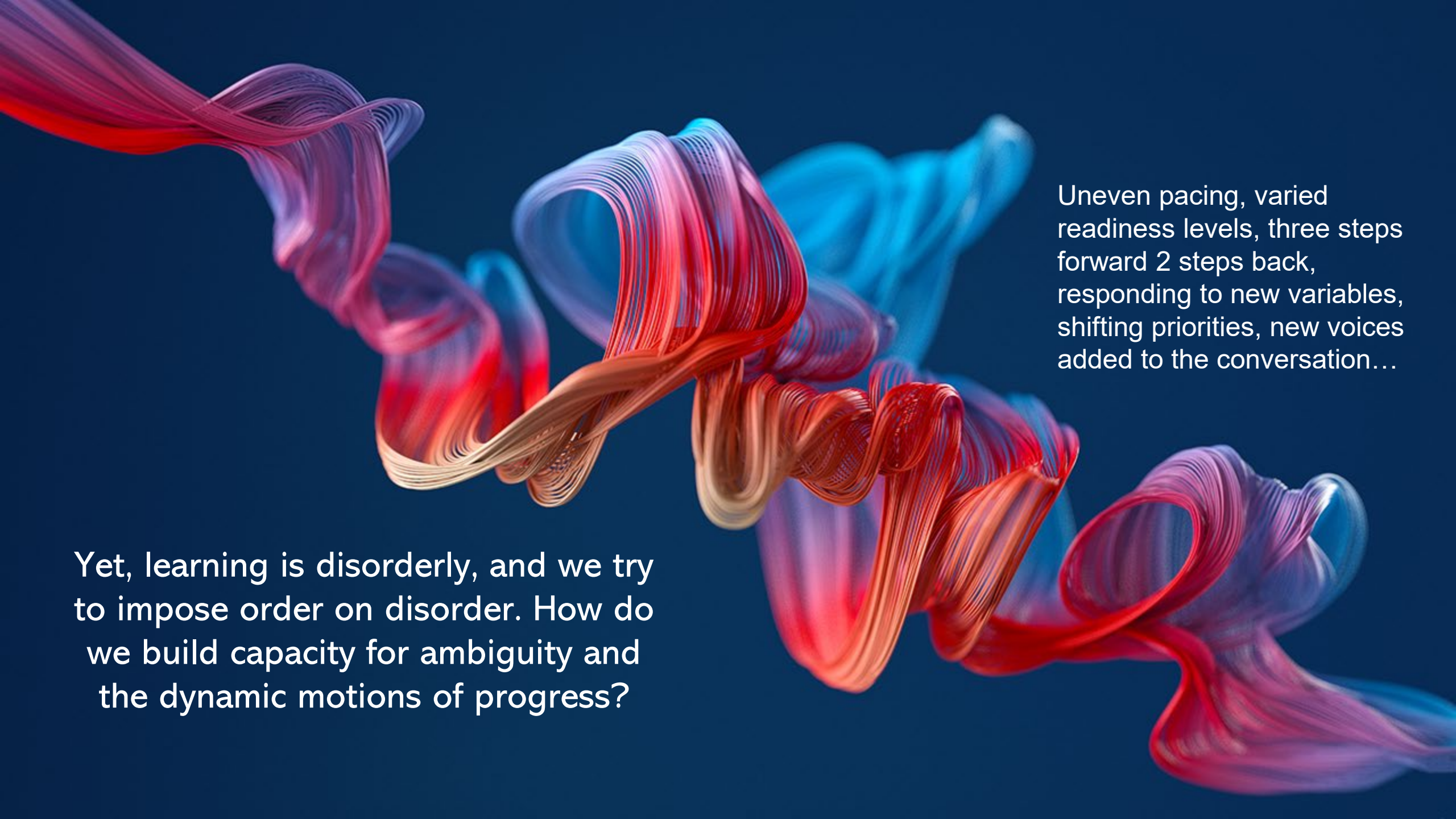


We're hired to teach the way *students* best learn, not the way *we* (or *their classmates)* best learn.

It is deeply inappropriate to use the characteristics of an extrovert to judge the healthy and positive behaviors of an introvert.

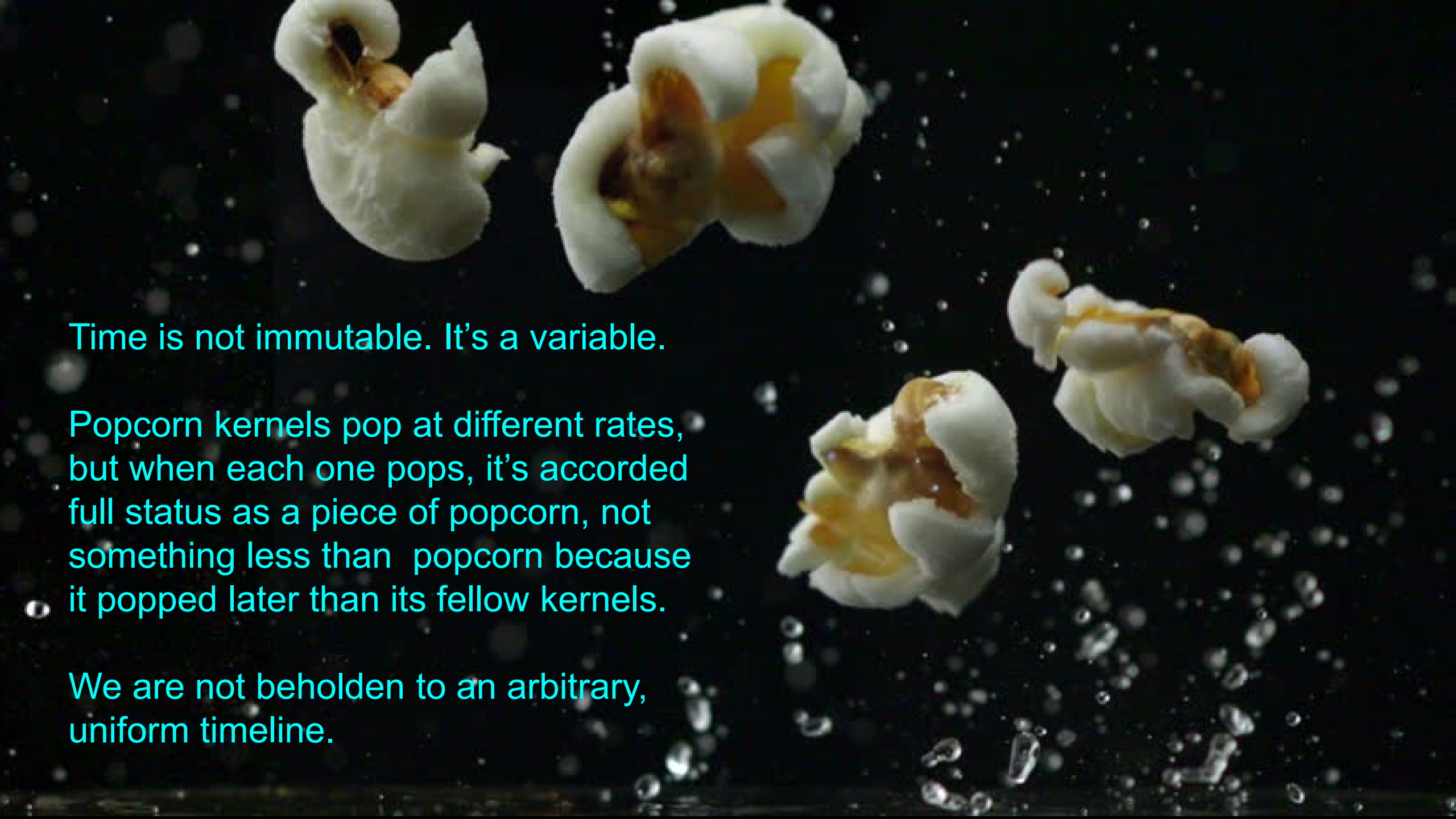
Equally concerning, most schools are overly dependent on linguistic representation of intellect and proficiency. Let’s build a repertoire of non-linguistic assessments.


We like orderly schematics and linear progression.
It makes us feel like we are productive, and
students' learning seems quantifiable.



Uneven pacing, varied readiness levels, three steps forward 2 steps back, responding to new variables, shifting priorities, new voices added to the conversation…

Yet, learning is disorderly, and we try to impose order on disorder. How do we build capacity for ambiguity and the dynamic motions of progress?



Time is not immutable. It’s a variable.

Popcorn kernels pop at different rates, but when each one pops, it’s accorded full status as a piece of popcorn, not something less than popcorn because it popped later than its fellow kernels.

We are not beholden to an arbitrary, uniform timeline.

"I can't teach (or grade) like that for those three students because it wouldn't be fair to the others."

Fairness

We provide what students need to maximize their learning and achievement, even when it differs from what we do for their classmates. It does *not* mean equal, similar, or same treatment.

So, what are the goals?

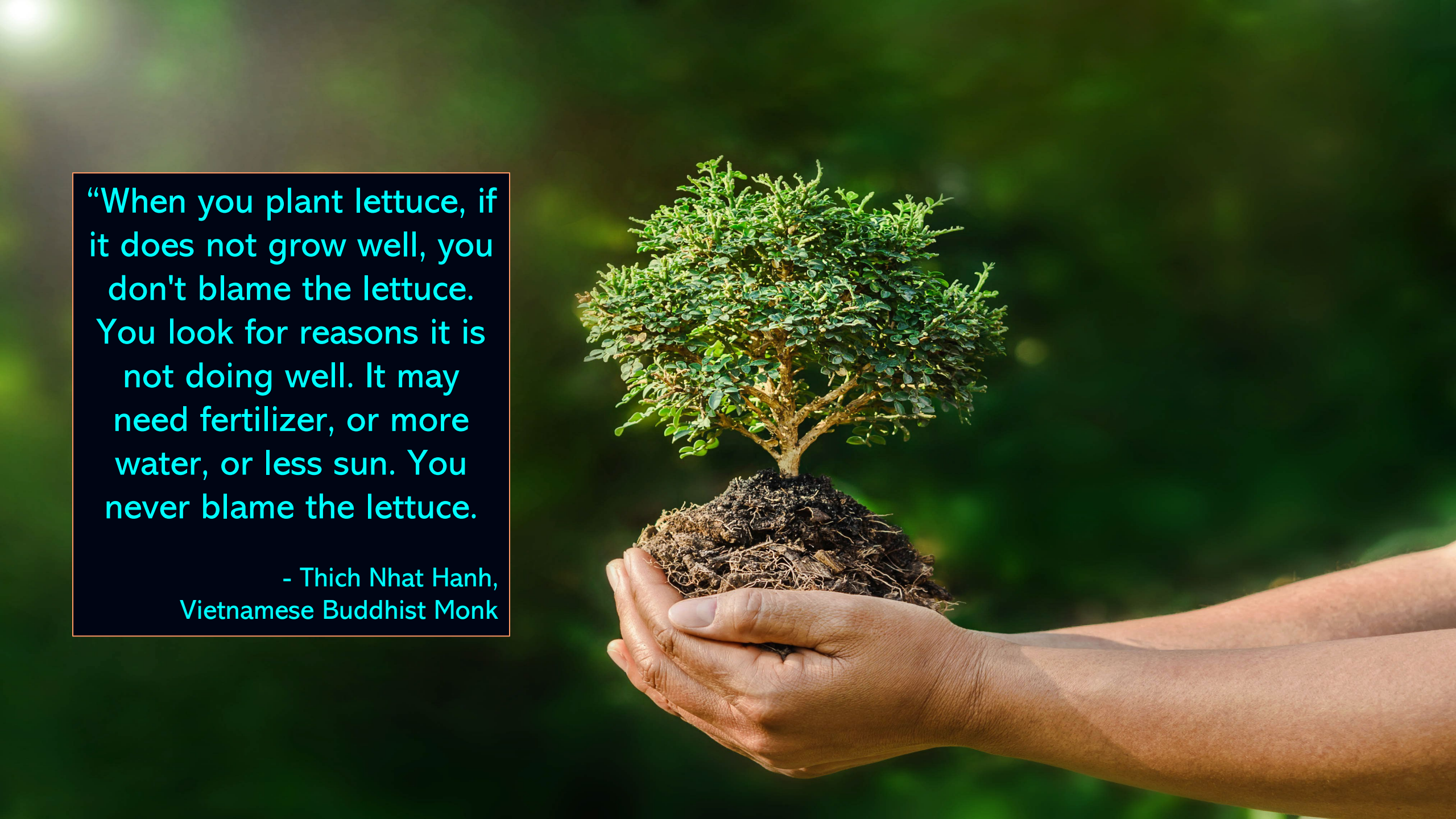
- Students learn it, not that they learn it on the same day and in the same manner as everyone else.
- Students demonstrate learning, not that they did a project, took a test, read a book, or wrote a paper.
- Students find meaning, potential, maybe even joy, in their learning.

How does my instruction respond to what I know about how my students learn, and who they are as individuals?

How can I improve the effectiveness of learning experiences based on what I know about my students?

We can be mindful of:

- Diverse levels of background knowledge
- Different levels/types of support needed by students on their way to performance independent of all that support
- Multiple pathways/routes to proficiency, including multiple iterations with feedback
- Students' varying access to resources, tools, finances, child and elderly care
- Language/cultural differences
- Physical and/or mental/academic challenges
- Multiple generations living under one roof


“When you plant lettuce, if it does not grow well, you don't blame the lettuce. You look for reasons it is not doing well. It may need fertilizer, or more water, or less sun. You never blame the lettuce.
- Thich Nhat Hanh,
Vietnamese Buddhist Monk


Humility
An Effective
“Compass Rose”

“Is my purpose to **select** talent or **develop** it?…If your purpose as an educator is to select talent, then you must work to maximize the differences among students. In other words, on any measure of learning, you must try to achieve the greatest possible variation in students' scores …Unfortunately for students, the best means of maximizing differences in learning is poor teaching. Nothing does it better.”

-- Thomas R. Guskey, *Education Leadership*, ASCD, November 2011, Pages 16-21

"If, on the other hand, your purpose as an educator is to ***develop*** talent, then you…clarify what you want students to learn and be able to do. Then you do everything possible to ensure that all students learn those things well. If you succeed, there should be little or no variation in measures of student learning. All students are likely to attain high scores on measures of achievement, and all might receive high grades."

-- Thomas R. Guskey, Education Leadership, ASCD, November 2011, Pages 16-21

Grades are not transactions!

Grades are accurate communication, *not* compensation, reward, affirmation, validation, or what a child deserves.

Be clear:
The more we make grades transactional, the less they can be used to report student learning accurately and ethically.

Grades should be accurate. This means they should be based on evidence of content skills and competencies that students present at the end of learning, not how they did early in the learning, or including other things that have nothing to do with the skills and competencies themselves.

"Welsh (2019) describes three defining criteria for SBG (also see Guskey & Bailey, 2001, 2010). First, teachers report student performance based on key grade level or course standards rather than single content-area grades. Second, student achievement is communicated using a limited number of performance categories, usually three to five. And third, academic achievement grades are reported separately from information related to non-cognitive (behavioral) factors such as effort, homework completion, and class participation (Guskey, 1996)."

- Welsh, M. E. (2019). Standards-based grading. In T. R. Guskey & S. M. Brookhart (Eds.), What we know about grading: What works, what doesn't, and what's next (pp. 133-144). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. The article from NACCP Bulletin in the Welsh definition can be download from here: https://tguskey.com/wp-content/uploads/NASSP20-Transiton-from-HS-to-College.pdf

- More effective instructional design: Students learn more as a result
- Protects students (from what?)
- Builds & maintains teaching integrity and consistency
- Makes descriptive feedback more effective & useful
- Helps students mature and develop executive function in ways traditional grading does not
- More reflective and preparatory for the post-high school world
- More useful to parents and stakeholders

PLT Questions

1. What do we expect our students to learn?
2. How will we know they are learning?
3. How will we respond when they don't learn?
4. How will we respond if they already know it?

How do accurate, ethical, & equitable grading practices intersect with each?

National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools

7.2 The curriculum integrates Catholic worldview, spiritual, moral, and ethical dimensions of learning in all subjects.

7.3 Classroom instruction actively engages and motivates each student to learn.

National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools

7.6 Classroom instruction is designed to intentionally address the affective dimensions of learning, such as Catholic virtue, intellectual and social-emotional dispositions, relationship and community building, and skills of executive function.

7.7 To ensure the inclusion of and to meet the needs of diverse learners, classroom instruction utilizes current research in interventions, student accommodation, and curriculum modification.

National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools

7.8 Faculty collaborate in professional learning communities to develop, implement, and continuously improve the effectiveness of the curriculum and instruction to result in high levels of student achievement, engagement, and well-being.

7.11 Faculty and staff engage in high-quality and research-based professional development, including religious formation, and are accountable for implementation that supports student learning and well-being.

National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools

Standard 8

An excellent Catholic school uses school-wide assessment methods and practices to document student learning and program effectiveness, to make student performances transparent, and to inform the continuous review of curriculum and the improvement of instructional practices.

National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools

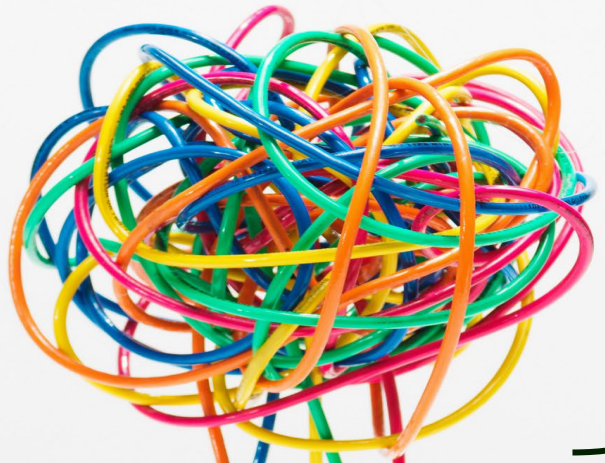
8.3 Teachers use a variety of curriculum-based assessments aligned with learning outcomes and instructional practices to assess student learning and to plan for continued and sustained student growth.

8.4 Criteria used to evaluate student work and the reporting mechanisms are valid, consistent, transparent, equitable, and justly administered.

Sample Challenges

Samples of additional factors some teachers add to the mix:

- Brought the bathroom pass back
- Returned signed permission slip
- Maintained an organized notebook
- Volunteered at school events
- Contributed extra bottles of Purell
- Did service projects
- Knew the score of last night's game
- Organized the lab/band equipment
- Cleaned equipment
- Changed the water in the fish tank



Grade: 82%

Stuff you learned

of times you were nice

Extra credit for things not related to the subject

Stuff you did

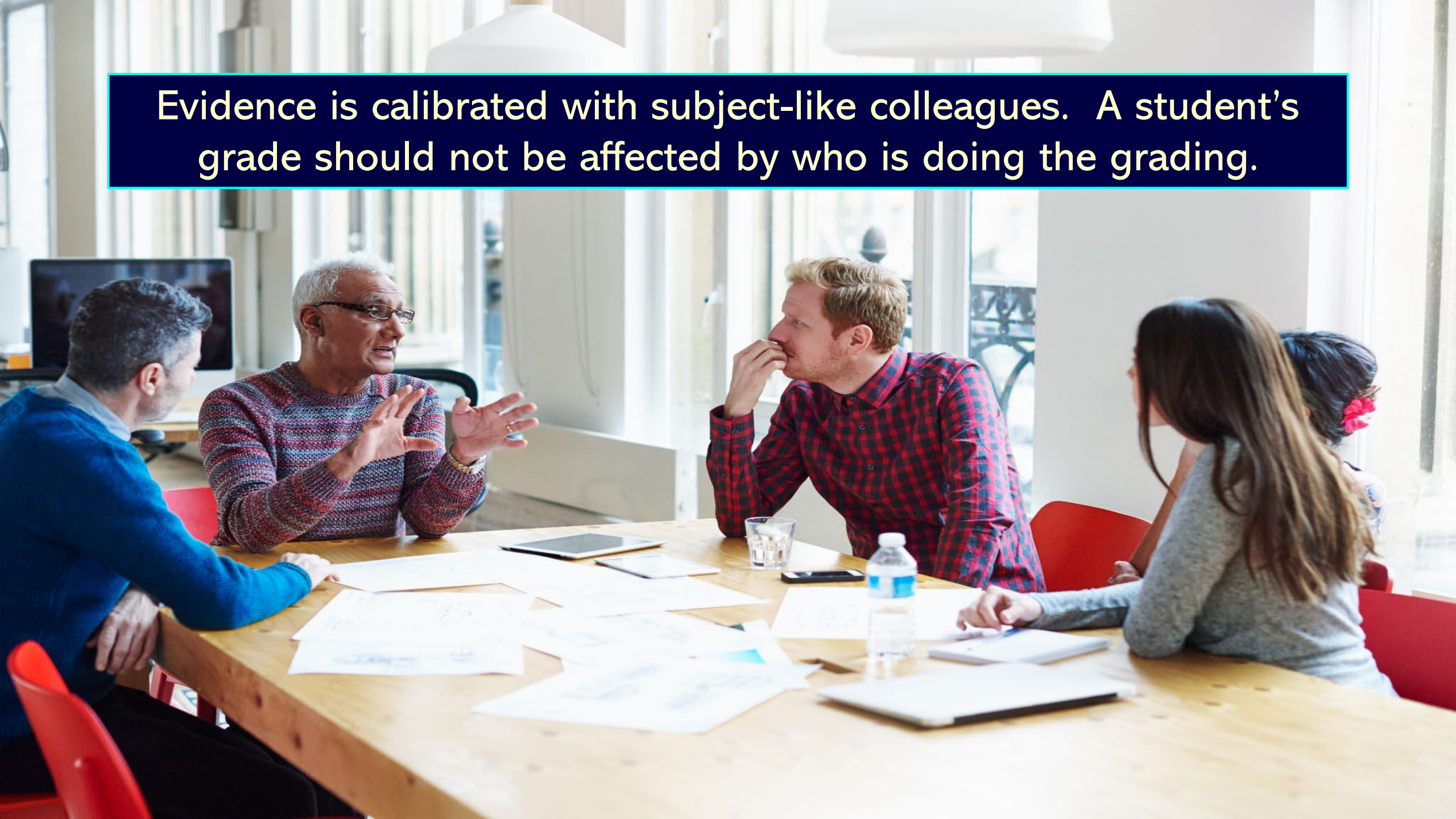
Teacher's mood, personal biases

When teachers discuss what number on the 100-point scale means, “Satisfactory,” they often have a difference of 20 to 30 points difference, from 70% to 90% to 100%.

Wait, this doesn't make sense.

"You told me that level of learning was only a B in your class, but that same level of learning counts for an A in the class next door."

"And now you want to tell me the grades are accurate and can be used to make high stakes decisions?"


Evidence is calibrated with subject-like colleagues. A student's grade should not be affected by who is doing the grading.

When it comes to demonstrating full mastery of polynomial functions *(or how the energy transfer cycle works, the capacity to infer an author's meaning, or how the use of specific art techniques and materials evoke the zeitgeist of an identified historical era)*, what is the difference between…

…an 89% and a 90%?
…an 89.4 and an 89.5?
…an 89.424 and an 89.425?

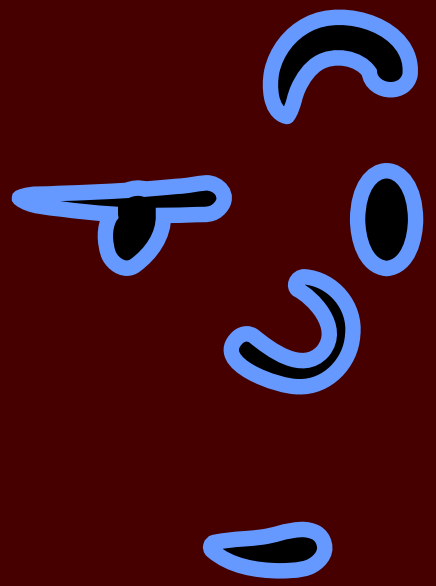
It's a false assumption that you can discern mastery to this level of precision with most things we teach. It's set up to sort students arbitrarily, NOT to report learning accurately.

Be clear: There is no discernible difference in mastery between an 89 and a 90. It's within the statistical margin of error, yet whole futures are built or destroyed because we thought we could see a difference and sort students this way.

The top symbol in our grading or proficiency scale should be "Meets" the standard, not "Exceeds" the standard, and we are demanding in those expectations for "Meets."

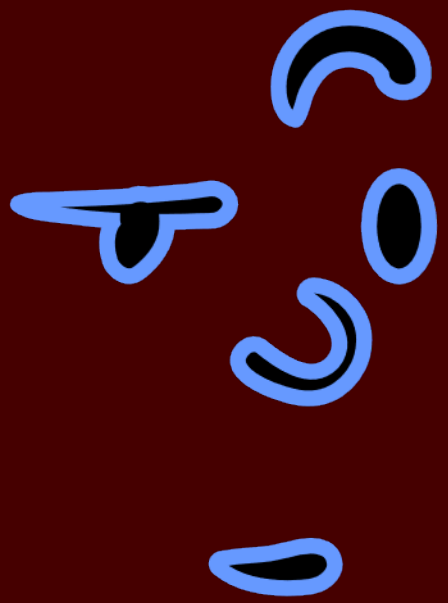
Performance that extends beyond identified standards can be recorded in a separate column or addendum dedicated to "Advanced," "Accelerated," "Enriched" (or similar) curriculum.

Avoid using, “I can teach it to others” as a statement of great proficiency. Teaching content or skills to others is a completely different skill set and not evidence of advanced proficiency in the original standard itself.



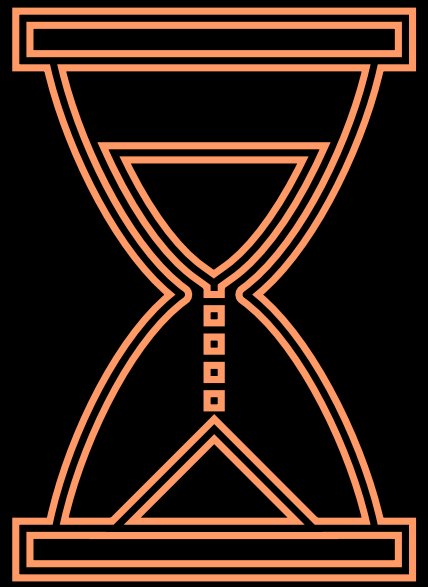
What about...

- Grading late work?
- Grading homework?
- O's on the 100-point scale?
- Re-Learning and Re-Assessing?
- Grade integrity (accuracy of the report)?
- Teachers who allow grades to be, "padded" by elements not in the standard they claim to be reporting?
- The volatility (distortability) of averaging?
- Students who knew it for the test, but do not know at the end of the year?



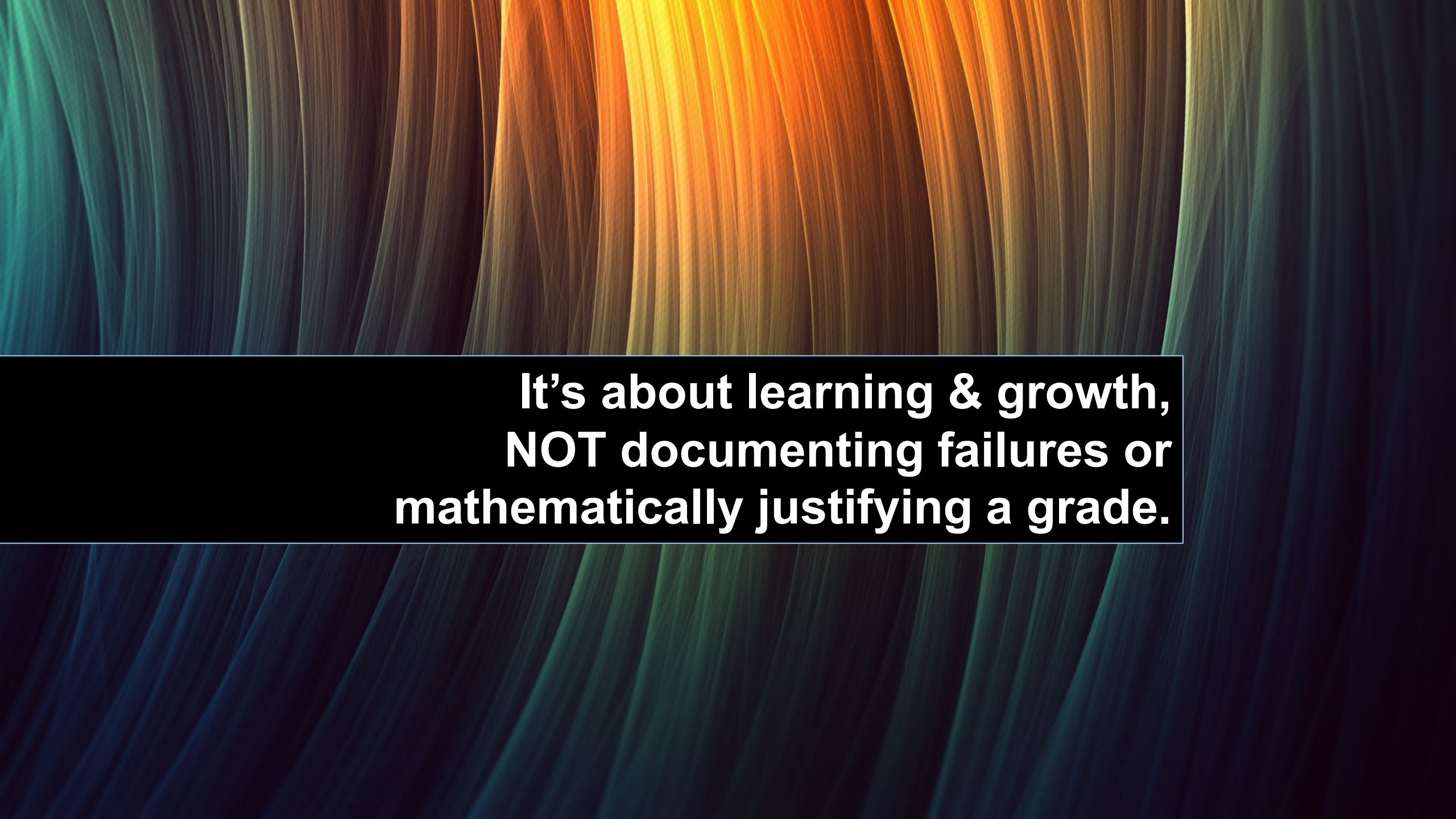
What about...

- Students who demonstrate the standard, but in a non-traditional manner?
- Students who get all kinds of support in their learning, yet take the same test?
- Students who don't do the work unless it counts for a grade?
- Teachers using different grading scales in the classroom or among the grade level or department?
- Grading English Language Learners and those from different cultures?
- Having a life outside of school?

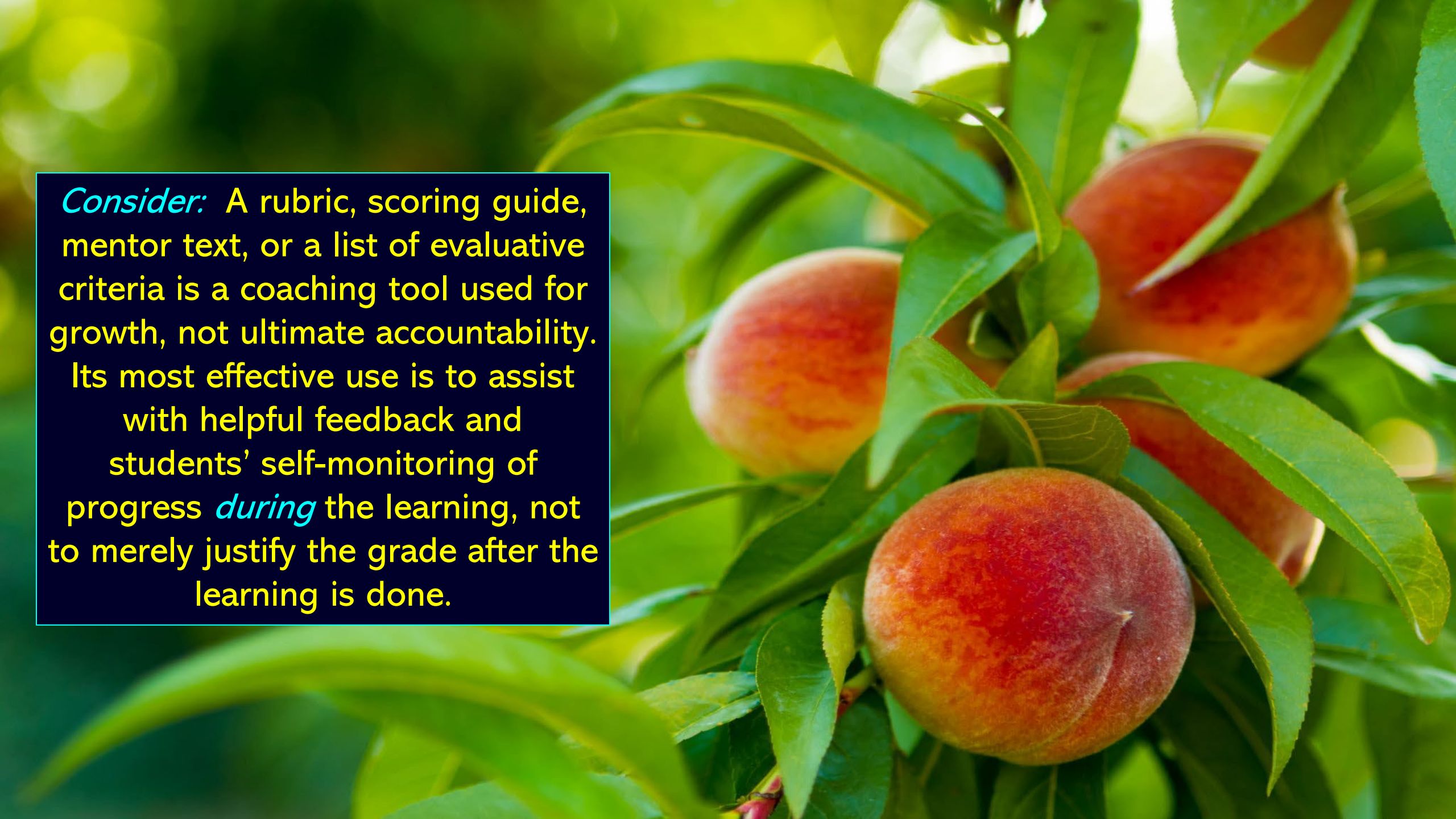


www.amle.org/where-do-we-find-the-time-to-do-all-this-stuff/

Key Principles


It’s about learning & growth,
NOT documenting failures or
mathematically justifying a grade.

Assessment is an ongoing process of gathering data (information) in order to provide feedback, monitor progress, and inform next steps in instruction. It's critical partner, feedback, does not judge or indict, nor is either one transactional. They are used to improve learning.

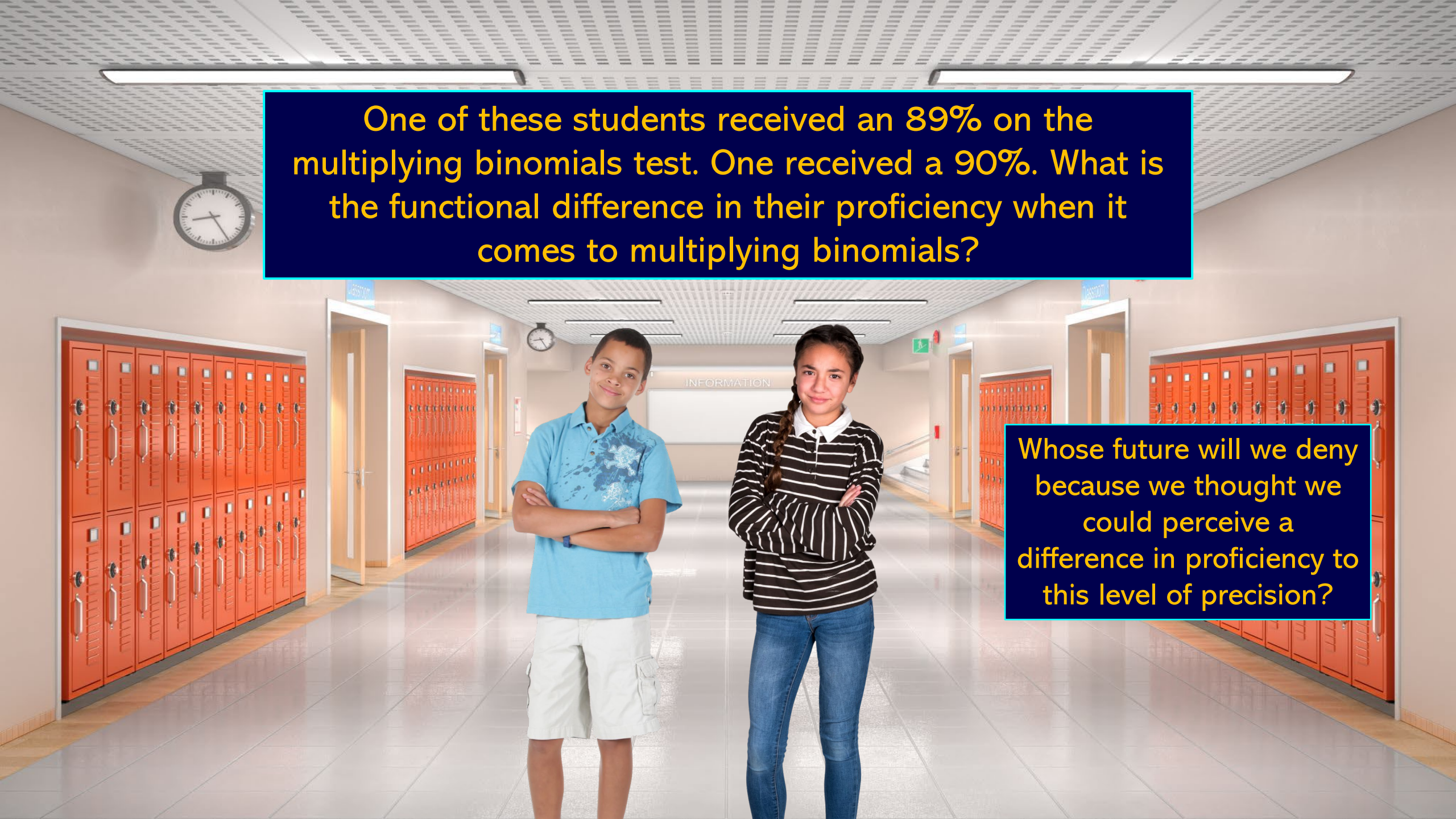


Consider: A rubric, scoring guide, mentor text, or a list of evaluative criteria is a coaching tool used for growth, not ultimate accountability. Its most effective use is to assist with helpful feedback and students' self-monitoring of progress *during* the learning, not to merely justify the grade after the learning is done.

A grade is not a statement or description of the student or her character. It is a summation of evidence as of one arbitrary calendar date indicating where she is right now on her learning journey.

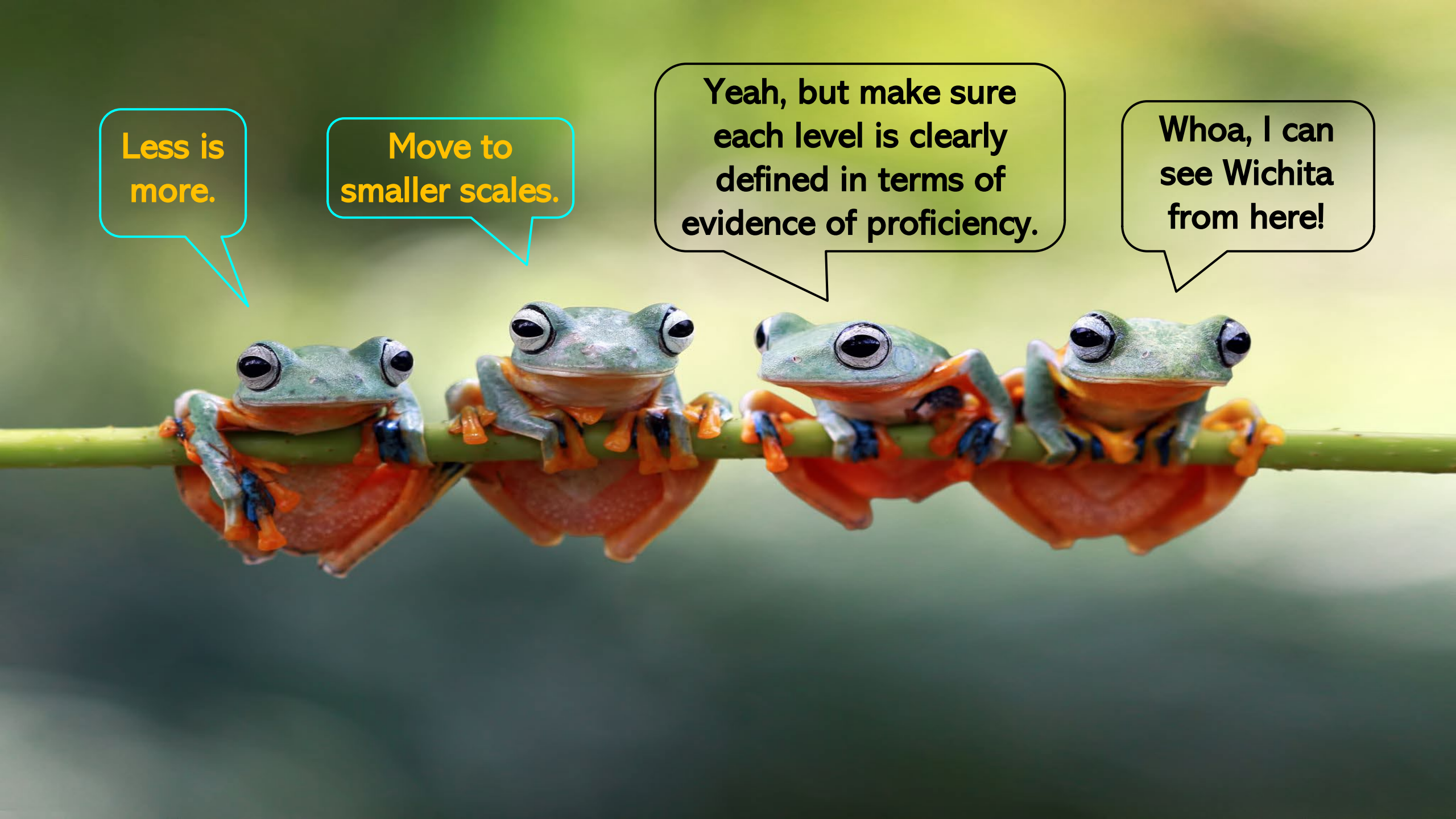
You are not your grade. You are infinitely more than your grade. Grades are temporary positions along the learning continuum at best.

Consider E- or digital portfolios carried over several years. Students maintain science, Spanish, CTE, physical education, math portfolios, and similar over all three years of 6th, 7th, and 8th grades, for example. When we do this, it doesn't matter what summer or school year a student learns the material, he is given full credit for competencies as demonstrated.


One of these students received an 89% on the multiplying binomials test. One received a 90%. What is the functional difference in their proficiency when it comes to multiplying binomials?
Whose future will we deny because we thought we could perceive a difference in proficiency to this level of precision?

The more levels we have in a grading scale, the more subjective and inconsistent are the scores among teachers.

The smaller the scale, however, the higher the inter-rater reliability, especially when attached to calibrated evidence descriptors. The grades have integrity; they mean what they say.


Less is more.
Move to smaller scales.
Yeah, but make sure each level is clearly defined in terms of evidence of proficiency.
Whoa, I can see Wichita from here!

Descriptor Words	Letter Grades	Letter Grades	Whole Numbers			Symbols
Proficient	O	A	3	4	5	
Approaching Proficient	G	B	2	3	4	
Basic Elements Demonstrated	S	C	1	2	3	
No Evidence	N	D	0	1	2	
No Evidence	U	F	0	0	1	

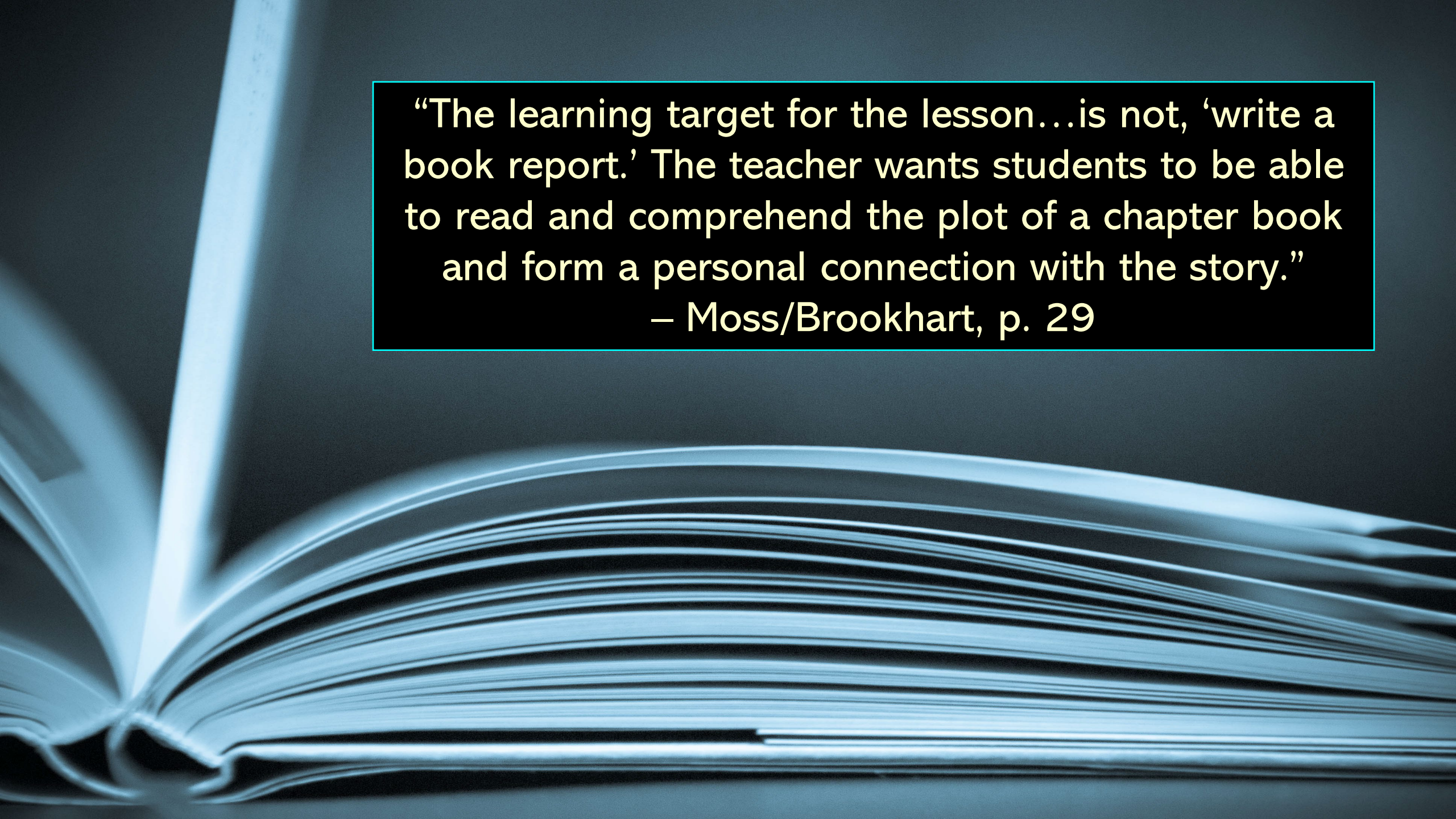
[And over a year or three, drop the 100-point scale.]

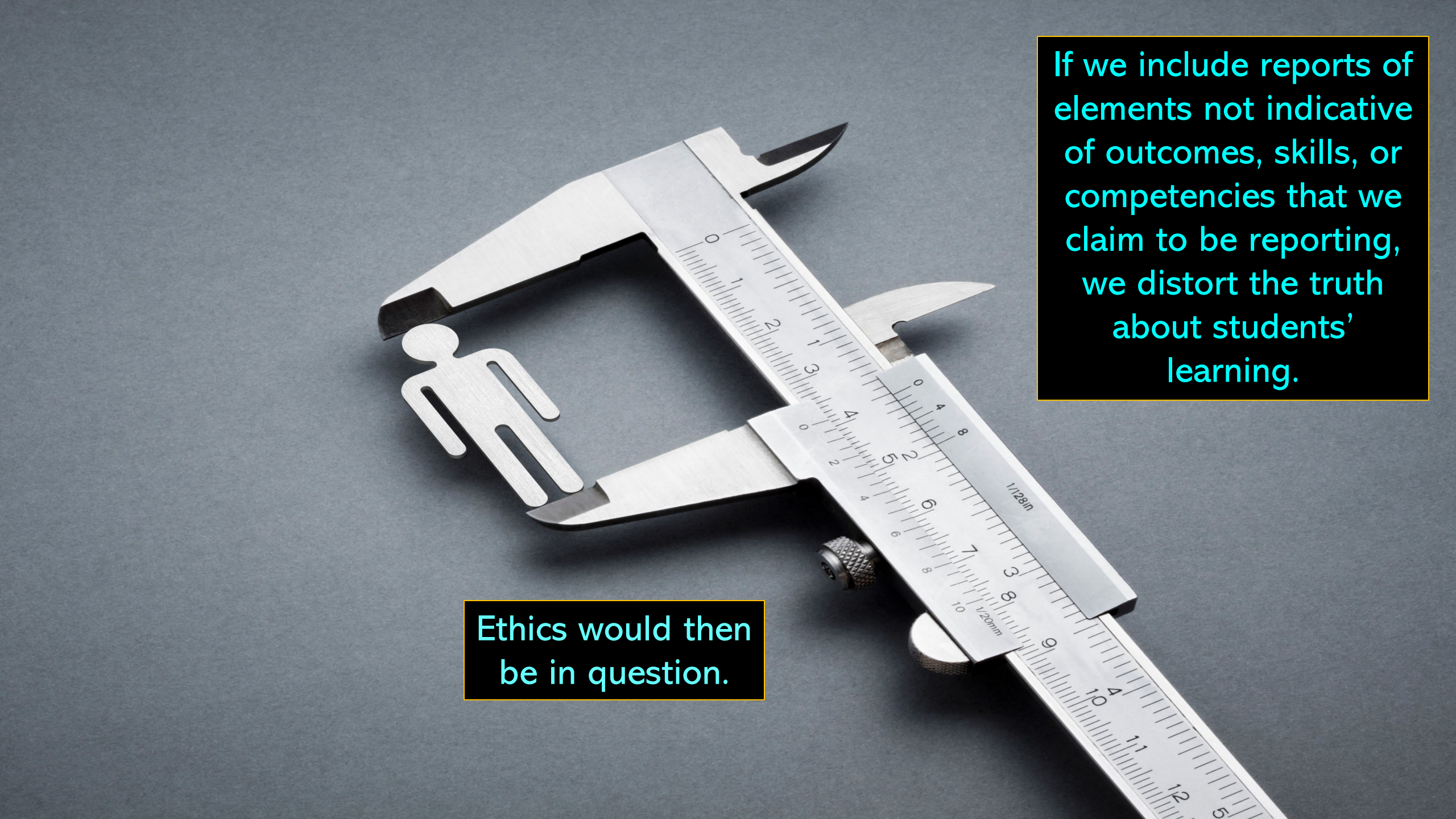
Arbitrary Equivalencies Chart

Notice that everything pivots through the Descriptors. If something is "Approaching Proficient," for example, it's 2 on a 3.0 scale, a 3 on a 4.0 scale, a smiley face on a symbol scale, and an 89% on the percent scale.

Grades, numbers, symbols, and single words are place-holders for summative judgements as of one arbitrary calendar date. They simply reference more thorough evidence descriptors.

Avoid Conflation


“The learning target for the lesson…is not, ‘write a book report.’ The teacher wants students to be able to read and comprehend the plot of a chapter book and form a personal connection with the story.”
– Moss/Brookhart, p. 29


If we include reports of elements not indicative of outcomes, skills, or competencies that we claim to be reporting, we distort the truth about students' learning.
Ethics would then be in question.

Grades should be accurate reports of student learning. Any practice that distorts this accuracy should be stopped.

Knowingly falsifying a grade report of student learning, is distorting the truth, which is deeply troubling, unhelpful, and inconsistent with profession and school values.

So, anything that doesn't report evidence of a specific learning standard, is reported……

Separately.

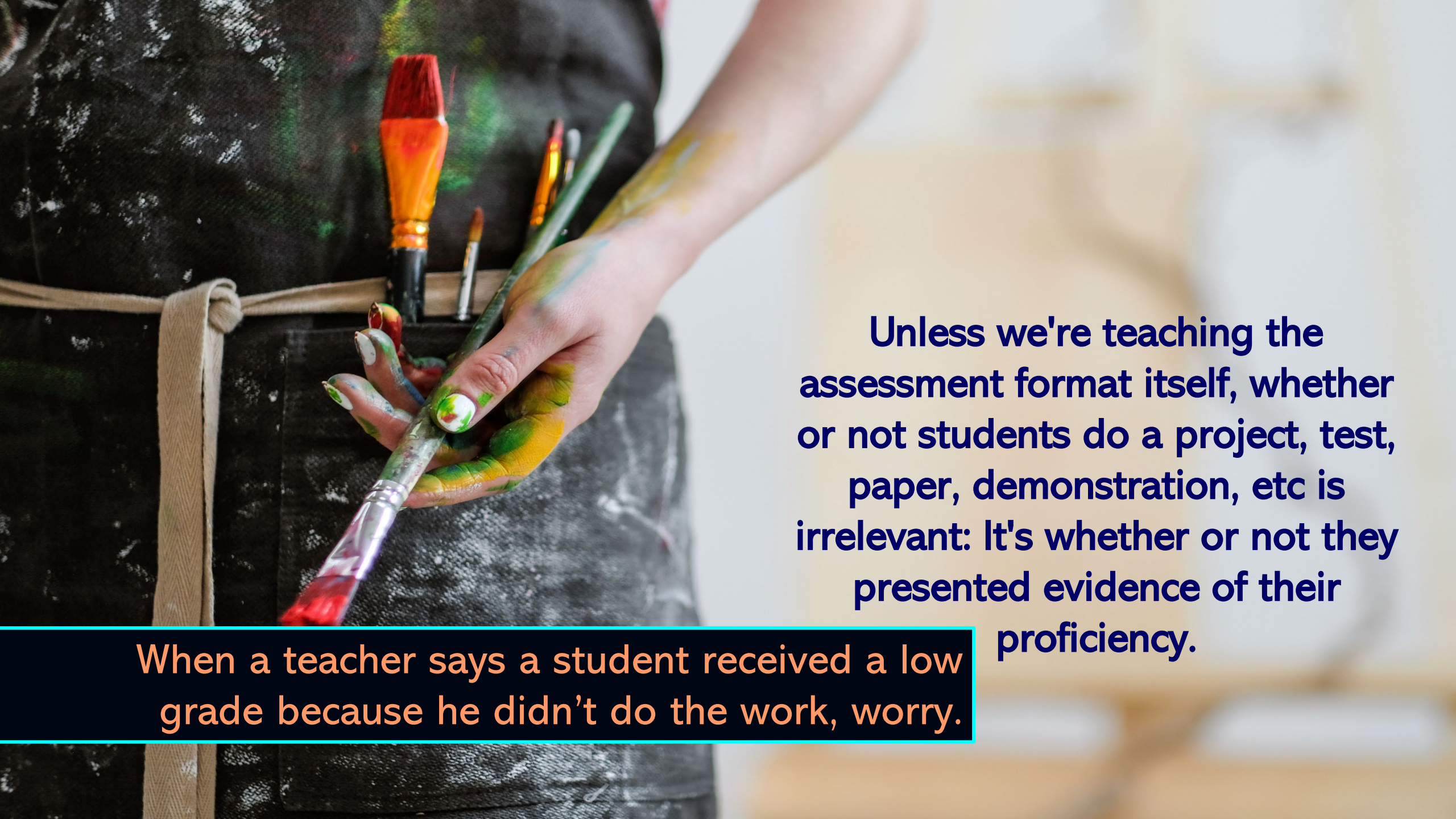
Academic Learning Regarding the Subject	Work Habits and Character


Bust the myth: We're not saying work habits and character don't count. We're saying they matter so much, they get their own separate reports, and that grade accuracy is so important, we won't let the report of one element misinform the report of another.

Yeah, he had 1-inch margins, but can he write well? Does he have a strong voice?

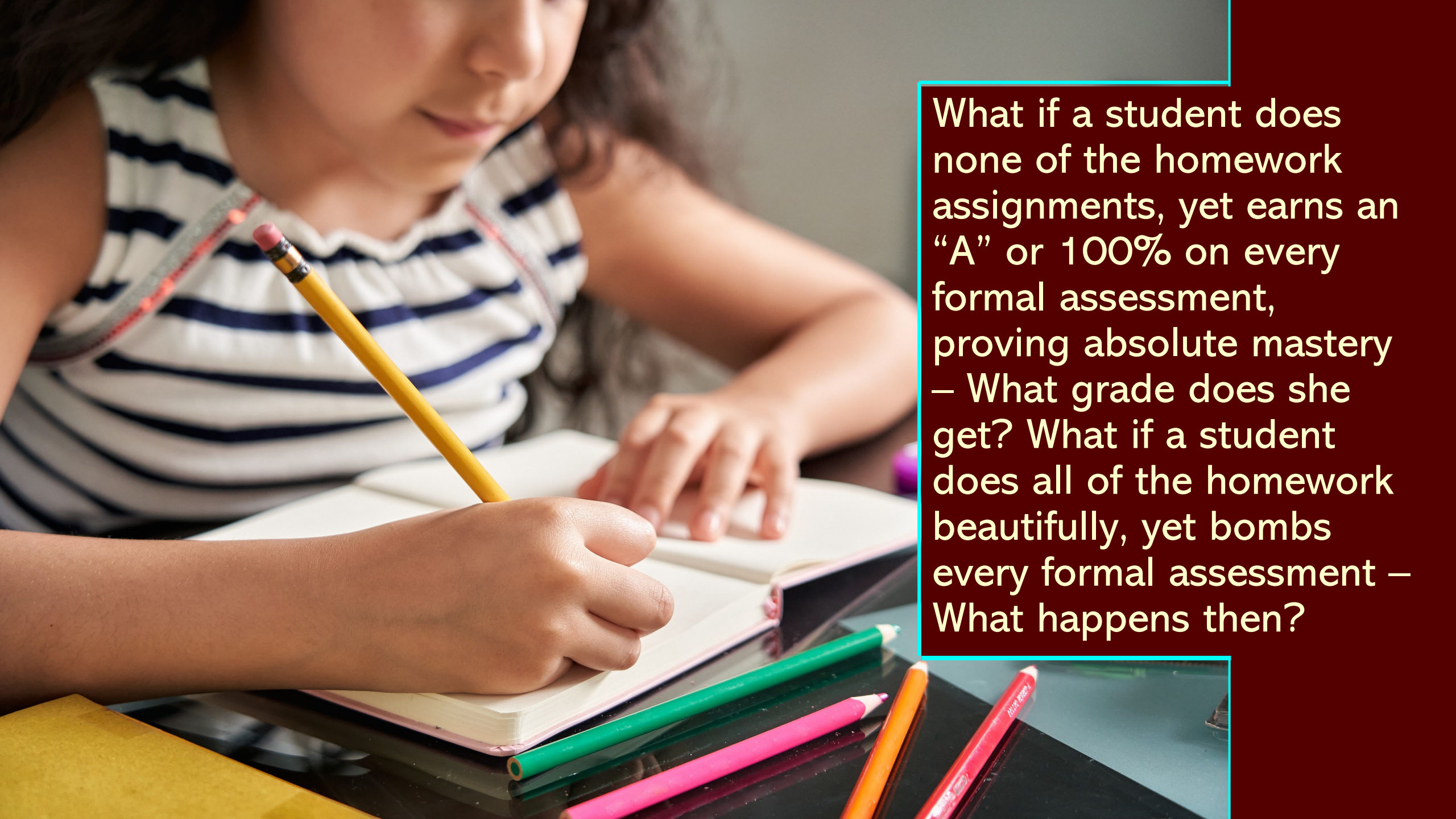
No, she didn't use a color printer per the directions, but did she interpret the data correctly and draw reasonable conclusions?


We're looking for evidence of learning, not the instrument used to convey it.
We're evaluating the produce, not the wagon used to delivery it.



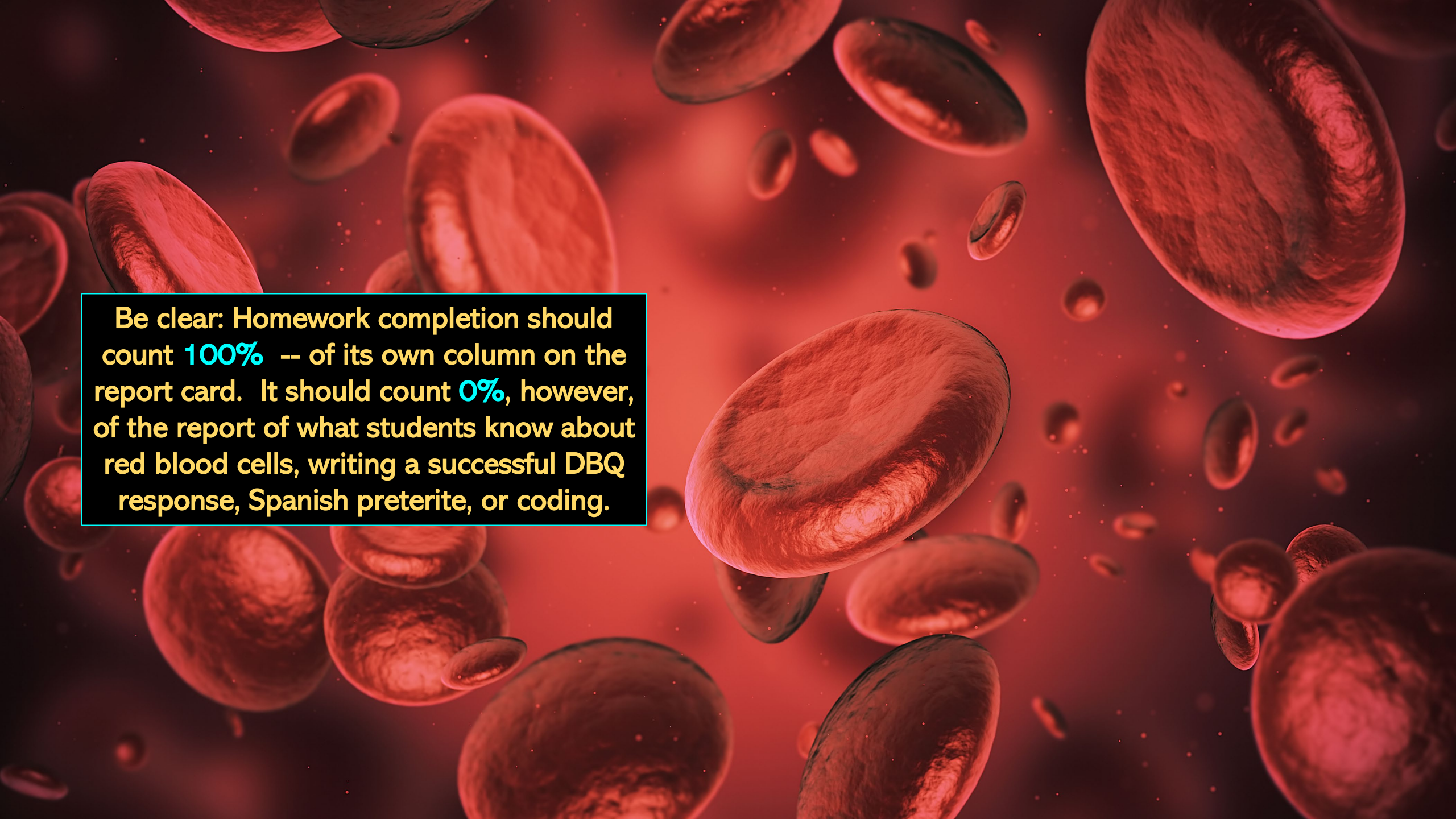
Unless we're teaching the assessment format itself, whether or not students do a project, test, paper, demonstration, etc is irrelevant: It's whether or not they presented evidence of their proficiency.

When a teacher says a student received a low grade because he didn’t do the work, worry.



What if a student does none of the homework assignments, yet earns an “A” or 100% on every formal assessment, proving absolute mastery – What grade does she get? What if a student does all of the homework beautifully, yet bombs every formal assessment – What happens then?

Homework is practice of what has already been vetted as learned, NOT to learn content or skills for the first time, OR to be the declarative proof of final proficiency at journey's end.


Be clear: Homework completion should count 100% -- of its own column on the report card. It should count 0%, however, of the report of what students know about red blood cells, writing a successful DBQ response, Spanish preterite, or coding.

What do all these have in common?

- Put name, date, period in the top right corner of the paper
- Completed a task in a timely manner
- Put in volunteer service hours
- Dressed appropriately
- Maintained a neat notebook
- Worked collaboratively in class
- Demonstrated courtesy and patience
- Used college-rule lined paper
- Invited a professional from the field to talk with the class
- Attended class regularly
- Participated in class

None of these report evidence of course content outcomes such as: *the student used the merge and center features properly to make his spreadsheet, sorted data in cells, demonstrated absolute and relative cell referencing, and he used basic formulas and functions, if-statements, and the sort and find function effectively.*

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But wait, a lot of these are actually important to upper academic level and working world success for which you are preparing students. They matter a lot!

So make them matter: Elevate their importance and give them their own report. Do not mix their report into the report of the student's performance with other content, however, as that would knowingly dilute the accuracy of your report for each element.

Work Behavior	Grade
Meets Deadlines	4.0
Takes Initiative	4.0
Task Analyzes	4.0
Works collaboratively	4.0
Demonstrates Good Organizational Skills	4.0
Remains Calm in the Face of challenges; Does not Frustrate Easily	4.0
Consistently Well-Provisioned, has Necessary Supplies	4.0

Since these elements are so important, give them their own radar – Report them separately from academic content and skills.

Three major “separations” or disaggregations to try in the first year:

Separate reports of proficiency with standards from reports of work habits, character, and learning methods

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Separate formative feedback reporting from summative evaluation

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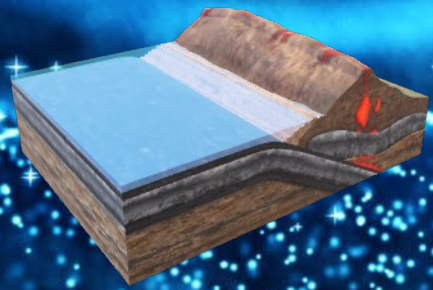
Separate the report of learning from reports of doing

Disaggregate

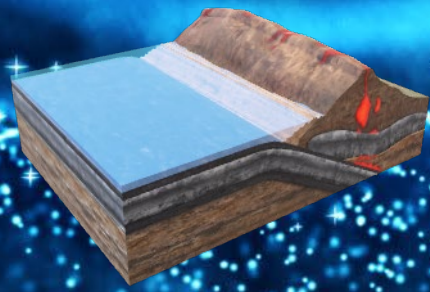
Learning Target:
Subduction Zones



The majority of the class…

Different pathways using divergent teaching strategies

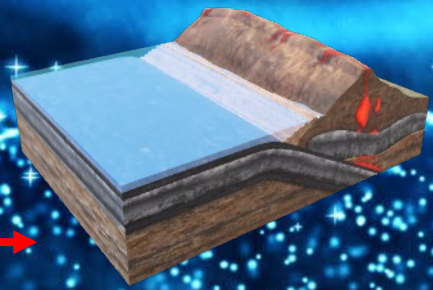
Learning Target:
Subduction Zones



The majority of the class...

Different pathways using divergent teaching strategies

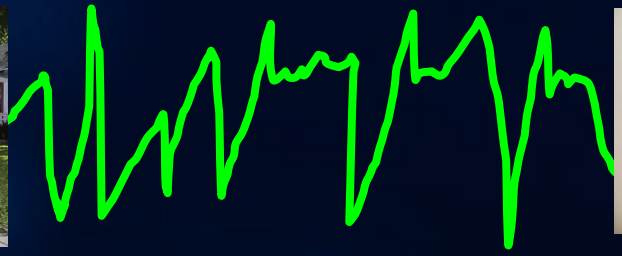
Learning Target: Subduction Zones



The majority of the class…

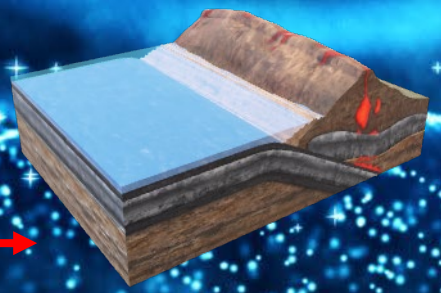
Varying levels & types of support early on and throughout learning

More or less time and practice needed at different stages of learning



Different pathways using divergent teaching strategies

Learning Target: Subduction Zones



The majority of the class…

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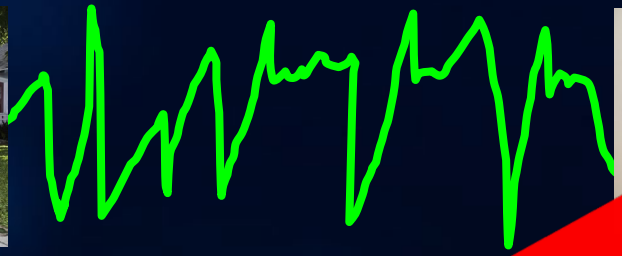
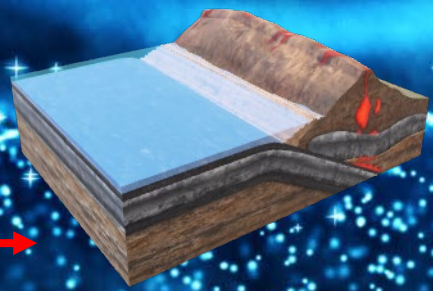


Different pathway using
divergent teaching strat

Learning Target:
Subduction Zones

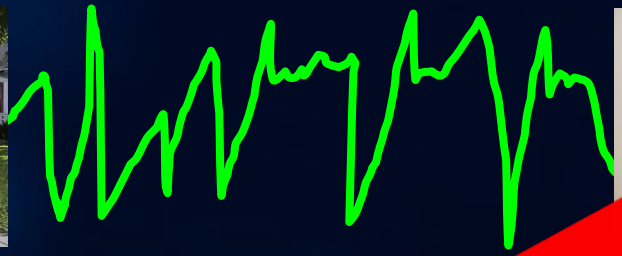


The majority o

Varying levels &
types of support
early on

None of this has anything to do with final evaluation or grading!

More or less time and
tice needed at
s of learning



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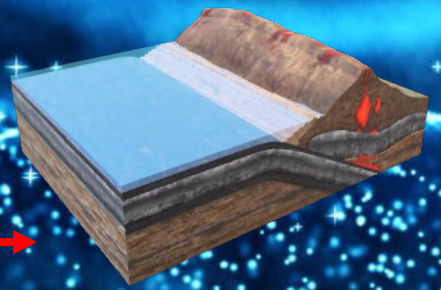
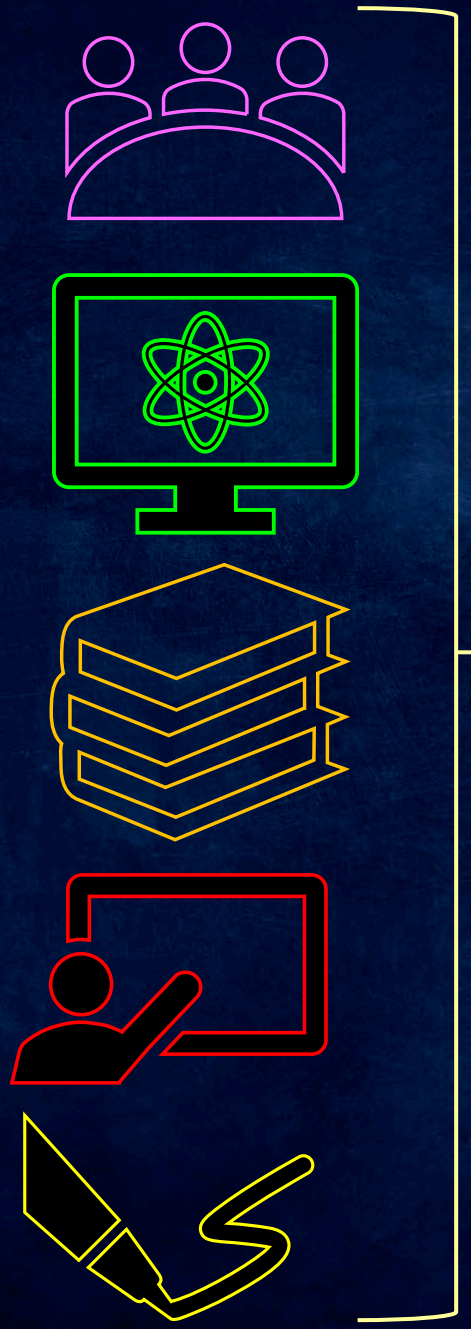


The grade is a report of what you know and can do at journey's end, not how you got there.

Varying levels &
types of support
early on



Functionally, then, anything that is a teaching technique or learning method is not included in the report of proficiency at journey's end, i.e. the report card grade.

What is the value of x when $2x + 3 = 3x - 4$

$$2x + 3 = 3x - 4$$

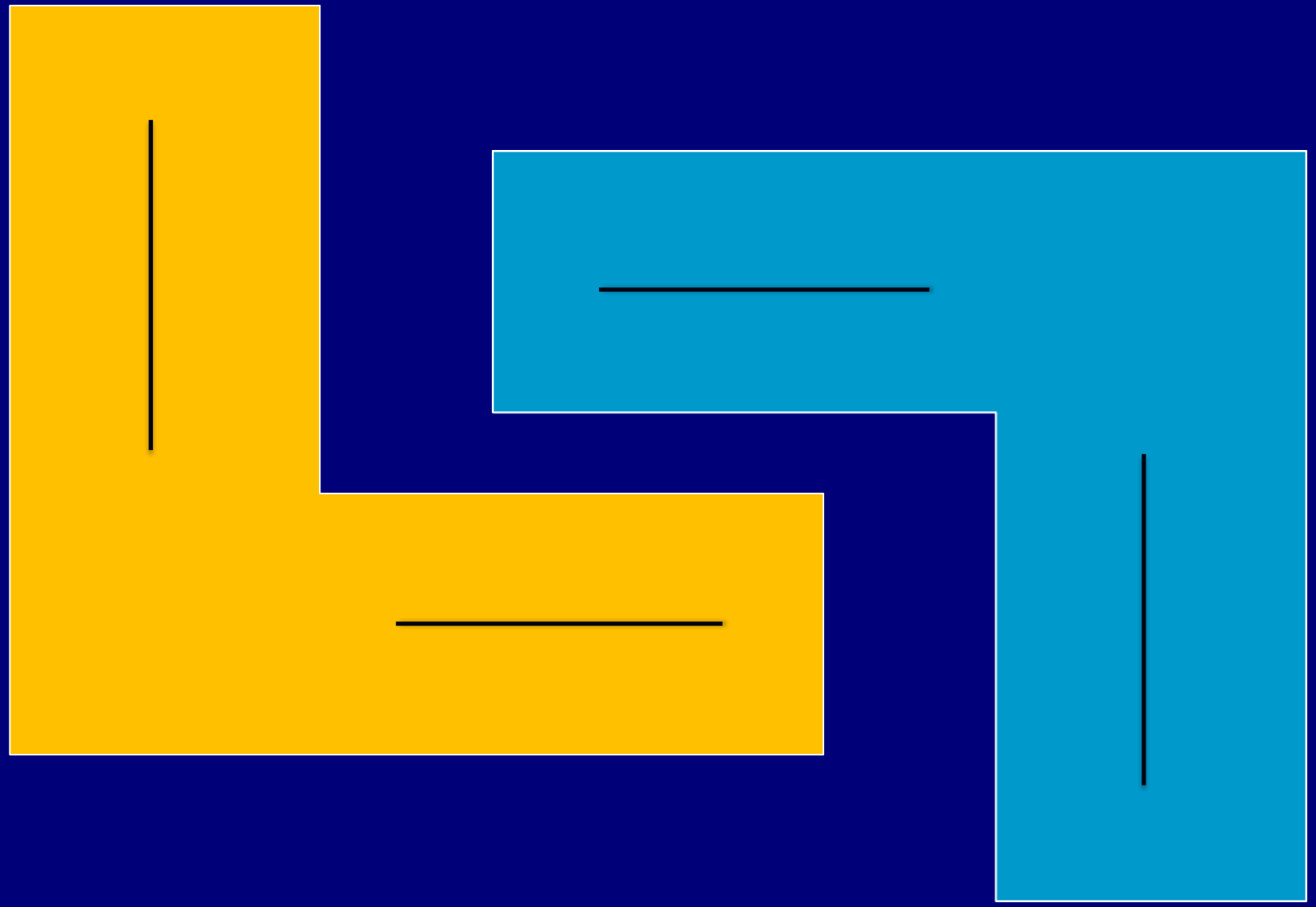
$$5x + 3 = -4$$

$$-4 = -4$$

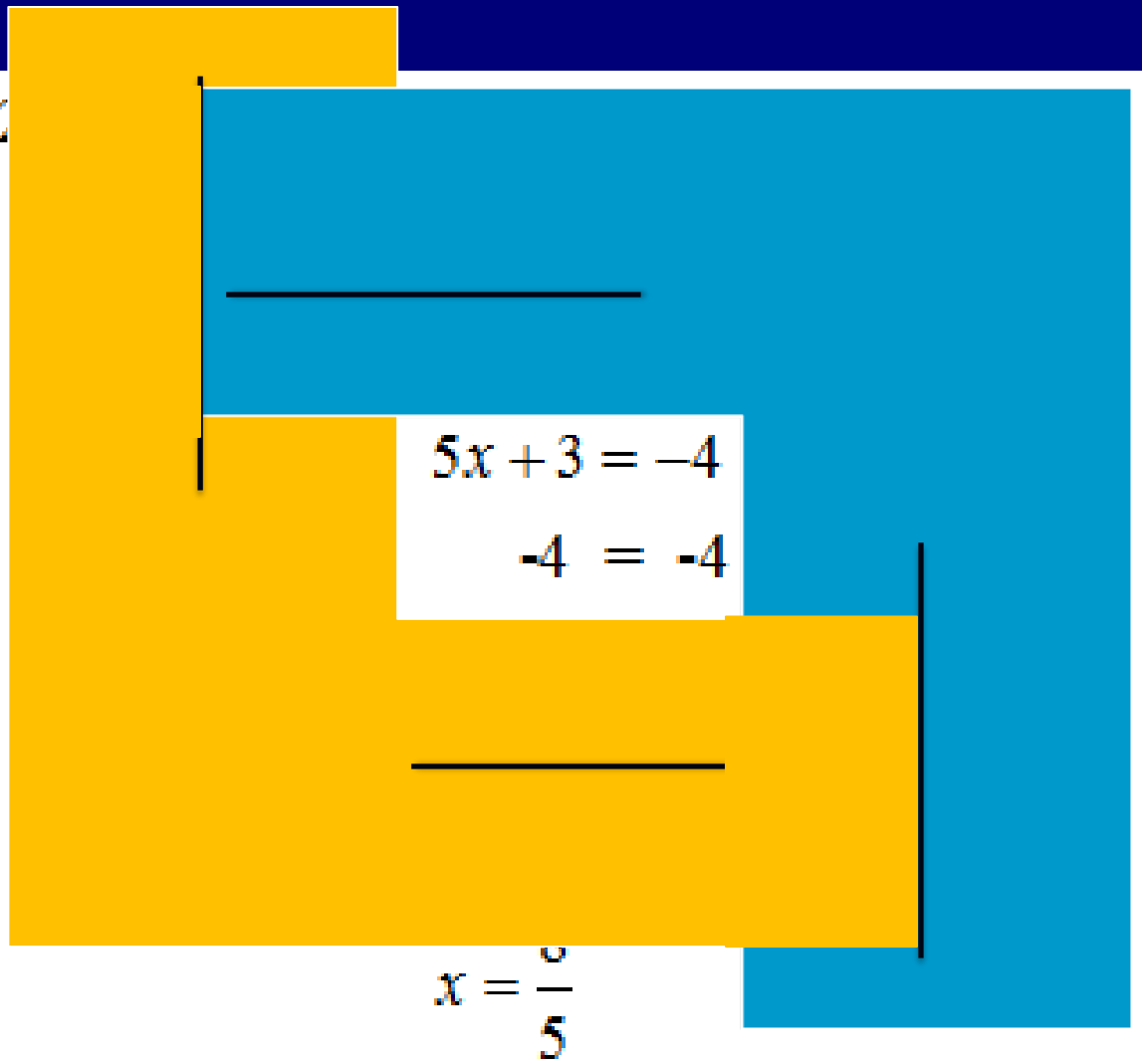
$$5x = 8$$

$$\frac{5x}{5} = \frac{8}{5}$$

$$x = \frac{8}{5}$$



What is the value of x when

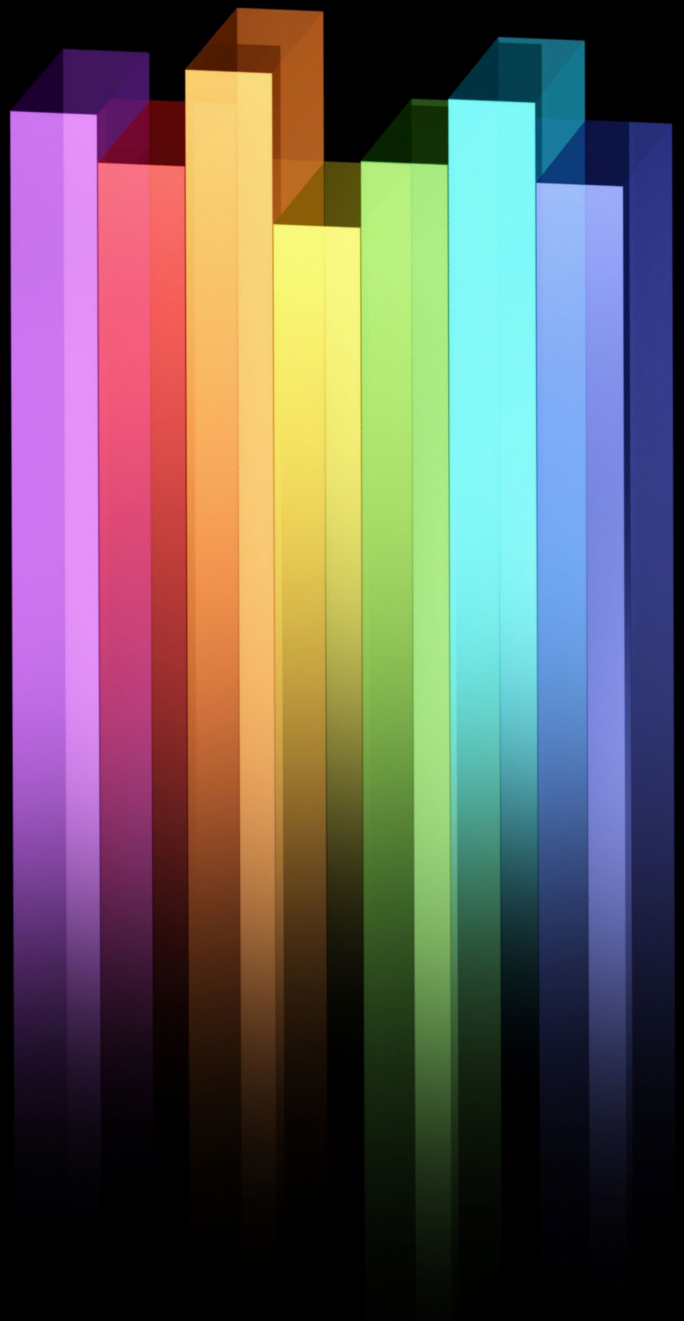


What about Late Work?

- One whole letter grade down for each day late is punitive. It does not teach students responsibility, and it moves students to rationalize giving up.
- Is it chronic or is it occasional?
- Report timeliness separately from the level of proficiency – Avoid conflating the two.
- Yes, the world beyond school ***is*** like this more than we think.

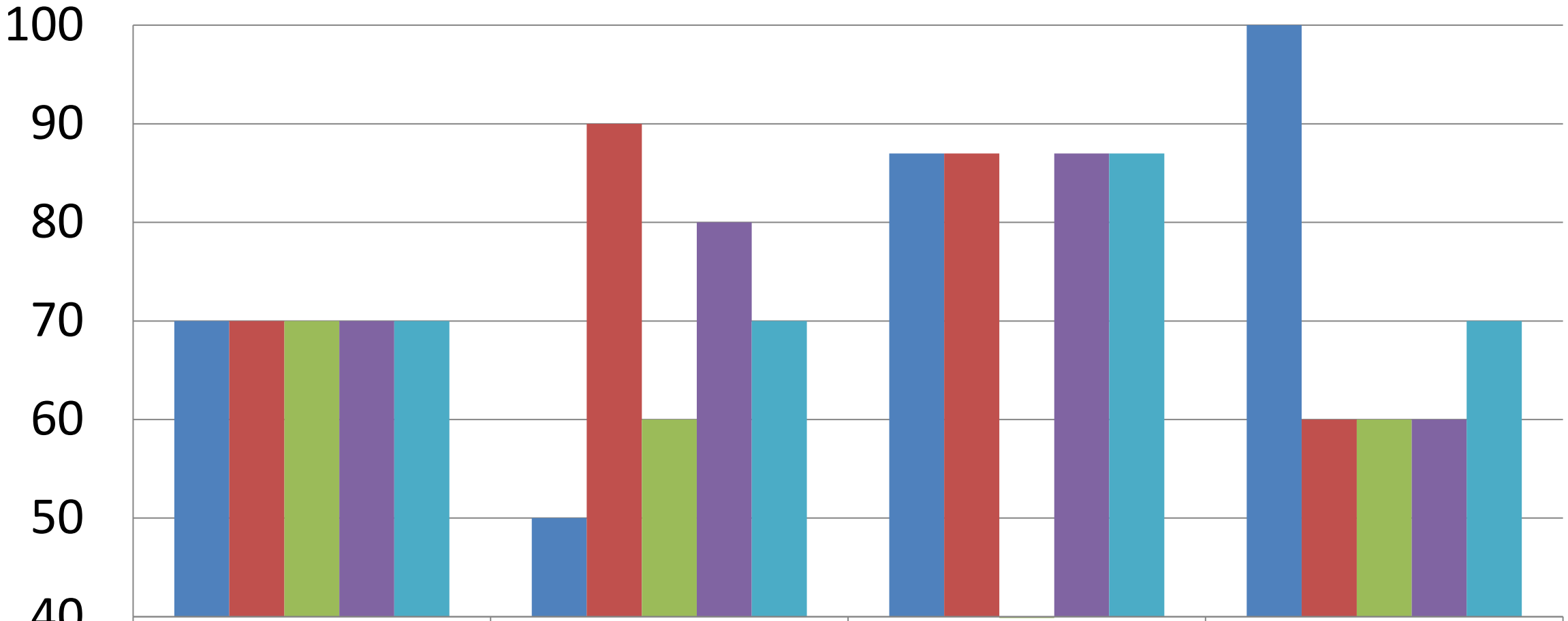
“One of the biggest misunderstandings…is that the non-achievement factors don't matter; they do. Achievement grades are the reason students will ultimately gain entry into college; their habits of learning are the reason they will graduate from college. It is not okay for students to turn work in late. But it's equally not okay to distort achievement levels as a result of lateness. Given current remote or hybrid learning models, the observation of these non-achievement factors has become increasingly more complex; having any of them contribute at all to a student's achievement grade would be inequitable and even unethical.”

- Tom Schimmer, www.ascd.org/el/articles/quality-over-counting-mindsets-for-grading-reform



Assessment must be revelatory (reveal story). So, yeah, write the outcomes/standards at the tops of tests, quizzes, writings, projects, labs, and other assessments, and record the appropriate report of proficiency for each one. Do not mash them up into one test score.

Give me feedback and later, grades, on individual outcomes. There is gold inside me. I am so much more than a composite report of my weakest areas allow to be reported.



	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D
Fiction	70	50	87	100
Non-Fiction	70	90	87	60
Writing	70	60	0	60
Speaking	70	80	87	60
Listening	70	70	87	70

TEST X

Student: _____

Date: _____

Code	Standard	Proficiency Level Demonstrated
A.1		3
A.2		3
G.5		3
G.11		4
G.12		3

- Test is organized as normally done, but codes for the specific standards being assessed by each prompt are placed next to each of those prompts.
- Test is organized into segments, with all the questions assessing a particular standards located together.

TEST X

Student: _____

Date: _____

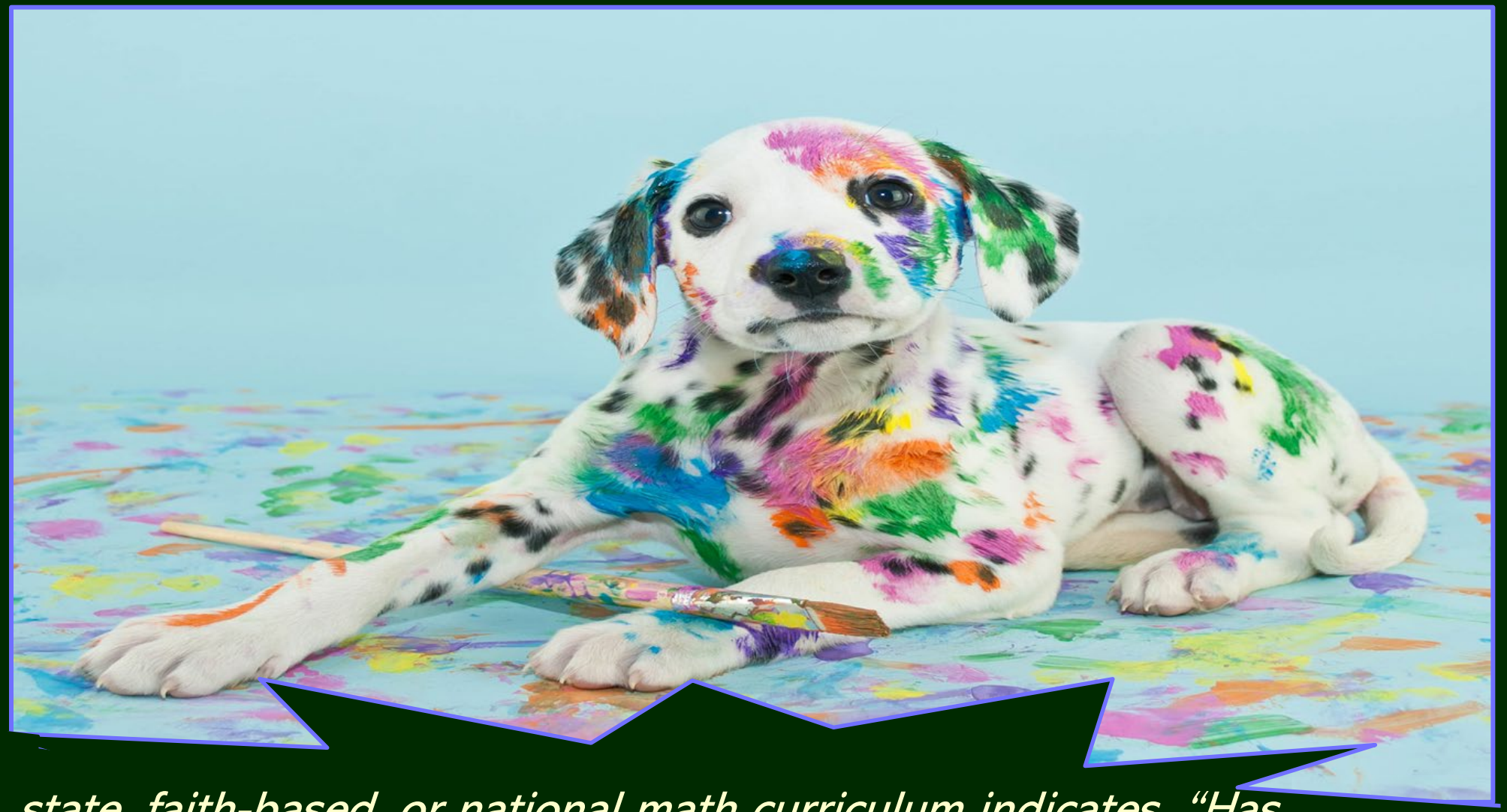
G.11 12. $5x + 6 = 66$

[Of course, if we can color our fonts, we can simply color code evidence for each standard: All green refers to evidence for G.11, all red refers to evidence for G.12, and so on.]

- Test is organized as normally done, but codes for the specific standards being assessed by each prompt are placed next to each of those prompts.
- Test is organized into segments, with all the questions assessing a particular standards located together.

Become Evidentiary


Key to Cell Model:
- The Cell Wall (1st and 2nd layers)
- Protein Gateway (part of the cell wall)
- Nucleus
- Nucleolus
- Nuclear Envelope (With Pores)
- Golgi Body
- Mitochondria
- Lysosome
- Ribosome
- Vacuole
- Cytoplasm
- Rough ER
- Smooth ER
- Micro Tubules



No local, state, faith-based, or national math curriculum indicates, "Has a nice, neat math notebook," as one of its math standards. Should it be a part of the math grade on what students know about graphing?

The most useful assessment for most situations is criterion-referenced.

Teacher: “He’s above average in his CTE class.” (Norm-referenced)

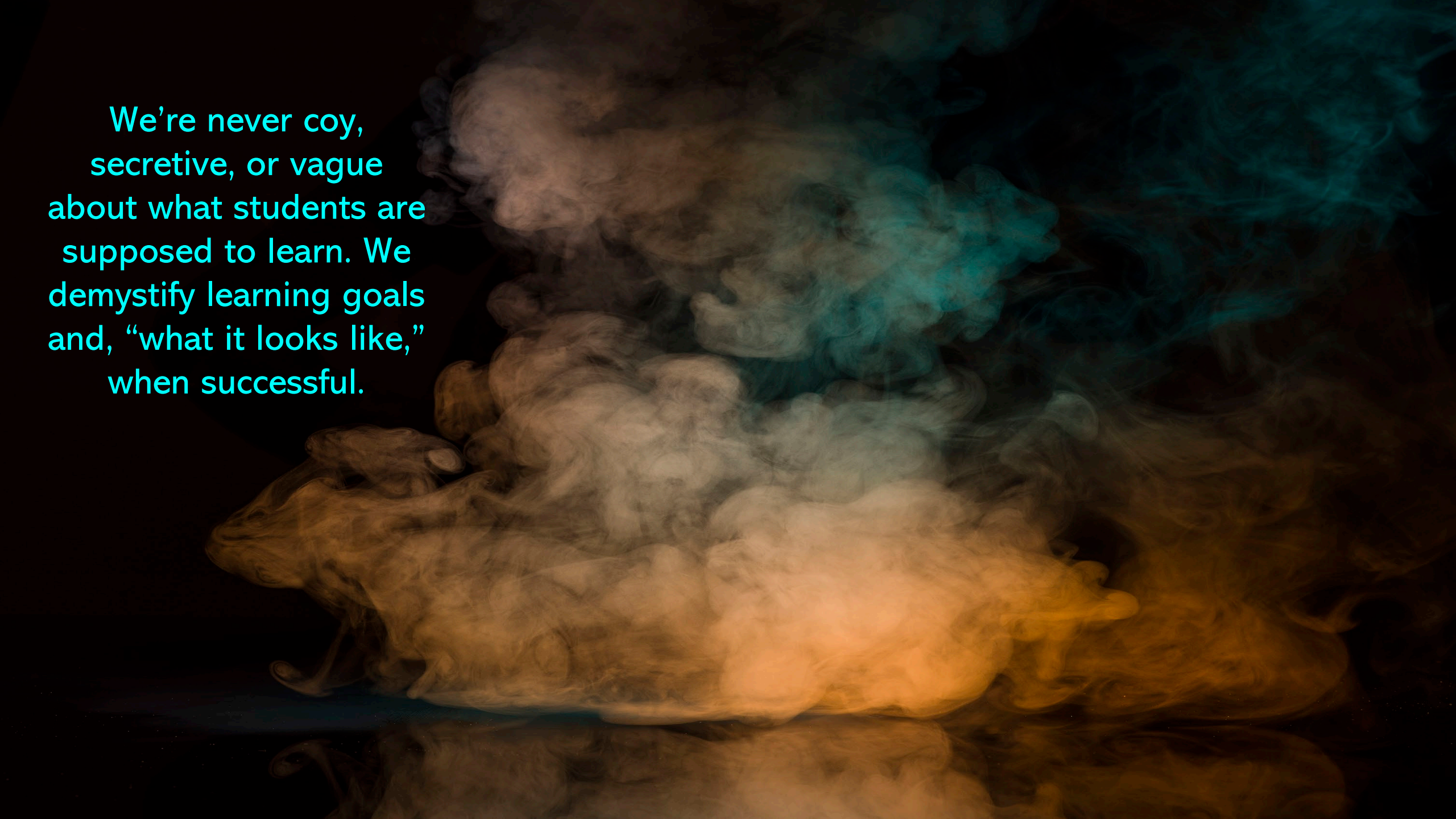
Parents: “Yeah, but what has he learned specifically?

(Criterion-referenced)

At its basic level, a grade expresses a student's school performance as a report of evidence of specific standards and competencies. Academic grades rally around content and skills, *nothing else*. We want to know to what degree "Junior" can:

- Explain the dual nature of light
- Determine the area of a polygon
- Analyze an argument
- Titrate liquids
- Use knowledge of exercise and metabolism to make healthy snack choices
- Write an information paragraph
- Incorporate musical dynamics in a successful concerto

Ethical, accurate grading is focused on clear communication: Grades are an undistorted report of student proficiency as of one calendar date.


We’re never coy, secretive, or vague about what students are supposed to learn. We demystify learning goals and, “what it looks like,” when successful.

Great assessment is never kept in the dark.

"Students can hit any target they can see and which stands still for them."

- Rick Stiggins, Educator and Assessment expert

If a child ever asks, "Will this be on the test?," we haven't done our job.

Assessment and grading are never a game of guessing what's on the teacher's mind. Students and parents should know how a student moves from a 0 to 1, a 1 to 2, a 2 to a 3, and 3 to a 4 on any standard.

The implicit is made explicit, with clear transparency for expectations at each level of proficiency. Students know where they stand against the evaluative criteria.

Three Great Ideas that Shape our Evidence Culture:

- Stop referring to points, grades, scores, and percentages. Use the proficiency terms only.

- Using the same evaluative criteria that will be applied to their own efforts, ask students to analyze samples from different levels of proficiency, and as they work on their own versions, ask them periodically to explain how their efforts demonstrate the criteria for success.

It’s appropriate to ask students to prove their proof, give evidence for their evidence.

What is Mastery?

“Tim was so learned, that he could name a horse in nine languages; so ignorant, that he bought a cow to ride on.”

Ben Franklin, 1750, *Poor Richard’s Almanac*

- Determine the surface area of a cube.
- Determine the surface area of a rectangular prism (a rectangular box)
- Determine the amount of wrapping paper needed for another rectangular box, keeping in mind the need to have regular places of overlapping paper so you can tape down the corners neatly
- Determine the amount of paint needed to paint an entire Chicago skyscraper, if one can of paint covers 46 square feet, and without painting the windows, doorways, or external air vents

Which one qualifies for an "A" in the gradebook?

Working Definition of Mastery (Wormeli)

Students have mastered content when they demonstrate a thorough understanding as evidenced by doing something substantive with the content beyond merely echoing it. Anyone can repeat information; it's the masterful student who can break content into its component pieces, explain it and alternative perspectives regarding it cogently to others, critique others in their demonstration of content and skills, and use it purposefully in new situations.

Consider your qualifiers –
In order to be Proficient (or achieve Mastery), students can demonstrate the concepts or skills…

- Accurately?
- Frequently/Consistently?
- Independently?
- Efficiently?
- Safely?
- with Agility?
- Quickly?
- with proper Disposition?
- Responding effectively to novelty and variables?

What do these descriptions mean?

Intellectually agile

Versatile

Divergent

Perseveres

Balanced

Skillful

Astute

Adapts readily

Innovative

Wide repertoire

Flexible

Assimilates

Multi-faceted

Dives deeply

Not formulaic

Mentally/skillfully dexterous

Authentic voice, Genuine

Capacity to transfer

Evaluating the Quality of our Assessments Helps Us Think about our Evidence

- What are your essential and enduring skills and content you're trying to assess?
- How does this assessment allow students to demonstrate their mastery?
- Is every component of that objective accounted for in the assessment?
- Is this assessment more a test of the chosen format or of actual learning?
- Can students respond another way and still satisfy the requirements of the assessment task? Would this alternative way reveal a student's mastery more accurately?

Objective Selection Criteria

(Larry Ainsworth, *Common Formative Assessments, 2.0*, Corwin, 2015, p. 59)

- Endurance (lasting beyond one grade or course; concepts and skills needed in life)
- Leverage (crossover applications within the content area and to others content areas; interdisciplinary)
- Readiness for next level of learning (prerequisite concepts and skills needed for the next level of the course)
- External exam requirements

Where do we get ideas for evidence of students' proficiencies in Outcomes and Standards?

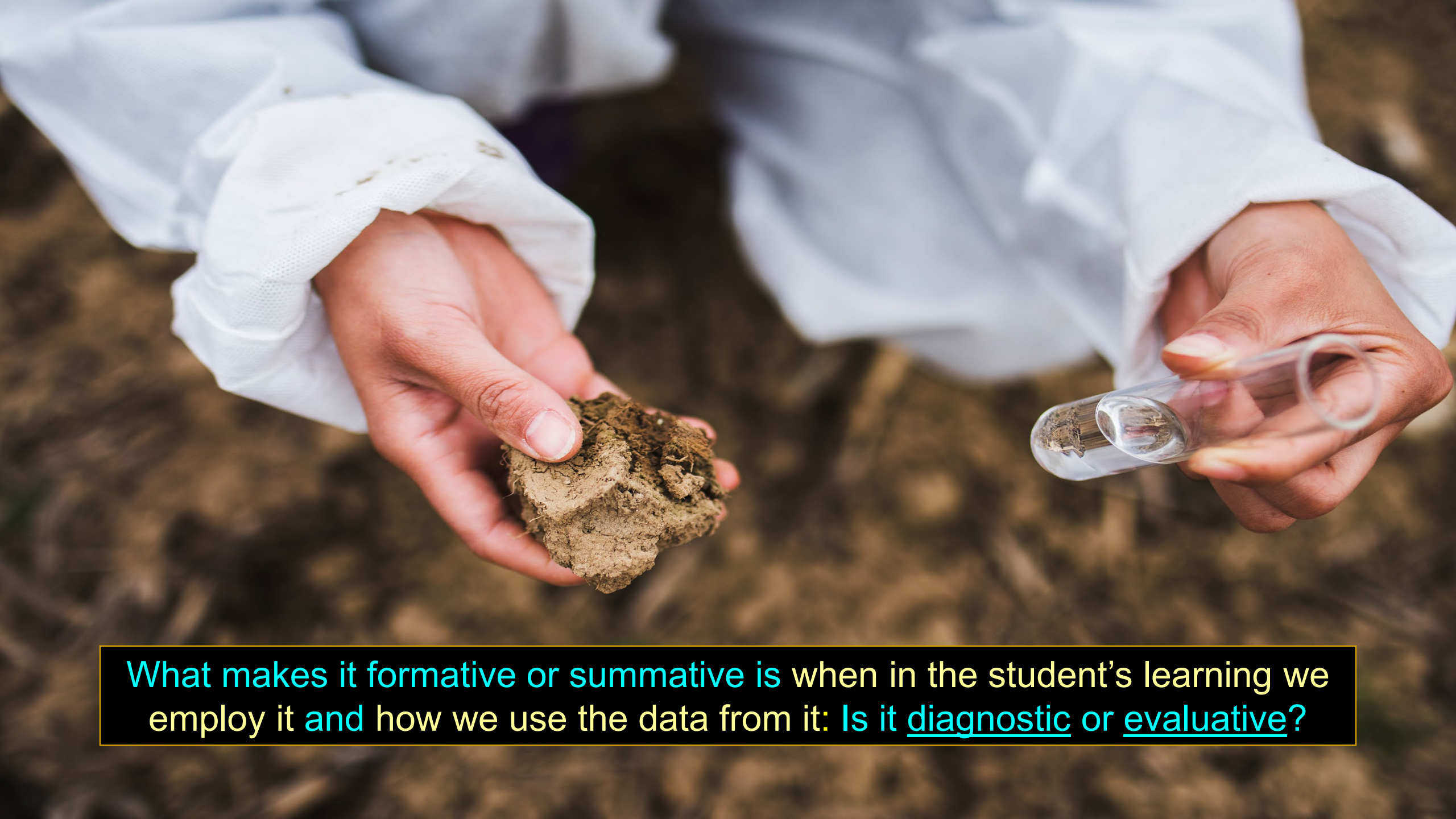
- Our own expertise
- Other teachers' tests/online tutorials
- Subject associations
- Books on our standards
- Professional conferences
- Accreditation requirements
- Professional Learning Network (PLN)
- Common Core or Other Curriculum
- Provincial mandated curriculum
- Other school districts posted standards, benchmarks, Programs of Studies

Formative vs Summative


What is the role of each one?
Formative Assessment
Summative Judgment

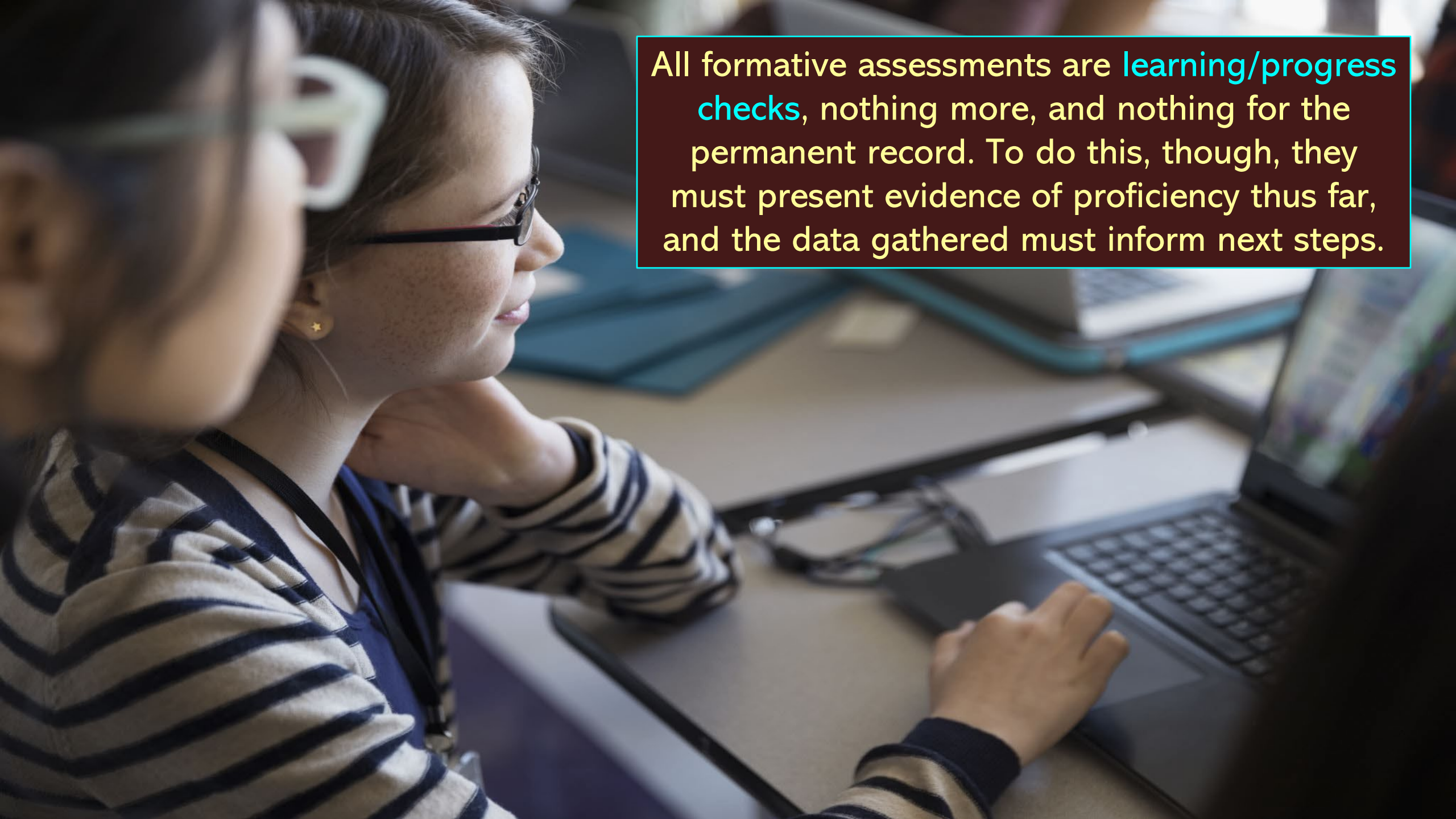

Everything is formative
until it's not.
To be clear, anything originally designated as summative can become a formative any time we think we can improve learning.

Anything once declared as summative can be turned into a formative experience. The only reason we don't do this in some schools is because of uninformed policy, lack of commitment to student learning and achievement, and false notions of how we instill self-discipline and personal responsibility in students.

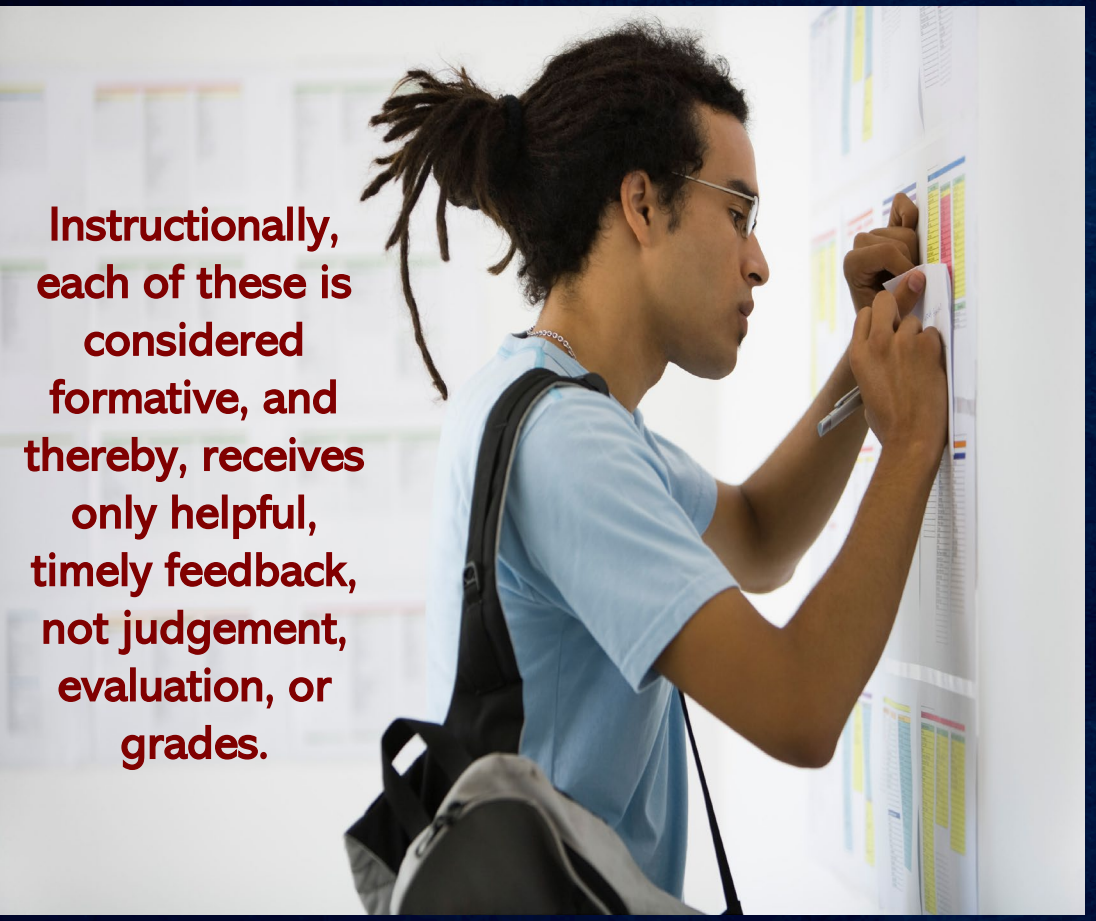


What makes it formative or summative is when in the student's learning we employ it and how we use the data from it: Is it diagnostic or evaluative?

This means anything in the coming-to-know (formative) portion of the learning does *not* count in the final grade, as it's meant to be low stakes, high feedback, 'a safe place to wrestle with ideas and skills without these early attempts and practice being used as final evaluation of proficiency, which is knowingly falsifying a final grade.



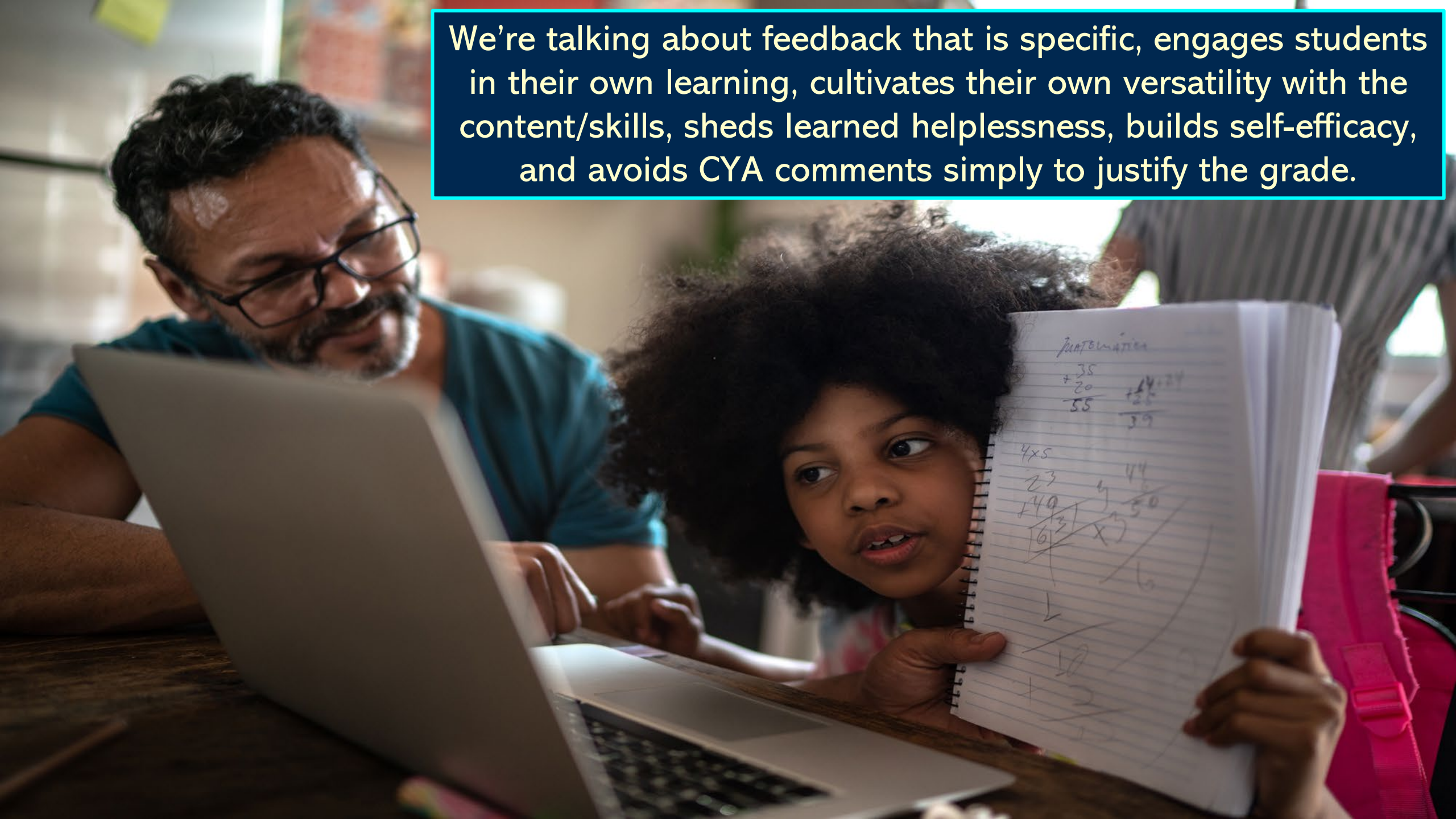
All formative assessments are learning/progress checks, nothing more, and nothing for the permanent record. To do this, though, they must present evidence of proficiency thus far, and the data gathered must inform next steps.



- Labs (unless used for final demonstrations of proficiency)
- Writings (unless used for final demonstrations of proficiency)
- Competitions or exhibitions that are a part of series of such
- Anything used as way for students first come to know and practice content and/or skills
- Anything once declared as final or summative that receives helpful feedback students can use to improve learning
- Anything that requires multiple drafts or versions
- Homework/Classwork
- Online modules
- Exit slips/cards
- Quizzes
- Group projects
- Maintaining notebooks, note-taking

Descriptive, Actionable Feedback and Student Self-Monitoring

Feedback is only helpful if it's actionable.

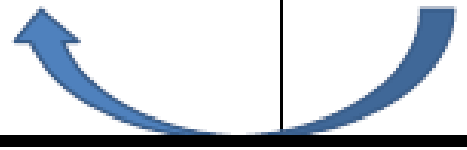


We're talking about feedback that is specific, engages students in their own learning, cultivates their own versatility with the content/skills, sheds learned helplessness, builds self-efficacy, and avoids CYA comments simply to justify the grade.

The 4 Big Questions for Teacher Clarity

p. 5

Guiding Questions	
For Students	For Teachers
1. What am I learning today?	1. What is the purpose and goal of this lesson (learning target)?
2. How will I show that I know?	2. How will the formative assessments measure where students are with mastery towards this goal?
3. How will I know how well I'm achieving the Learning Target?	3. What details will guide the students towards mastery of this learning target via the formative assessment?
4. Why am I learning this? What is the relevance of this lesson to me?	4. Why is this learning target important?



From your curriculum work with LeAnn Nickelsen (Used with Permission)


Instead of “feedback,” some educators call it, “feed*forward*.”

Thank you for letting me observe your class today. I wonder if you have time for some feedback?

Feedback isn’t something to endure; it something to welcome. Worry when there’s no feedback.

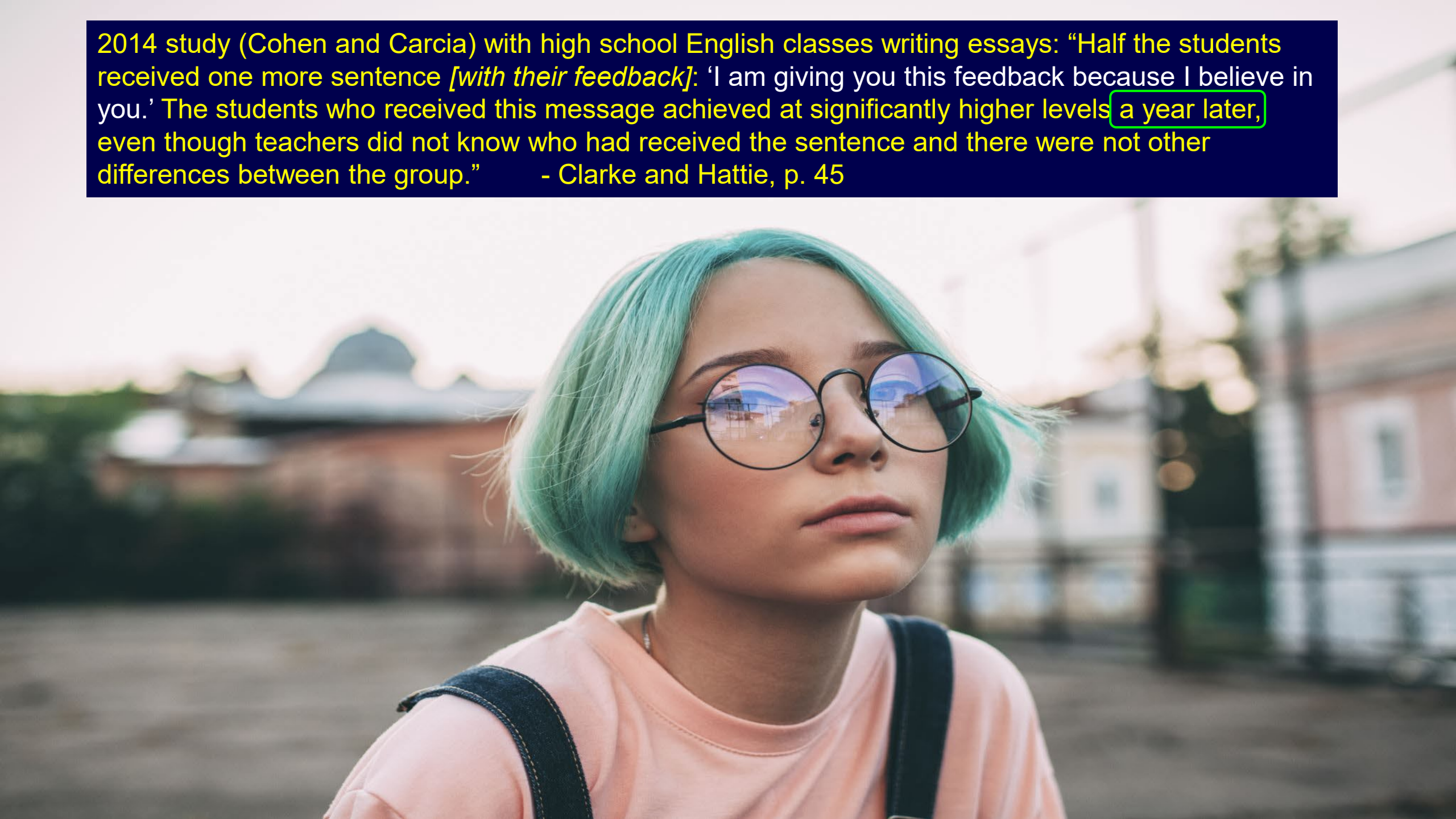
“The Story of Austin’s Butterfly”
with Ron Berger
www.youtube.com/watch?v=hqh1MRWZjms

Let’s process the video a moment:

- *What does the teacher do -- What are the elements of feedback you see used?*
- *What about helpful feedback was made clear to students in this experience?*
- *What elements demonstrated here could you incorporate in your lessons in your subject(s) and grade level(s)?*
- *How is our teaching (and students’ learning) affected positively, given the foundation of education as an effort to, “draw out?”*

EXPEDITIONARY
LEARNING

2014 study (Cohen and Carcia) with high school English classes writing essays: “Half the students received one more sentence *[with their feedback]*: ‘I am giving you this feedback because I believe in you.’ The students who received this message achieved at significantly higher levels a year later, even though teachers did not know who had received the sentence and there were not other differences between the group.” - Clarke and Hattie, p. 45




Judgement inhibits learning; it limits the instructional impact of descriptive feedback. Ego and status are invoked.

Avoid

- “Using words and phrases that ‘lecture’ or ‘boss’
- Telling the student what to do, leaving nothing up to the student’s choice
- Assuming that your feedback is the last word, the final expert opinion”

VS

- Finding fault

- Brookhart, 2028, p. 26, 34

Tone matters.

Tone matters.

Avoid

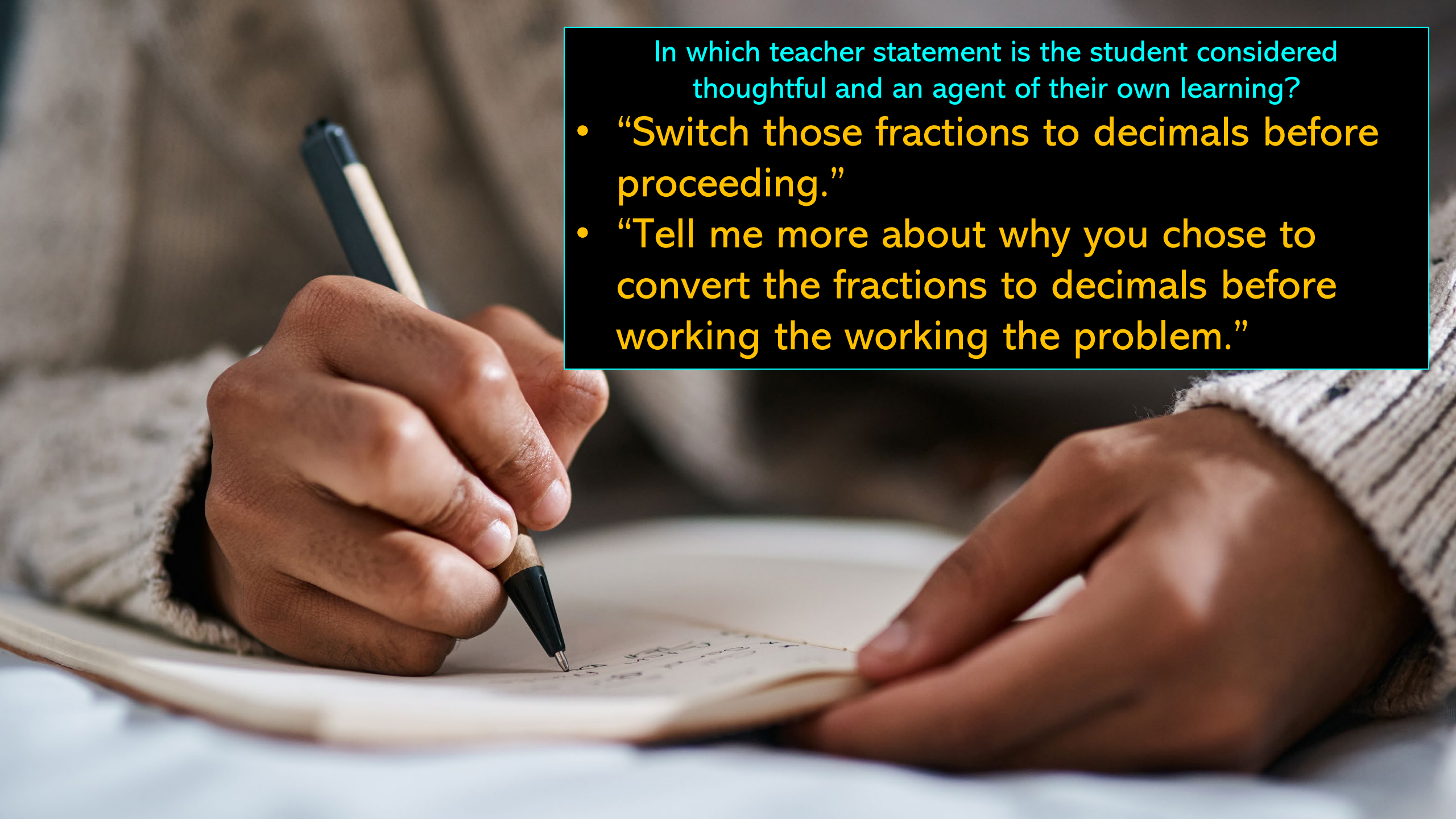
- "Using words and phrases that 'lecture' or 'boss'
- Telling the student what to do, leaving nothing up to the student's choice
- Assuming that your feedback is the last word, the final expert opinion"
- Finding fault

vs

- Brookhart, 2028, p. 26, 34

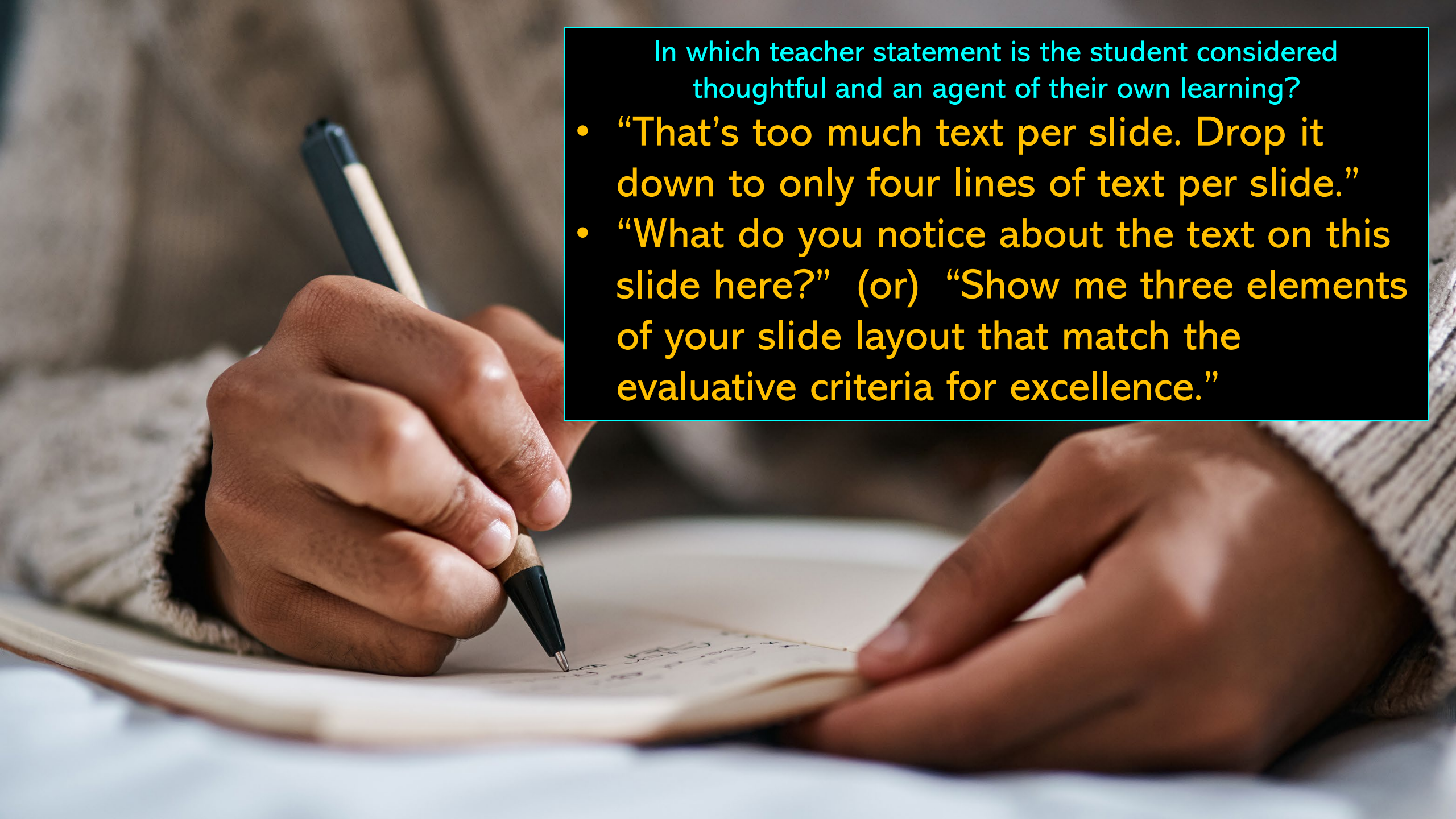
Do Instead:

- "Using words and phrases that assume the student is an active learner
- Asking questions
- Sharing what you are wondering about"
- Seeking to understand, compare to exemplars, re-direct, not blame



In which teacher statement is the student considered thoughtful and an agent of their own learning?

- “Switch those fractions to decimals before proceeding.”
- “Tell me more about why you chose to convert the fractions to decimals before working the working the problem.”



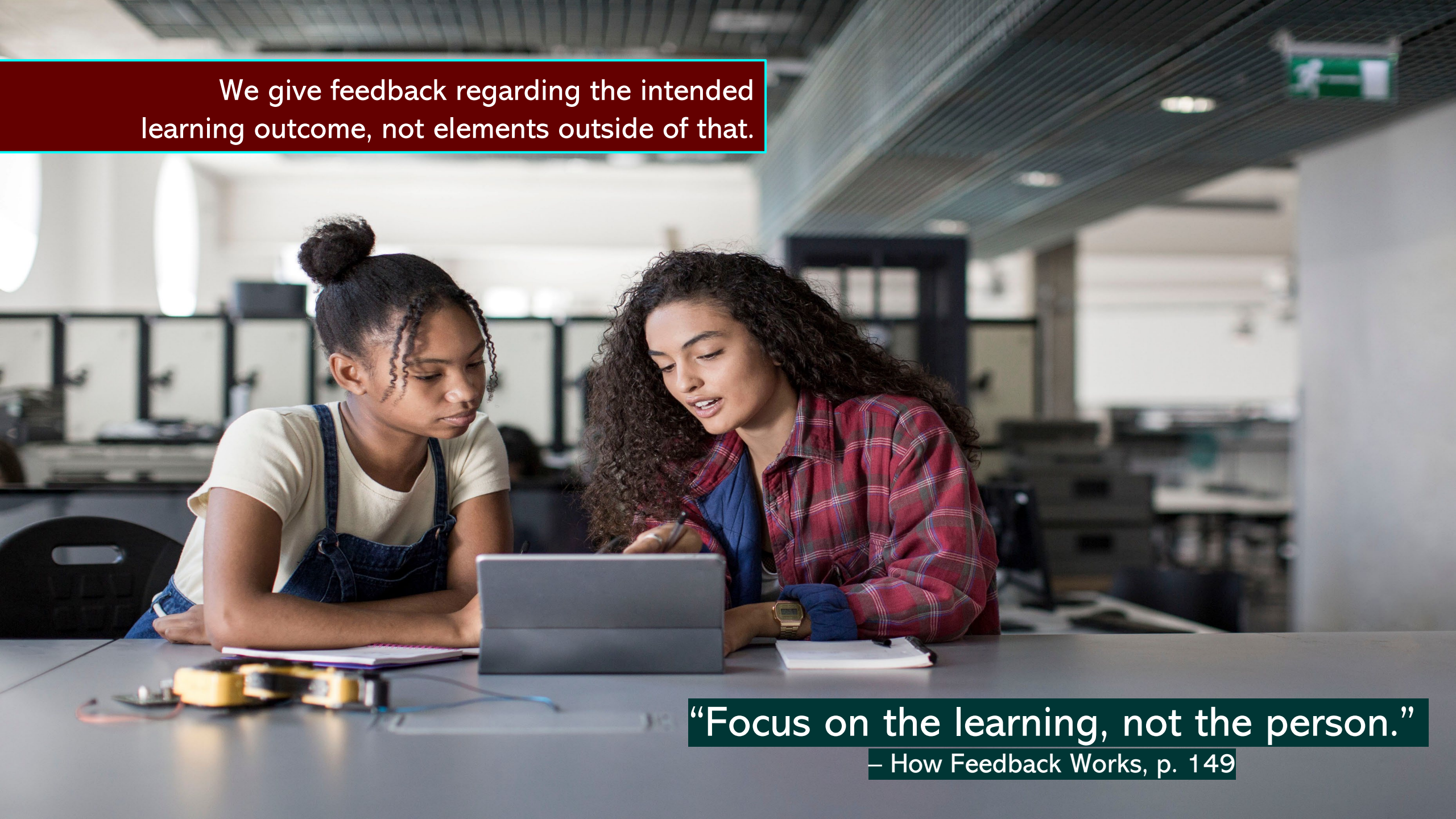
In which teacher statement is the student considered thoughtful and an agent of their own learning?

- “That’s too much text per slide. Drop it down to only four lines of text per slide.”
- “What do you notice about the text on this slide here?” (or) “Show me three elements of your slide layout that match the evaluative criteria for excellence.”

Unhelpful and not aligned with what we know is effective:

- Correcting all spelling & punctuation errors, noting problems in proper citation and neatness, when the agreed feedback focus would be on accurate interpretations of graphed data only.
- "'Needs work."
- "Half of these are wrong. Re-do the assignment."
- "This is not Advanced Program quality."
- "Look how smart you are!"
- "Try harder."
- "Next time, follow directions."
- "It's obvious you don't care about this."
- "Why would you think this is okay?"
- "I can tell you didn't spend more than two minutes on this."
- On a student-designed lab investigation, commenting on improper margins, placement of a data chart, or a careless math calculation when you were supposed to provide feedback on the student's inclusion of the scientific method in his design.

We give feedback regarding the intended learning outcome, not elements outside of that.



"Focus on the learning, not the person."

– How Feedback Works, p. 149

Let me tell you…

- What worked for me, and what did not
- What I will change in my learning or study practices next time
- Where I started, where I ended up, and what decisions I made in order to learn (or be successful)
- What I learned about myself as a student
- Where I’m going next with this

When providing descriptive feedback that builds agency and tenacity, comment on decisions made and their impact…

…NOT quality of work.

- Give feedback on two or three elements of the project/paper only. (Spandel, 2012; Brookhart, 2008) In the moment, this is about all the mind can process and use effectively.
- “Goldilocks Principle: Give feedback so that, “students get enough feedback so they the understand what to do, but not so much that they work has been done for them.” - Brookhart, 2008, p. 13

When identifying areas for improvement:

Be specific

Stick to the agreed upon elements for discussion

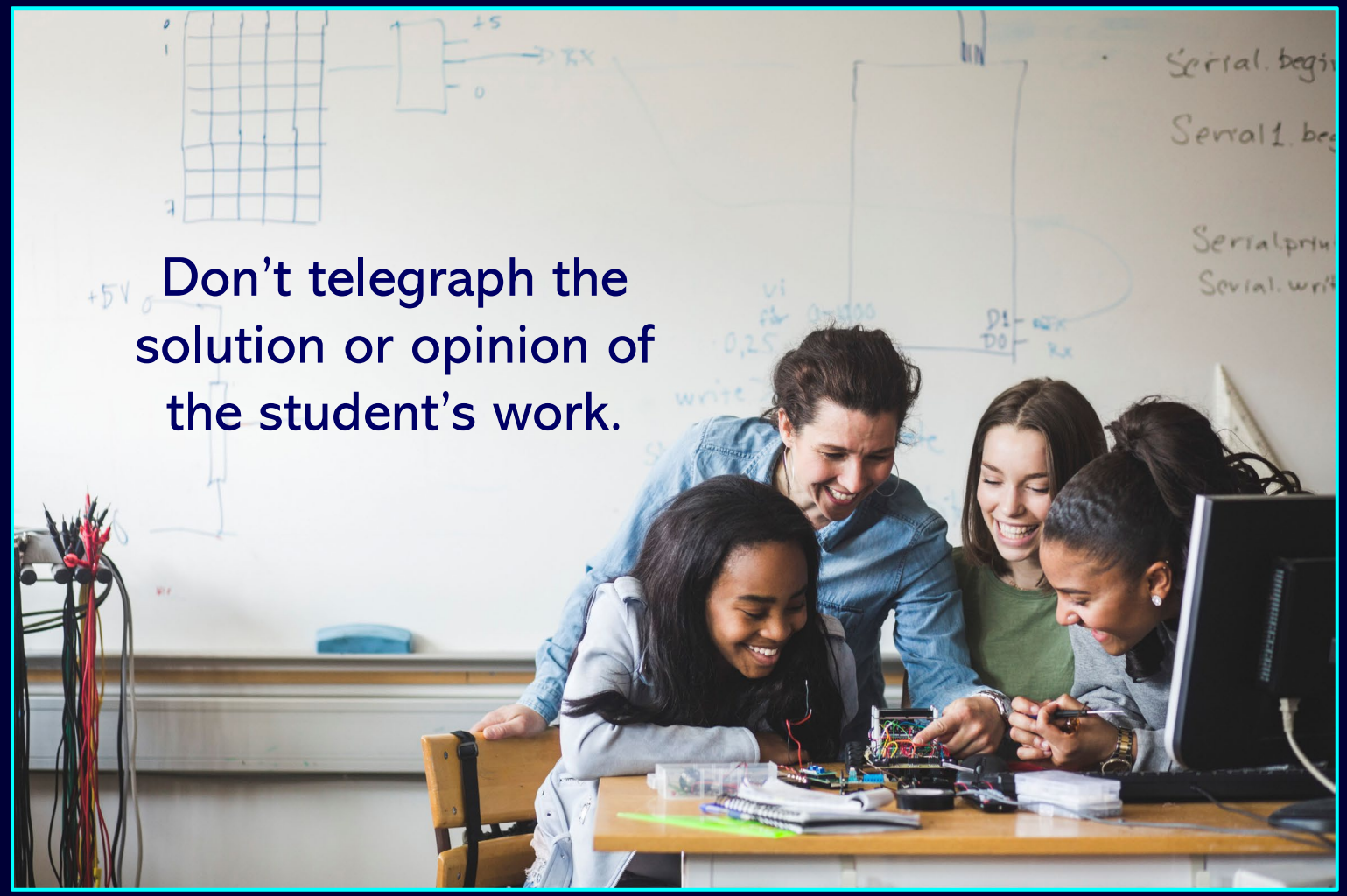
Avoid comments about the students' character

‘Particularly helpful to have in your feedback “back pocket”

- What do you notice?
- Tell me about this.
- What is your goal, and how will you know you have achieved it?
- Where does your work match and where does it differ from the example given?
- I hear you saying this…., is that what you intended?
- If you had to do this over again, what would you do differently?

‘Particularly helpful to have in your feedback “back pocket”

- I noticed you did [X], and the result was [Y]. Is this what you wanted?
- How would a respected classmate respond to this?
- How would you like this to be different?
- What could we do together to help you achieve your goal?
- Can you give me an example of that?
- Let’s rehearse that right now and see how it feels.



The goal is for students themselves to see the errors and the successes, how to fix the errors, and the decisions they made that led to this success or lack thereof. We want children to be active participants in their own feedback and learning.

A mirror is emotionally inert, it does not judge you. It just reflects your reality back to you. We are mirrors for students, reflecting back to them what they've done or learned, helping them compare that to learning goals.

Feedback from the Teacher to the Student:

- "You included one piece of evidence for each claim. Notice here in the directions that you were asked to include two or pieces of evidence per claim. What would you like to change?"
- "You used all four suggestions for compelling introductions, and as a reader, it made me want to read the rest of your paper. Thank you for that."
- "You split your notebook into a double-entry journal, placing notes on the left side, applications on the right. How did that work for you?"
- "You accounted for the amplitude of the wave. As a result, what can you now tell me about energy outputs that you couldn't tell me before?"
- "You cleared 8 of the 10 hurdles. What did you notice about the run, and what would you like to try differently in the next one?"
- "I noticed you used 500's for your vertical increments on the graph. Why did you not use 50's or 1000's?"

Feedback from the student him/her/themselves:

- I used distilled water in the lab. As a result, I do not have as many contaminants potentially affecting my lab results.
- I arched my back on the dismount. Because I arched my back, I am able to make a fluid transition into the next element of the routine.
- I isolated the variable to one side of the equation sign so I could plug in for x to get y and determine the coordinates to plot on my 4-quarant graph.
- I tied my shoe using a bow today, and it didn't fall off!
- Unless I use a ruler, nothing in my picture lines up.

And here's one from the teacher's perspective receiving feedback from a colleague or administrator:

"Your lesson was engaging."
[Judgement/Unhelpful]

"You incorporated students' personal interests and culture in your examples, and you started with a real scenarios from students' lives that needed proper language in order to be resolved. As a result, students spent most of their time discussing French instead of socializing."
[Commenting on Decisions and their Impact – Helpful, professional]

Two Questions to Ask Students:

- What are you supposed to be learning?
- Where are you in relation to that goal?

Great Idea: Ask students to compare (in writing or orally) their effort to an exemplar - Where does it match, where does it differ, and what they need to do to match the example given.

- How does my method of solving the problem align with the given algorithm or example?
- How is my result or approach different then my classmate's and which one was effective in answering the given question?
- What questions did I ask as I figured out how to solve the problem, and were they the right questions or those asked by others?

Two Ways to Begin Using Descriptive Feedback

- "Point and Describe"

  (from *Teaching with Love & Logic,* Jim Fay, David Funk)

- "Goal, Status, and Plan for the Goal"
  1. Identify the objective/goal/standard/outcome
  2. Identify where the student is in relation to the goal (Status)
  3. Identify what needs to happen in order to close the gap


Place a dot at the end of the line of writing, or near the issue in the math problem, code, lab, performance, music piece….
Do not identify the concern or issue, let the student do that.

Check out: “Highlighting Mistakes – A Grading Strategy” on www.Youtube.com

$$2(2x-5) + 2x = 38$$
$$4x - 10 + 2x = 38$$
$$2x - 10 = 38$$
$$2x - 10 + 10 = 38 + 10$$
$$2x = 48$$
$$X = 24$$

= Feedback Area 1

= Feedback Area 2

= Feedback Area 3

Effective Protocol for Data Analysis and Descriptive Feedback found in many Schools:

Here's What, So What, Now What

1. Here's What: *(data, factual statements, no commentary)*

2. So What: *(Interpretation of data, what patterns/insights do we perceive, what does the data say to us?)*

3. Now What: *(Plan of action, including new questions, next steps)*

Item	Topic or Proficiency	Right	Wrong	Simple Mistake?	Really Don't Understand
1	**Dividing fractions**		✓		✓
2	**Dividing Fractions**		✓		✓
3	**Multiplying Fractions**		✓	✓	
4	**Multiplying fractions**	✓			
5	**Reducing to Smplst trms**	✓			
6	**Reducing to Smplst trms**	✓			
7	**Reciprocals**	✓			
8	**Reciprocals**		✓	✓	
9	**Reciprocals**		✓	✓	

Date

Mr./Mrs./Miss _____,

I understand….

I need assistance in….

I suggest the following four steps for me to take in order to learn these content and skills:

Sincerely,

_____


“I used to
think…,
but now
I think…”

Student Samples:

- “I used to think semi-colons and periods were the same, but now I think they’re not. A period is a cold stop at the end of a complete thought. A semi-colon separates two main clauses that could stand alone, but are related to each other, and we want to give the second clause a boost with the momentum from the first one.”

- “I use to think fake news was a modern invention, but now I think it’s been around since the first Continental Congress.”

- “I used to be suspicious of anyone who wasn’t from my culture, but now I think that people in other cultures have the same fears and hopes as me and my culture. Maybe we’re more alike than I think.”

Descriptive Feedback Techniques gain new urgency here. Here are two new videos for teachers AND parents to help develop descriptive feedback in learning:

- Descriptive Feedback Techniques Part 1
  ttps://www.youtube.com/watch?v=78y5Csm5N8g
- Descriptive Feedback Techniques Part 2
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TgpumwMOe4g
  Both are also available at www.rickwormeli.com/multimedia

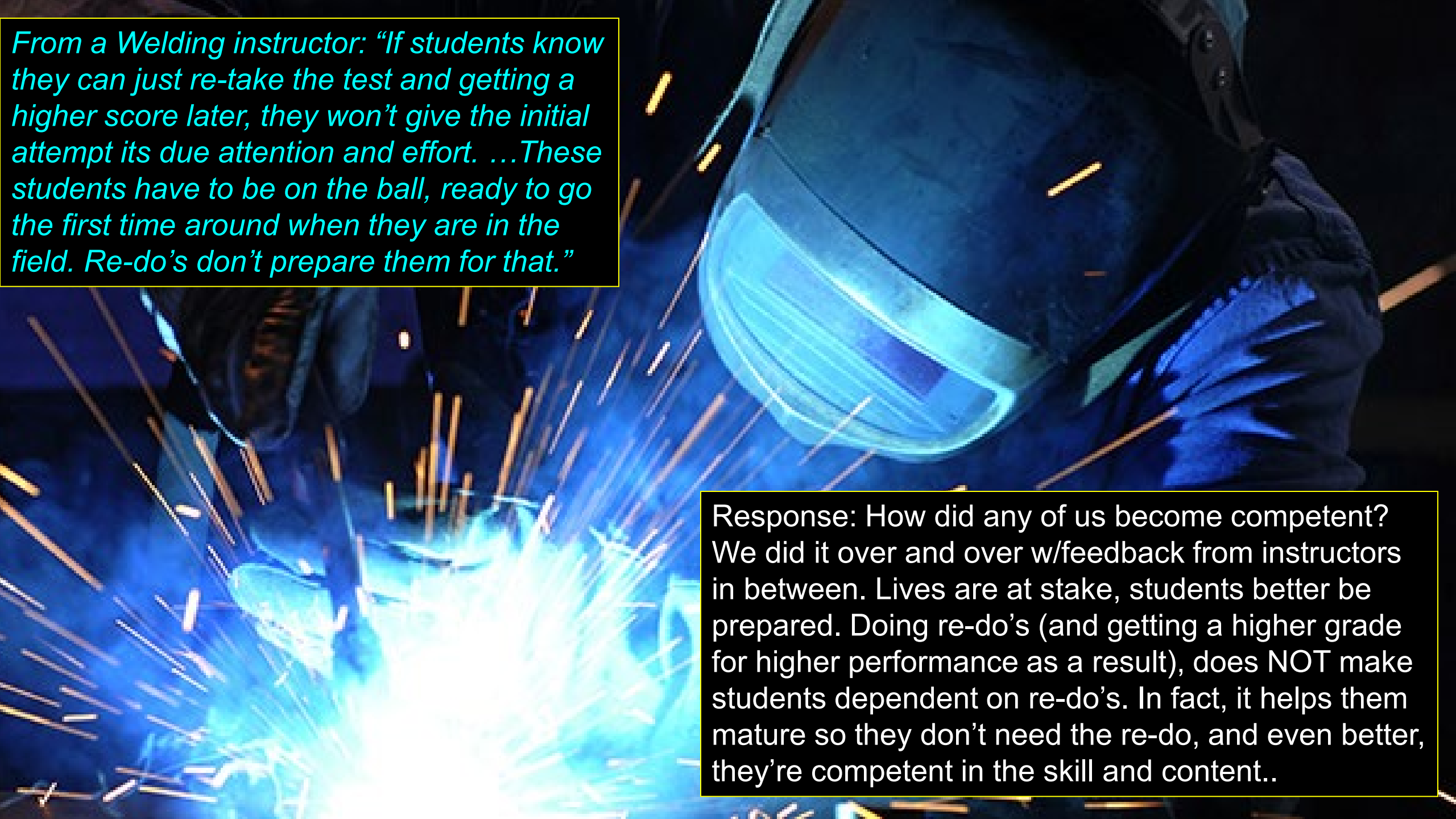
- See, too, the work of Susan Brookhart, Bill Ferriter, Starr Sackstein, and Douglas Fisher/Nancy Frey, Starr Sackstein

Re-Learning & Re-Assessing


When it comes to what we're teaching, what do most teachers aspire to achieve with their students?
Competence.
This happens only with re-iterations, increasing complexity, and facilitating helpful feedback along the way, not "one and done."

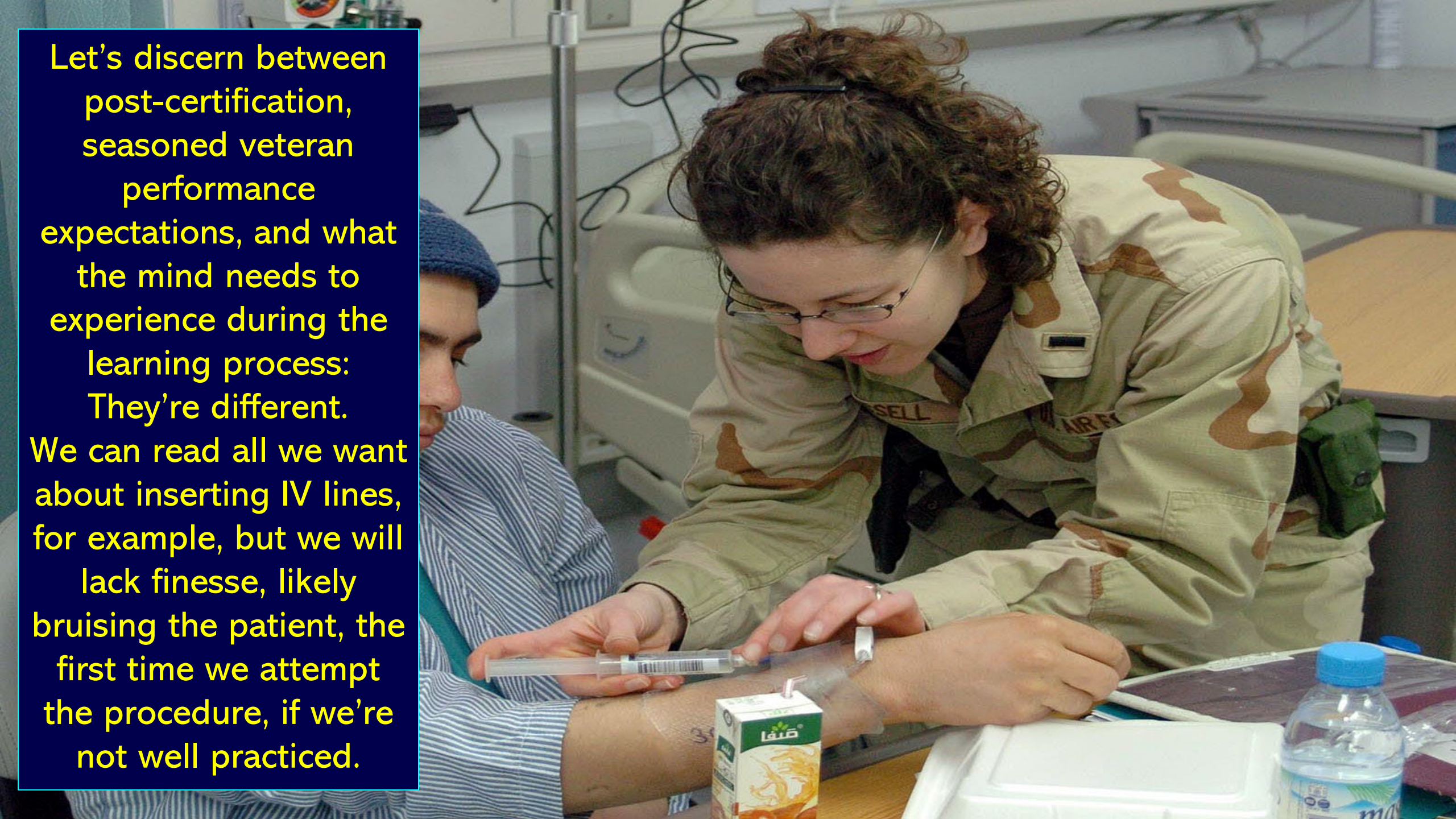

Incompetence in a subject is never maturing, preparatory, or engaging. ‘Just sayin’.


STOP
& Consider:Recovering from failure in full teaches
more than being labeled for failure ever could teach.



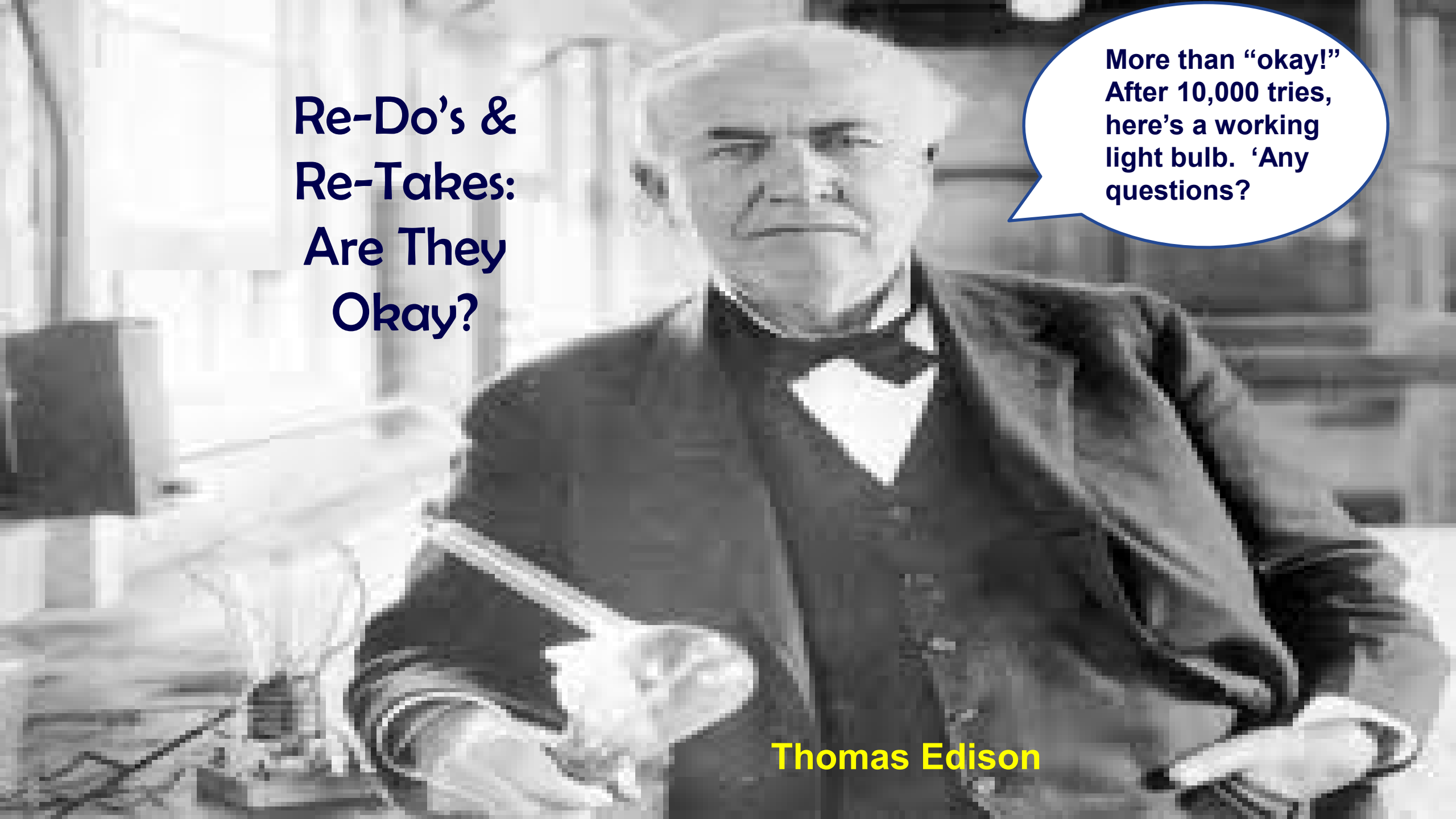
From a Welding instructor: "If students know they can just re-take the test and getting a higher score later, they won't give the initial attempt its due attention and effort. …These students have to be on the ball, ready to go the first time around when they are in the field. Re-do's don't prepare them for that."

Response: How did any of us become competent? We did it over and over w/feedback from instructors in between. Lives are at stake, students better be prepared. Doing re-do's (and getting a higher grade for higher performance as a result), does NOT make students dependent on re-do's. In fact, it helps them mature so they don't need the re-do, and even better, they're competent in the skill and content..



Let's discern between post-certification, seasoned veteran performance expectations, and what the mind needs to experience during the learning process: They're different. We can read all we want about inserting IV lines, for example, but we will lack finesse, likely bruising the patient, the first time we attempt the procedure, if we're not well practiced.

Re-Do's & Re-Takes: Are They Okay?



Pilot training

United States Air Force Training Manual

b. *Minimum Academic Performance* — The minimum acceptable score on any phase exam or End-of-Course exam is 85 percent. Should a student receive less than the minimum acceptable score, the instructor will remediate the student and a second, different exam for that phase will be administered. Unsatisfactory performance will be referred to the appropriate military authority.

c. *Minimum Demonstration/Performance Test Standard* — The minimum acceptable performance on any demonstration/performance test will be measured against the course standard and the required proficiency level for events requiring a demonstration/performance test.

d. *Minimum Hour Requirement* — There is no minimum hour/event/sortie requirement for graduation.

e. *Instructor Responsibilities* — Instructors are responsible for training accomplishment; however, students should monitor their own training and develop mission profiles when appropriate.

‘Principled First, ‘Actionable Second

Specifically, what does this mean for re-learning and re-assessing principles and practices?

‘Principled First, ‘Actionable Second

Repeated learning and assessment (re-iteration) after critical feedback is one of the most effective ways any one person becomes competent in any field.

‘Principled First, ‘Actionable Second

Requiring experienced veteran, high-quality, post-certification performance in a student’s one attempt at demonstrating competency during his/her/their learning process is ineffective instruction and not in alignment with how the mind learns.

‘Principled First, ‘Actionable Second

Falsifying the report of student learning & proficiency does NOT teach responsibility or prepare them for certification in the field. It is a dishonest and ineffective practice.

‘Principled First, ‘Actionable Second

Walking with students as they recover from mistakes/failures teaches more content and helps them develop professional maturity more than do unrecoverable labels of “F.” Unrecoverable F’s have limited instructional impact. Denial of “F” recoverability communicates the message that it is okay for students to be incompetent.

‘Principled First, ‘Actionable Second

Label zeroes and F’s what they really are: Not yet.

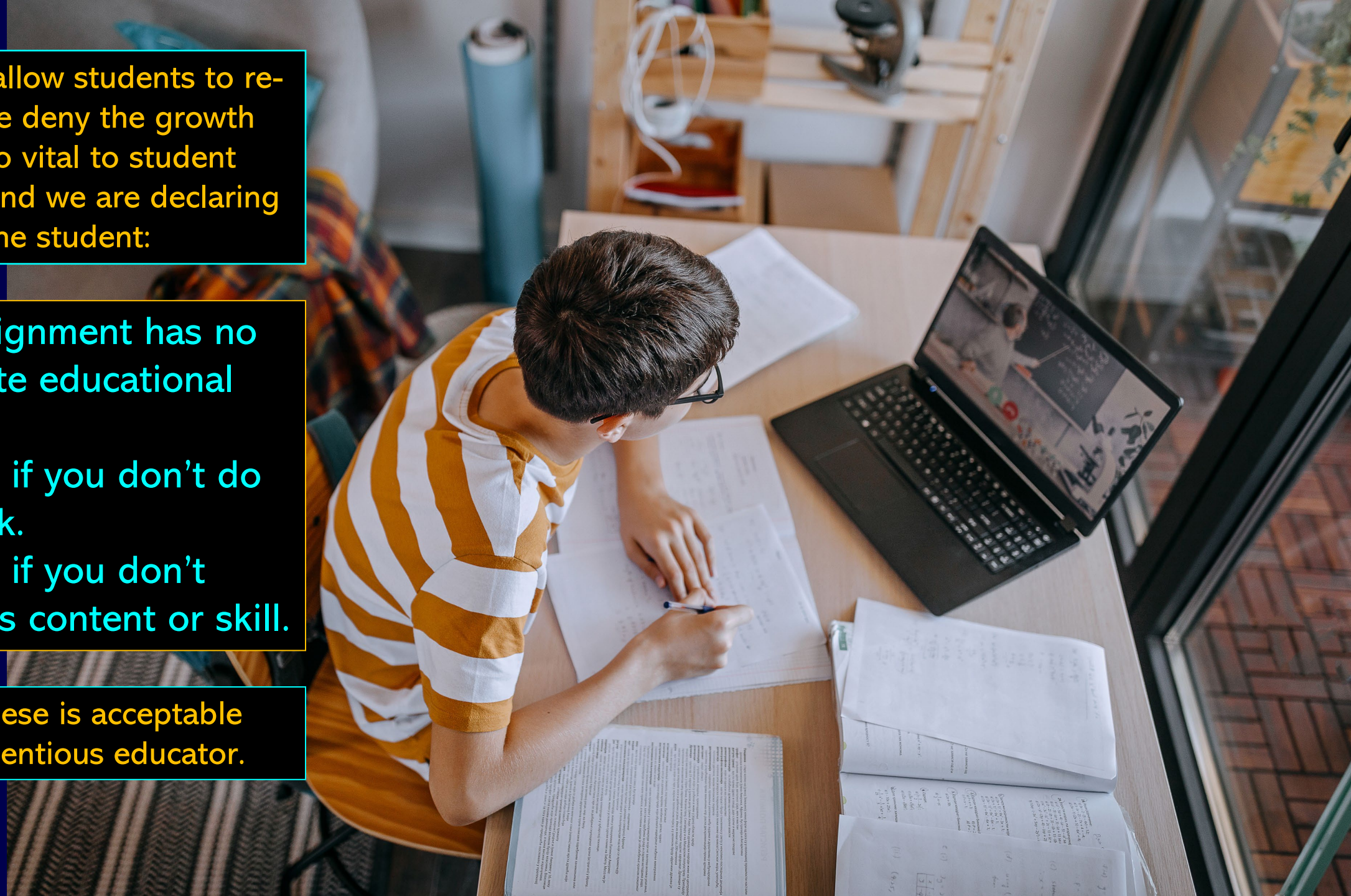
‘Compelling Observation

Second career teachers embrace re-learning/re-assessing far more readily than do those who entered the classroom directly after college.

If we do not allow students to re-do work, we deny the growth mindset so vital to student maturation, and we are declaring to the student:

- This assignment has no legitimate educational value.
- It's okay if you don't do this work.
- It's okay if you don't learn this content or skill.

None of these is acceptable to a conscientious educator.



Article on Practical Tips for Re-Learning and Re-Assessing: https://www.amle.org/re-learning-and-re-assessing-practical-tips/

Quick Tips and Mechanics of Re-Learning/Re-Assessing

- Re-do's and Re-assessments are always done at teacher discretion, not the students' or parents' discretion.
- To protect sanity at first, limit redo's to only the identified, most pivotal of concepts/skills at first, and perhaps only to two attempts.
- Simply making problem or response corrections is insufficient for a redo. Such a task is more of a proper learning experience.

Quick Tips and Mechanics of Re-Learning/Re-Assessing

- No redo's the last week of the marking period.
- Identify a day by which time the re-assessment is accomplished or the grade is permanent, which, of course, may be adjusted at any point by the teacher.
- Students must submit a thoughtful plan of re-learning that is acceptable to the teacher before granted the opportunity to redo an assessment. Evidence of that re-learning must be submitted prior to the re-assessment.

Quick Tips and Mechanics of Re-Learning/Re-Assessing

- As appropriate, students write letters explaining the differences between the first and subsequent attempts, what new decisions they made that they did not make before, and what they learned about themselves as a growing professional. Teachers may require students to include the original attempt with the revised assessment in order to truly make the comparison.

- Students achieving any grade or score less than an A, 4.0, or top of the scale are allowed to redo assignments and assessments. This isn’t just for the lowest performers.

Quick Tips and Mechanics of Re-Learning/Re-Assessing

- Instead of averaging previous scores with new ones, we replace the earlier grade with the report of most recent evidence of proficiency.

- An accurate report of student proficiency is recorded on all re-assessments. There is no policy of having an upper ceiling that can be achieved on re-assessments in a misguided attempt to be fair to students who earned an A on their first attempt.

Quick Tips and Mechanics of Re-Learning/Re-Assessing

- Teachers reserve the right to give alternative versions of any assessment for the re-assessment version. These are not more difficult, as they are assessing the same evidence, but they may be in a different format to make sure students don't simply memorize answers and that they really know the material.

- If a test is organized in sections, teachers may opt to request students only redo the sub-sections on which they scored poorly rather than re-take the entire exam. This is "banking" the correct responses.

Quick Tips and Mechanics of Re-Learning/Re-Assessing

- If a student demonstrates proficiency after grades have been submitted to the college for the semester, a grade change report form can be submitted to the front office approving the new report in the student's academic record indicating higher proficiency.

- Re-taking the course for full credit is a viable re-assessment option, though this should not be used as the default option for all situations, nor should it be done with the same teacher.

Sample Re-Learning/Re-Assessing Forms found on Google Images…

NEW LENOX SCHOOL DISTRICT 122

REDO/RETAKE FORM

Student Name: Click or tap here to enter text. Subject: Reading Seminar

Teacher: Mr. Hence Due Date: Click or tap here to enter text.

Classwork/Homework	Required if Checked	Student Completed	Why didn't you meet the standards on the original assignment/assessment?
Correct and Return (use different colored pen to show new answers)			
Complete Correction Form			
Redo completely			
See me for instructions			
Other:			

Quizzes and Tests	Required if Checked	Student Completed	How do you plan to improve?
Use your book and/or study guide to correct and return			
Complete Test Correction Form			
Retake on _____/_____/_____			
Parent or Guardian Signature on Test			
See me for instructions			
Other:			

Parent Signature Required _____ Yes ☐ No ☐

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Other: Homework Club ☐ Workroom Time ☐ Working Lunch ☐ Academic Detention ☐

TEST CORRECTION PROCEDURE

You have one week to complete test corrections. The week begins on the day that your graded test is handed back to you.

You may get help from your classmates, parents, or teacher (please make an appointment). However, make sure **you** understand your errors enough to explain them clearly.

You must do the following **on a separate sheet of paper** for each incorrect question or problem on the test:

- Number the problem/question and rewrite it.
- Write at least two **complete sentences** explaining what your error was and what you need to do to correct it. Write enough to prove that you understand it now.
- Show all work to correct the problem or question and include the right answer.

You can earn as much as half of the missed points back.

EXAMPLE SENTENCES:

"I made a mistake with exponent rules in the original expression. I should have added the exponents, but instead I multiplied them. To fix this, I will have to use the product rule instead of the power rule."

"My error was just a simple multiplication mistake. The volume for the cylinder that I found was twice as big as it should be because I accidentally multiplied the height and area of the base incorrectly. I wrote that 6x4 was 48. It was just a silly mistake."

TEST CORRECTIONS

Name: Date: Test name: Original Test Score:	Teacher Use Only Corrections accepted? Yes No New Score:
Reflection: (Answer all.) • How did you study for this test? • Did you study to the best of your ability? • How could you study differently in the future?	

Directions: *Fill out this form COMPLETELY and ACCURATELY! When completed, staple original test BEHIND to this form. Use additional sheets if necessary.*

Question Number	My Answer	Justification	Correct Answer	Verification (This proves the answer is correct
5	B	I confused allusion with alliteration	C	Allusion is a reference to another story/cultural event. Alliteration is repetition of beginning sounds of words.

40. Multiple Choice Test Corrections
http://www.wsfcs.k12.nc.us/cms/lib/NC01001395/Centricity/Domain/2114/Test_Correction_Sheet.pdf

Request to Retest

The Basics.

Name _____
Date _____
Class Period _____
Concept to Retest _____

Reflect.

Previous Score _____

Why?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Three Activities I Did to Improve My Understanding of this Concept

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

When would you like to retest this concept?

_____

Stuff to Attach.

- **Previous Tests**
- **Proof of your 3 Activities**

Request.

I request the opportunity to retest this concept. I have worked hard to improve my understanding of this concept.

Signed _____

NAME:_____

RETAKE TICKET

Old Score: _____

New Adjusted Score: _____

This ticket will entitle the holder to a retake of either a quiz or a test taken in math class. MUST bring ticket to the retake appointment!!

Retake Time (Date/ Block): _____
(to be filled out by Ms. Dyson)

In order for ticket to be valid, the following criteria MUST be completed and checked off BEFORE the above appointment:

_____ I set up a specific day and time to take the retake– see above box.

_____ I got a resource pass from Ms. Dyson in order to go over mistakes/ complete my corrections . If Ms. Dyson and I are unable to meet, I understand that I am still responsible for completing my corrections (with help from my notes, resource teacher, or other adult– see form).

_____ I completed my corrections using the **"Test/Quiz Corrections"** form. (Extra forms are available in Ms. Dyson's room and also on her website.)

_____ I stapled my corrections on TOP of my original test .

_____ I will bring BOTH this ticket AND my stapled corrections "packet" with me to retake appointment.

_____
(my signature)

IF MS. DYSON FEELS THAT I AM NOT READY FOR RETAKE (corrections are wrong, etc.), I WILL NEED TO COMPLETE EXTRA REMEDIATION STEPS IN ORDER TO TAKE RETAKE.

(Teacher's Copy)

_____ **is scheduled for a retake on**

_____ **during** _____ **block.**

- Student name, Date, Class Period (if applicable)
- Name of Assignment/Assessment
- Standard or Learning Target(s) Focus
- Brief explanation of what didn't work for the student in the initial preparation, or what was misunderstood in the initial understanding.
- Brief explanation of what decisions were made in the re-learning that were not made in the initial attempt. This is good place for reflecting upon what was learned during item corrections.
- Specific Re-Learning Plan (Include a Menu of Options, if needed), minimum of four re-learning experiences required
- Brief explanation from students of what they learned about themselves as learners that will help them be successful the next time they study or prepare
- Signatures for Student, Teacher, and Parent

Items to Consider for the Re-Learning/ Re-Assessing Form

Students should be allowed to re-do assessments until they achieve acceptable mastery, and they should be given full credit for having achieved such.

Misinforming, Unethical, and Ineffective

- “I’ll give you ½ a point for each problem you go back and fix.”
- Averaging the new grade with the former one.
- “You can only re-do if you have a D or an F (1 or a 0).”
- “The highest grade you can get is a 70 (80, 85, etc) in order to be fair to those who studied and got a 100 the first time around.”
- Allowing students to do something else for the re-do that does not demonstrate the same evidence of learning (often found in Credit Recovery Programs)
- Allowing re-do’s without requiring re-learning.

"A 'D' is a coward's 'F.' The student failed, but you didn't have enough guts to tell him."
-- Doug Reeves

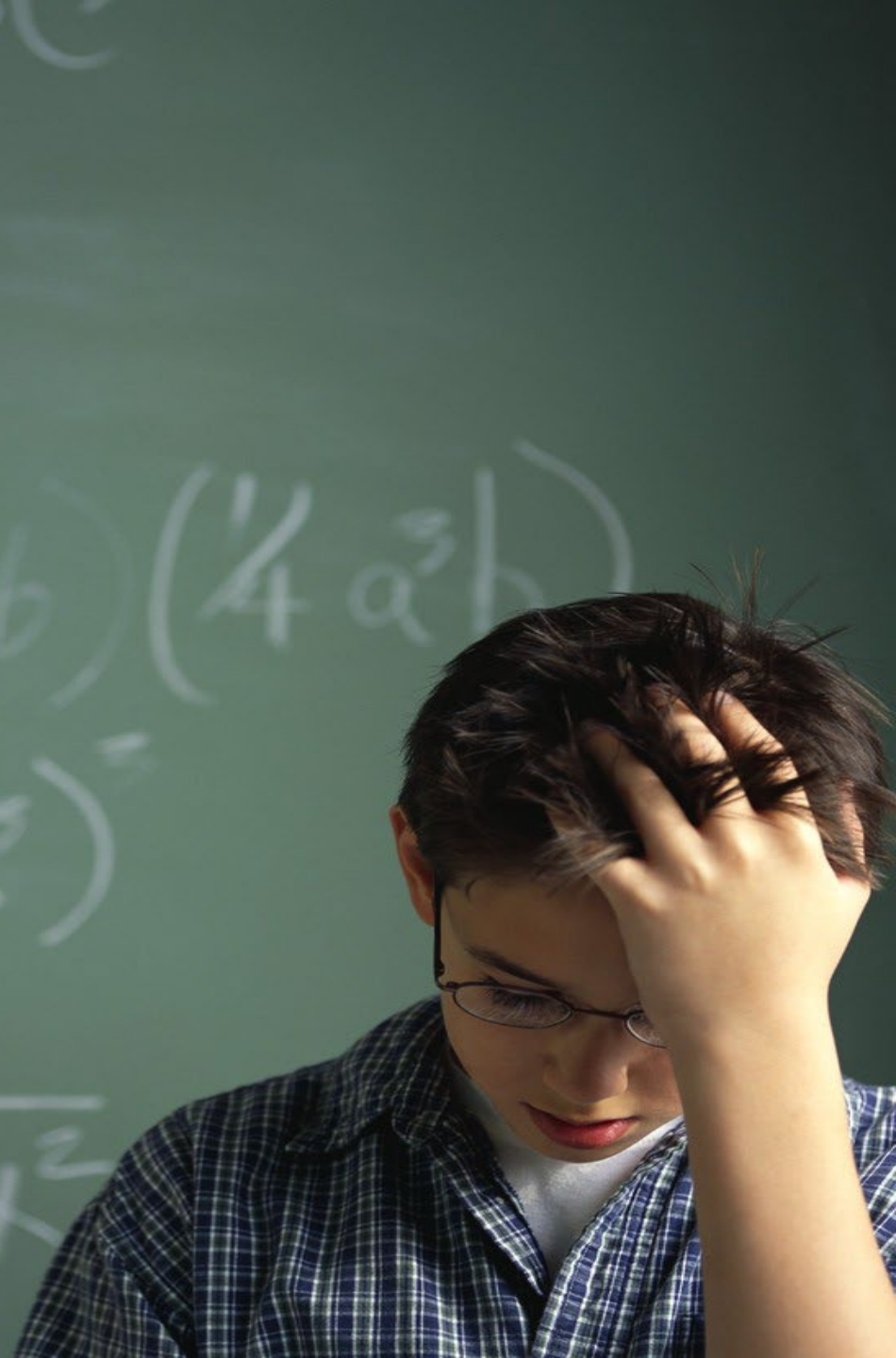
A (4,O)
B (3,G)
C (2,S)

We are in ceaseless composition.

Then one category called: Not Yet, In Progress, Incomplete, or No Evidence as of Today

Students may lack executive function and specific skills in how to study and learn things. In response, do we say, “That’s their tough luck, they should be more responsible,” or do we ask them, “How can I help?” We may need to directly teach them how to learn as well as how to manage time, organize, prioritize, and follow through on their goals. These skills are never to be assumed or left to chance.

Important Consideration



Grading Students Identified as Needing Special Education Services

Elements/Perspectives that Really Help When it Comes to Grading Students Identified as Special or ELL

- Increase assessment repertoire: *What are 12 different ways to assess this?*
- Remember that grades only report what students know and can do at journey's end, NOT how they got there. How or when they learned something is irrelevant to the final grade determination.
- Separate the report of teaching & learning strategies from the report of evidence regarding standards.

Elements/Perspectives that Really Help When it Comes to Grading Students Identified as Special or ELL

- Disaggregate according to standards.
- Identify grade levels for standards.
- Remember that grades are temporary positions along a continuum at best.
- Do not succumb to arbitrary, uniform timelines. Be willing to facilitate a completely different timeline for learning, including multiple learning-assessment iterations and proficiencies demonstrated after the year is completed.

Elements/Perspectives that Really Help When it Comes to Grading Students Identified as Special or ELL

- Never allow the test format to get in the way of a student's accurate demonstration of learning. We are obligated to change the format if we know the current one will not allow for an accurate expression of proficiency.
- Grade against evidence of standards, not compliance with the directions, unless that is what you're reporting.

Elements/Perspectives that Really Help When it Comes to Grading Students Identified as Special or ELL

- Remember that legally, the report card refers to the end-of-year transcript only. What we send to parents and students every quarter, trimester, or semester is a progress report.
- Academic progress is relative to developmental readiness. If the student is making substantive academic progress where he is functionally ready, then he is in good standing academically.

And who ultimately determines the final grade regarding achievement in any course or subject? The general ed teacher, but informed by evidence and perspective provided by the special teacher.

Zeroes on the 100-point scale becoming Minimum F's of 50

Principle:

Grades should report student proficiency regarding standards accurately.

If true, and we aren't hypocrites, what would this mean for our grading practices?

0 or 50 (or 60 or 70)?

“F” or an, “F?”

With one zero on the 100-point scale, it usually requires six to seven perfect 100's in a row just to get up to a "D" average. Why bother when there's no hope?

Do we need to discern among degrees of “F”-titude, gradations of failure?

Whether it’s due to moral or immoral reasons, we still investigate and take corrective action. Hope and recovery lead to maturation.

4

3

2

1

0

The grade symbols are merely placeholders for longer descriptions of evidence of learning we don't have time to write out for every student. They are not meant to be, "math-ified."

For example, 2 on this scale is "Fair," NOT half of 4, or 50%, which is considered failure in most school divisions. A score of 3 does not mean, "75% of the content was learned." They are not parts learned out of a total possible to be learned.

100

90

80

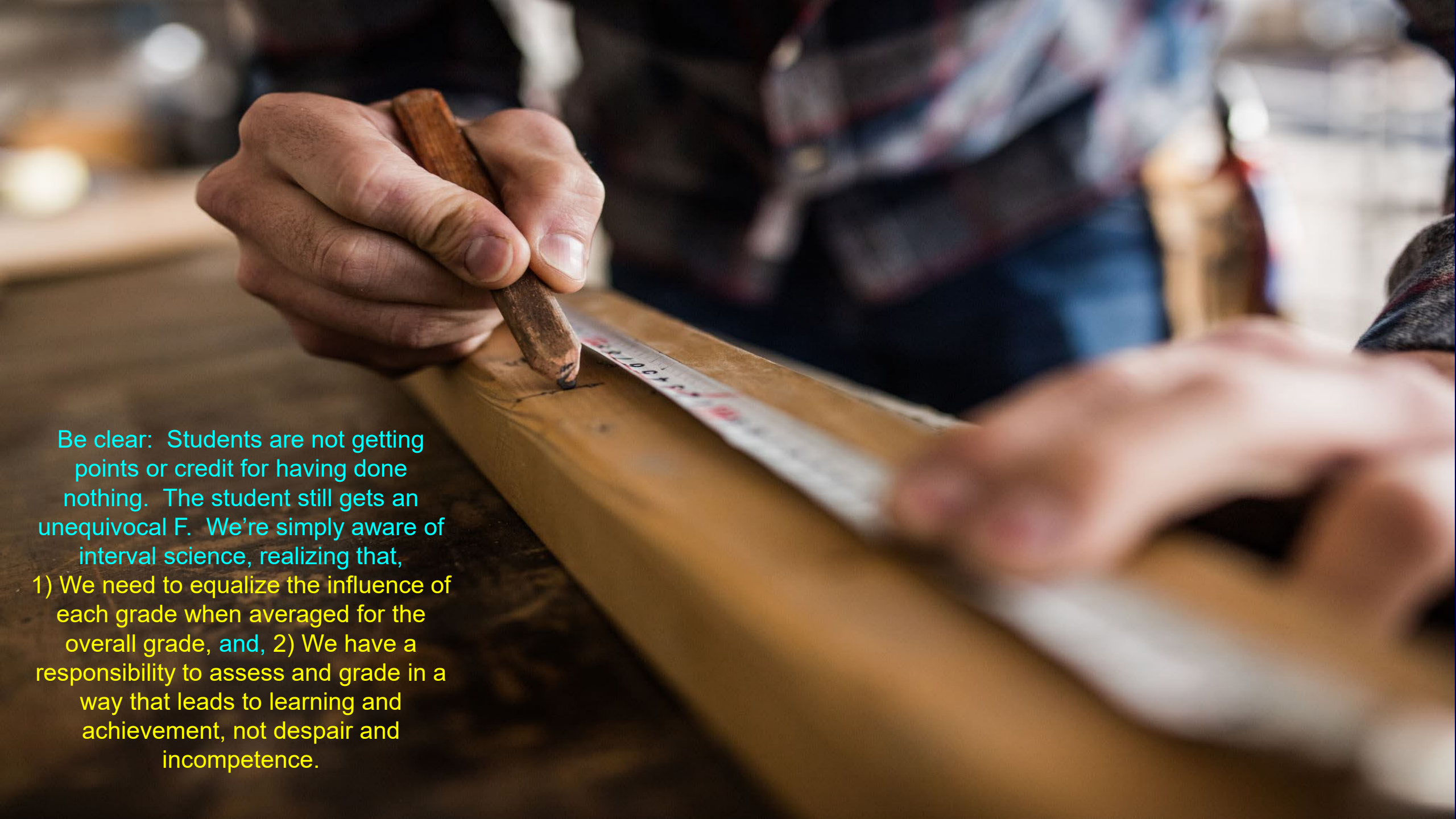
70

60

So, a 60 (or 50, depending on your intervals), is an F, not, “60% learned,” or, “60% completed.” It’s a placeholder for the clear declaration for, “No Evidence Presented,” or, “Failure.” No one is getting half credit or a 50% or 60% for doing nothing.

The four key understandings to resolving this issue are:

- Volatility in using average for central tendency
- Interval science
- The principle of hope as far more maturing and effective than are gotcha and despair
- The ethical stance to be accurate in grading



Be clear: Students are not getting points or credit for having done nothing. The student still gets an unequivocal F. We're simply aware of interval science, realizing that, 1) We need to equalize the influence of each grade when averaged for the overall grade, and, 2) We have a responsibility to assess and grade in a way that leads to learning and achievement, not despair and incompetence.

Imagine the Reverse…

A = 100 – 40

B = 39 – 30

C = 29 – 20

D = 19 – 10

F = 9 – 0

What if we reversed the proportional influences of the grades? That "A" would have a huge, yet undue, inflationary effect on the overall grade. Just as we wouldn't want an "A" to have an inaccurate effect, we don't want an "F" grade to have such an undue, deflationary, and inaccurate effect. Keeping zeroes on a 100-pt. scale is just as absurd as the scale seen here.

100	4
90	3
80	2
70	1
60	0
50	-1
40	-2
30	-3
20	-4
10	-5
0	-6

Consider the Correlation

A (0) on a 100-pt. scale is a (-6) on a 4-pt. scale. If a student does no work, he should get nothing, not something worse than nothing. How instructive is it to tell a student that he earned six times less than absolute failure? Choose to be instructive, not punitive.

[Based on an idea by Doug Reeves, *The Learning Leader*, ASCD, 2006]

Temperature Readings for Norfolk, VA:

85, 87, 88, 84, 0 ← ('Forgot to take the reading)

Average: 68.8 degrees

This is inaccurate for what really happened, and therefore, unusable.

The concern over minimum 50 as an F on the 100-point scale would be moot if we used the 50-point scale.

40-50 = A range
30-39 = B range
20-29 = C range
10-19 = D range
0- 9 = F range

College/University Admissions

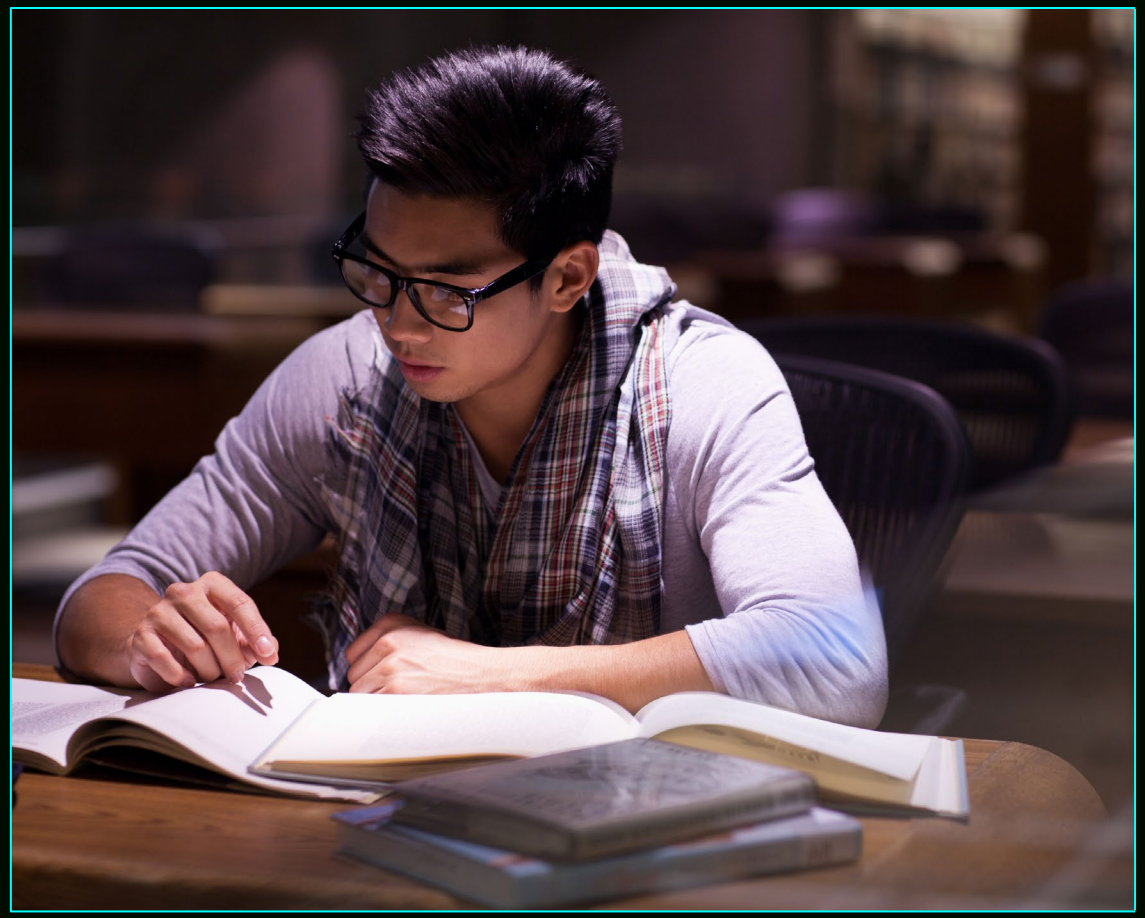
The biggest factors colleges examine when considering a student for acceptance…

- Marks/Grades in courses they value
- Rigor of coursework (Level II, AP, IB, Honors)
- Evidence of tenacity, perseverance, stick-to-itiveness, resilience

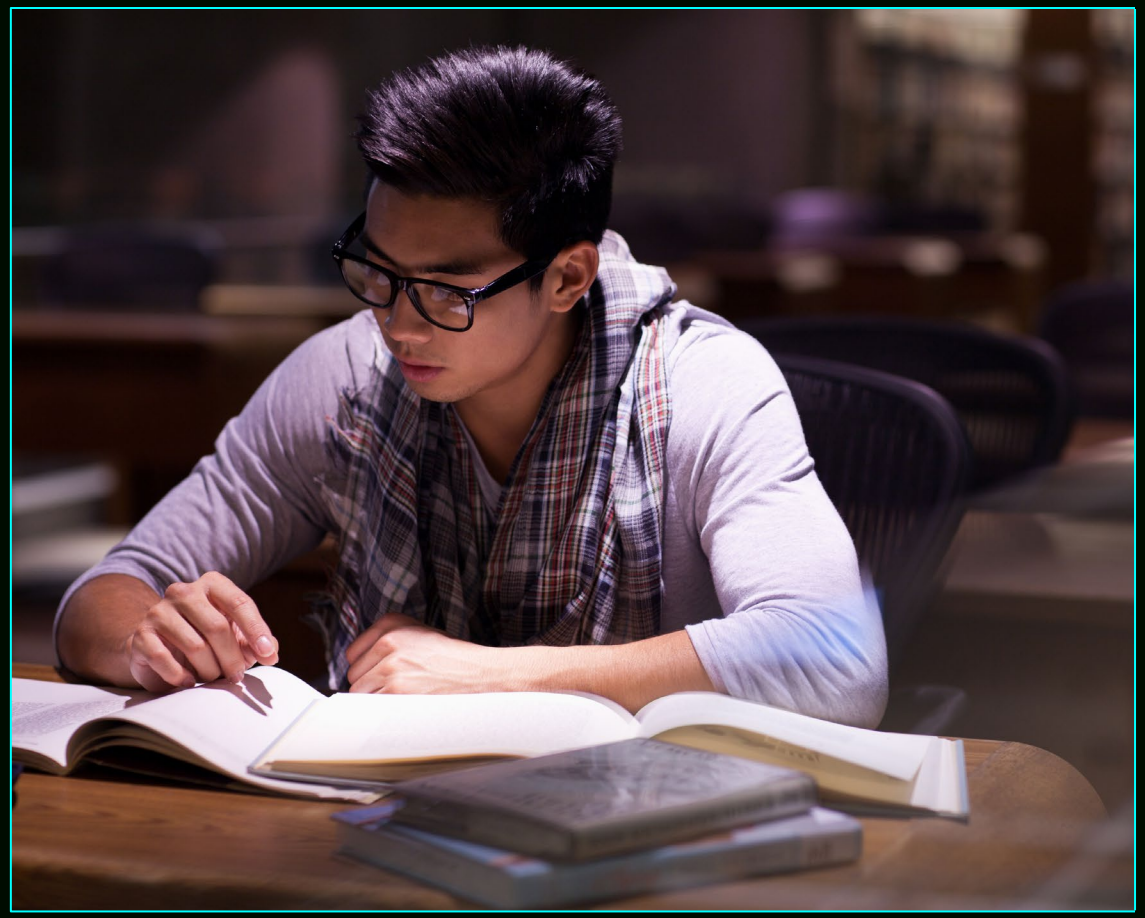
(Continued)

The biggest factors colleges examine when considering a student for acceptance…

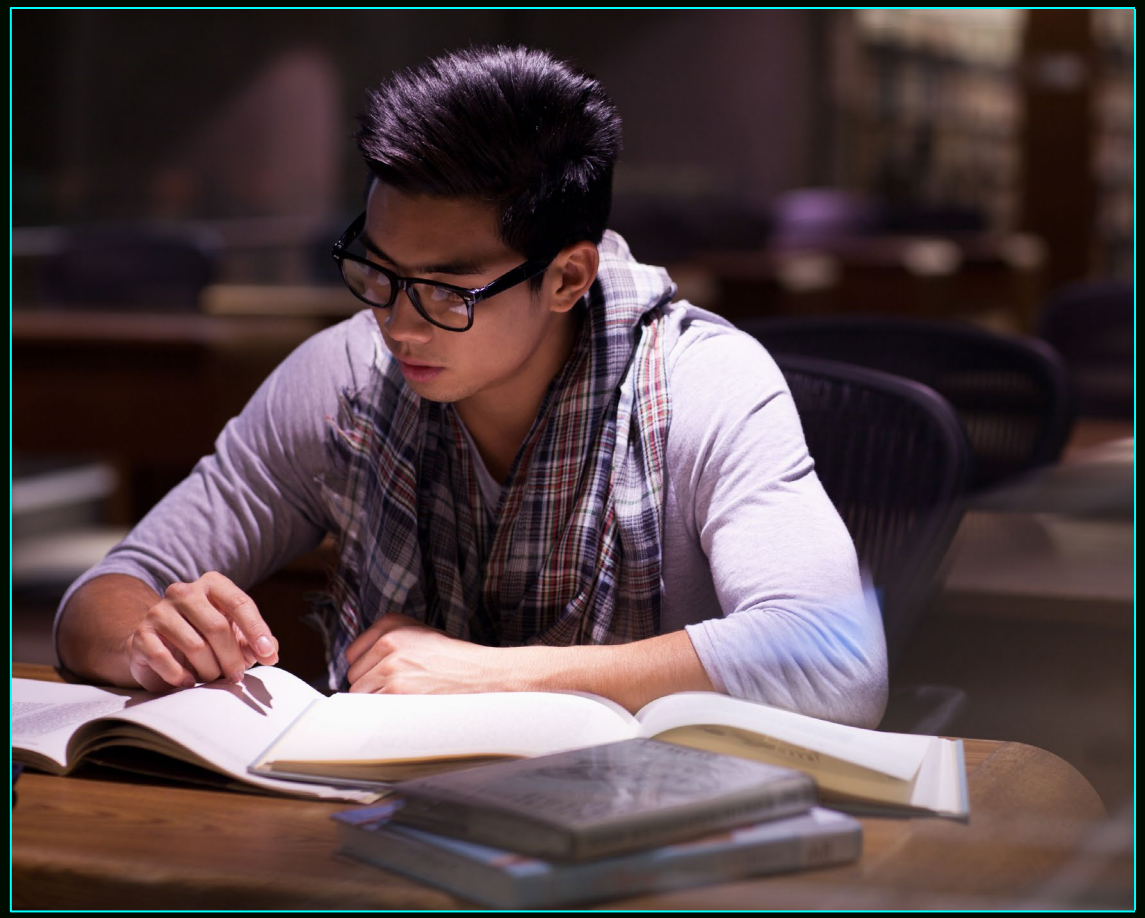
- Significant participation in at least one extra-curricular activity: Sports, fine/performing arts, community organizations – a sense that the student is more than is academics
- Unusual circumstances (raised in homeless shelters, spent two years working in Antarctica, raised $50,000 for juvenile diabetes program, teaches puppetry to impoverished students, speaks four languages fluently, invented economically viable water filtration system for impoverished countries, turned 1.0 GPA into 3.8 GPA in two years' maturation, is the primary care-taker of younger siblings while also caring for a parent with cancer, etc.)



- Class rank is falling out of favor in many universities.
- The SAT and ACT are optional at most universities in the United States, and some are foregoing it completely.
- Very few colleges/universities disadvantage students because their high school does not provide a class rank or GPA. For those that need either one, however, most schools will provide one, if absolutely necessary.



- Nationwide, about 40% of high students who graduate from high school have to re-take high school courses in colleges because the grades were false reports.
- For many affluent and relatively affluent school districts, there is a stunningly high percent of students who go on to a four or five year college program that don’t finish. It’s often between 20 and 40%.



Article of Interest:

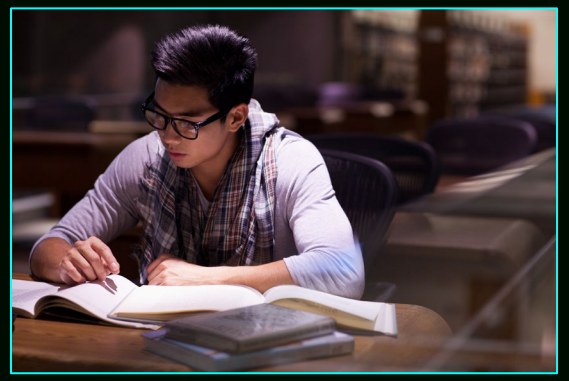
“Grades pointless? Some colleges don't care about GPAs” Admissions officers at the nation's top schools say they barely look at an applicant's GPA

- Mary Beth Marklein, @mbmarklein
USA TODAY Feb. 28, 2013

- "It's meaningless," says Greg Roberts, admissions dean at the University of Virginia, ranked as the top public university in this year's 150 Best Value Colleges, published by The Princeton Review and based on academics and affordability.
- "It's artificial," says Jim Bock, admissions dean at Swarthmore College, the top private college in The Princeton Review's Best Value rankings. So unimportant is the GPA that Swarthmore doesn't bother calculating it for guidebook publishers."

- “Research consistently shows that a student's high school grades are the best predictor of their likelihood of success in college. Annual surveys by the National Association for College Admission Counseling show that most admissions officials put a high priority on grades -- particularly grades in college-prep courses.”

- “…[E]ach college scours high school grades and transcripts according to its own criteria. Swarthmore's Bock, for example, says he looks for evidence that students have taken the most challenging classes they can. University of Florida's admissions staff recalculates student grade point averages based on five academic areas: English, math social science, natural science and foreign language, says Zina Evans, vice president for enrollment management.”

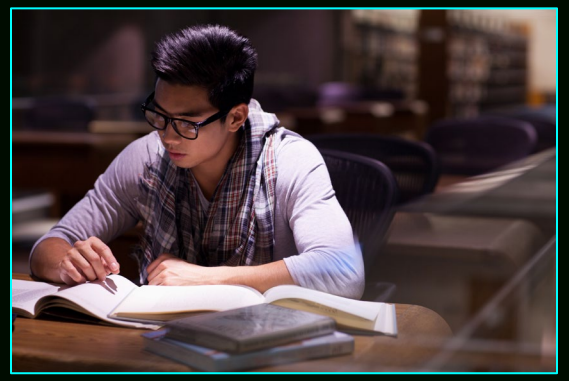


From Massachusetts Institute for Technology (MIT)'s grading policy for freshman:

"A grade point average (GPA) is calculated for freshmen starting in the second semester."

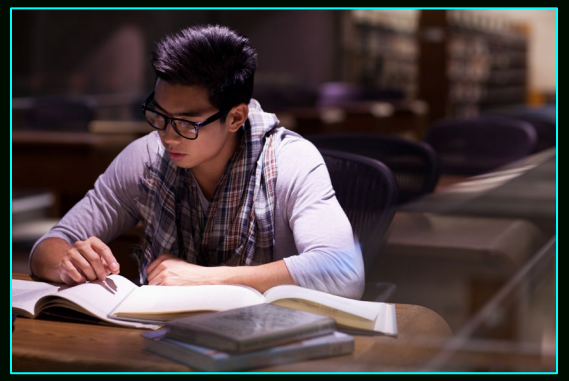
"First-year grading is designed to ease your transition to MIT by giving you time to adjust to factors like increased workloads and variations in academic preparation and teaching methods. You start with Pass or No Record (P/NR) grading during fall and IAP terms and transition to A, B, C, or No Record grades for the spring semester. Standard A-F grading begins in your sophomore year."

- https://registrar.mit.edu/classes-grades-evaluations/grades/grading-policies/first-year-grading



From Drake University in Iowa…

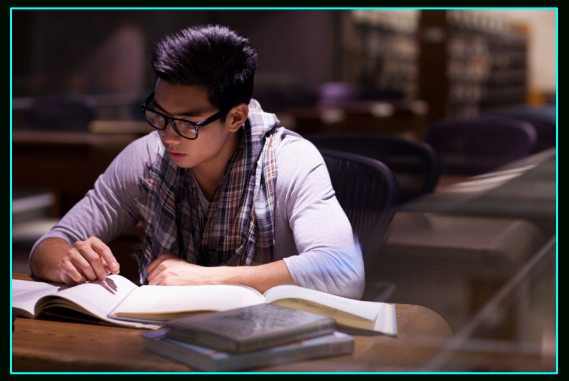
"A student may repeat a course. Only the highest grade and credit hours are used in computing the student's cumulative G.P.A.…The mark "I" (Incomplete) indicates a student has not submitted all evidence required for a final grade. The student must make satisfactory arrangements with the instructor to complete the work by the end of the next semester of enrollment…The instructor writes out the conditions that must be met to remove the incomplete. As a component of these conditions, the instructor may demand an accelerated deadline (the midterm of the following semester) or may provide an extended deadline if special circumstances warrant (a semester abroad, student teaching, etc.)…A copy of conditions that must be met to complete the course is also given to the student. Marks of incomplete are changed to a final grade either by the instructor (upon completion of the work) or by the Office of Student Records (upon attaining the specified due date). -- www.drake.edu/catalog/undergrad/14-15/geninfo/academicregulations/



From Reed College in Oregon…

Reed college in Portland, Oregon, ranks, "...fourth in the nation among all institutions of higher learning in the per capita production of future PhD's in all disciplines. It ranks third in science and mathematics, third in social sciences, and sixth in humanities and art. [It ranks]…second in life sciences, second in humanities, second in social sciences (not including psychology, education, and communications), second in psychology, and fourth in physical sciences."

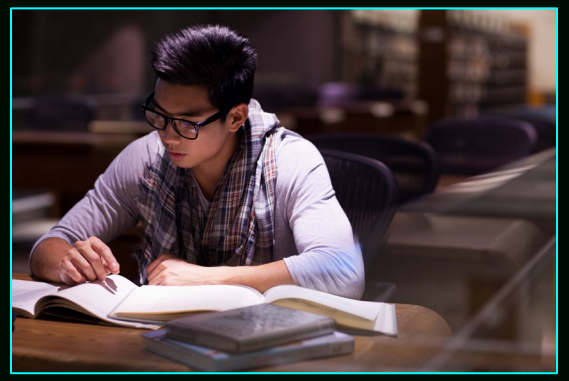
But check out their grading policy: "Students are encouraged to focus on learning, not on grades. Students are evaluated rigorously, and semester grades are filed with the registrar, but by tradition, students do not receive standard grade reports. Papers and exams are generally returned to students with lengthy comments but without grades affixed. There is no dean's list or honor roll, and Reed does not award Latin honors at graduation." - www.reed.edu/registrar/pdfs/grades.pdf



From the University of California System: “Letter grades on way out? Why some University of California departments may use alternatives Changes are especially being considered for first-year students to help them get acclimated to college,” Michael Burke, April 26, 2022, https://edsource.org/2022/letter-grades-on-way-out-why-some-university-of-california-departments-may-use-alternatives/670994

“Divisions like UC Berkeley’s College of Chemistry and UC Davis’s Department of Mathematics are deliberating whether to change how they grade students. In some cases, that means awarding students a pass or no-pass grade rather than a letter grade. Other times, it may mean allowing students to choose which assignments get the most weight in determining their grade.”

“At UC Irvine, Academic Senate leaders are currently evaluating long-term options around grading and have met with officials at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where students don’t receive letter grades for their first semester, to learn about that university’s approach.”



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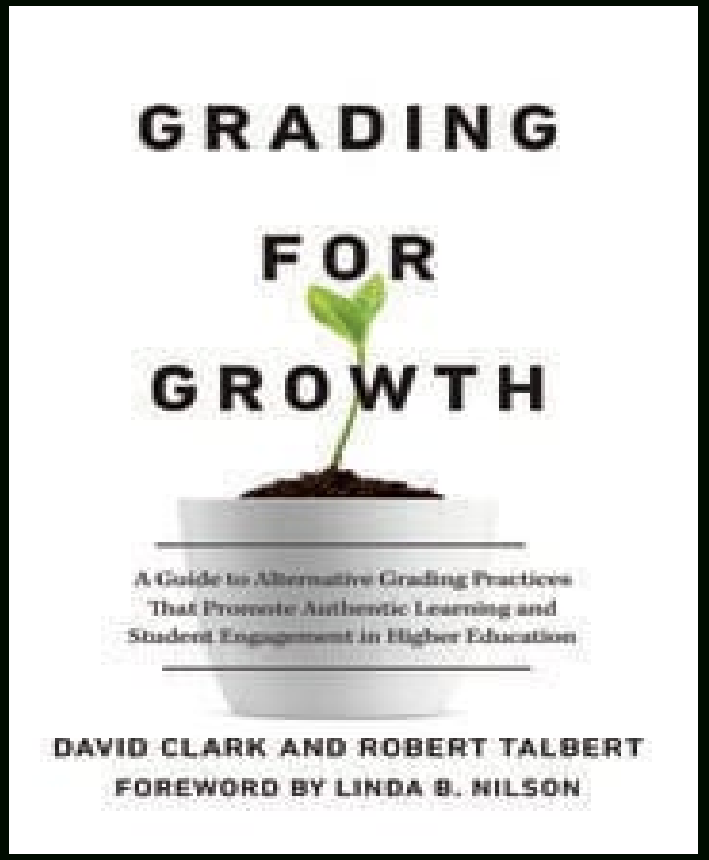
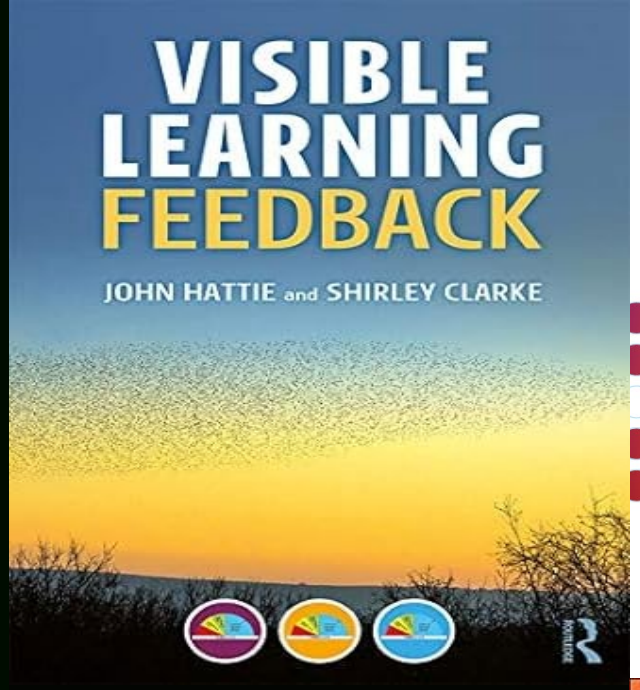
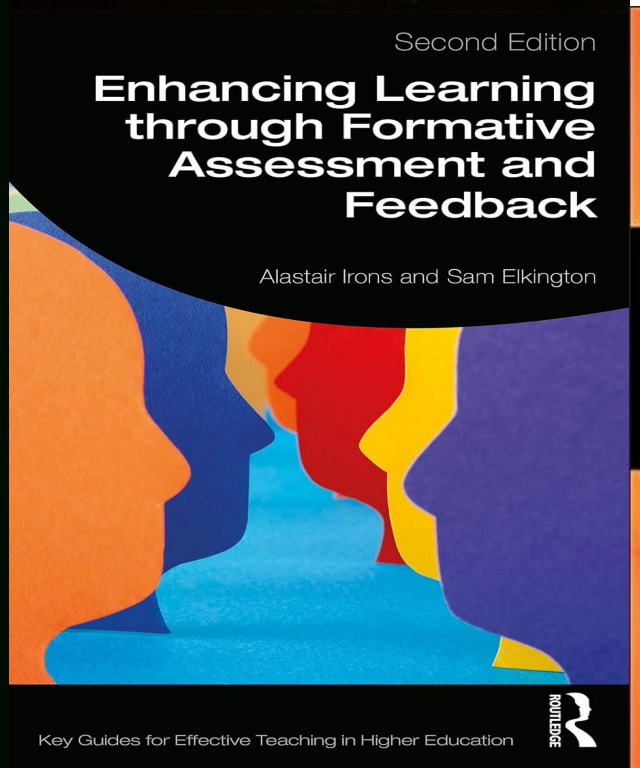
“Departments at other UC campuses are also experimenting with making changes to how they test students, putting less emphasis on high-stakes exams because some students aren’t good test takers but can demonstrate their understanding of the material in other ways. Some departments have begun using two-stage exams. Students take a standard individual exam before also taking a group test where they work with other students.”

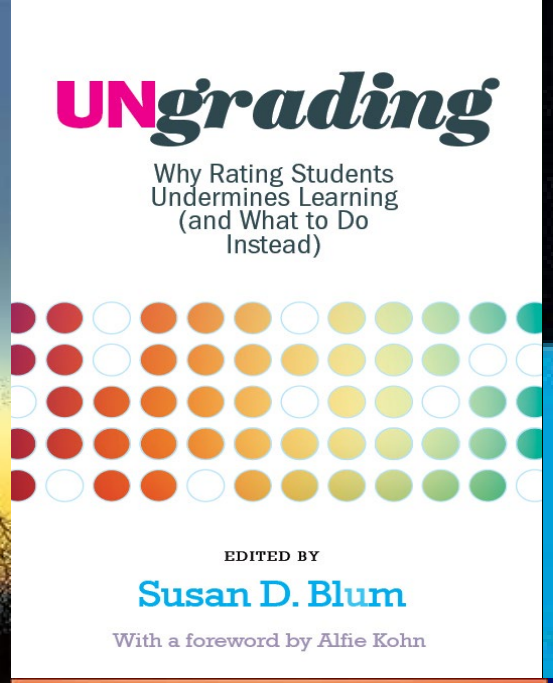
“The changes are especially being considered for first-year students to give them more time to get used to the rigors of college work and learn the material over the course of a semester rather than discourage them early on with low scores on tests and other assignments.”

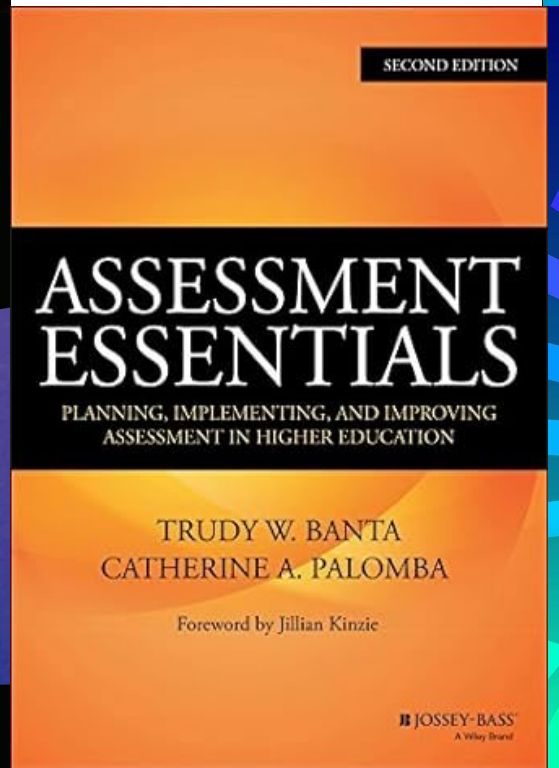
Helpful books on grading at the university level that have direct implications for grading at the high school level:

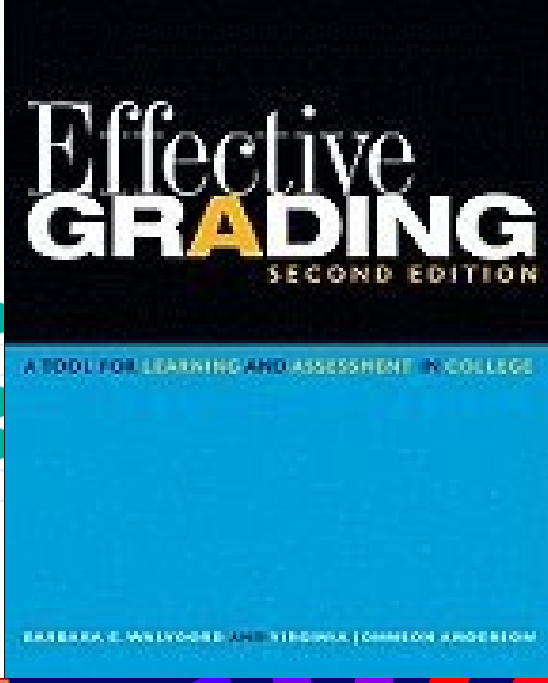




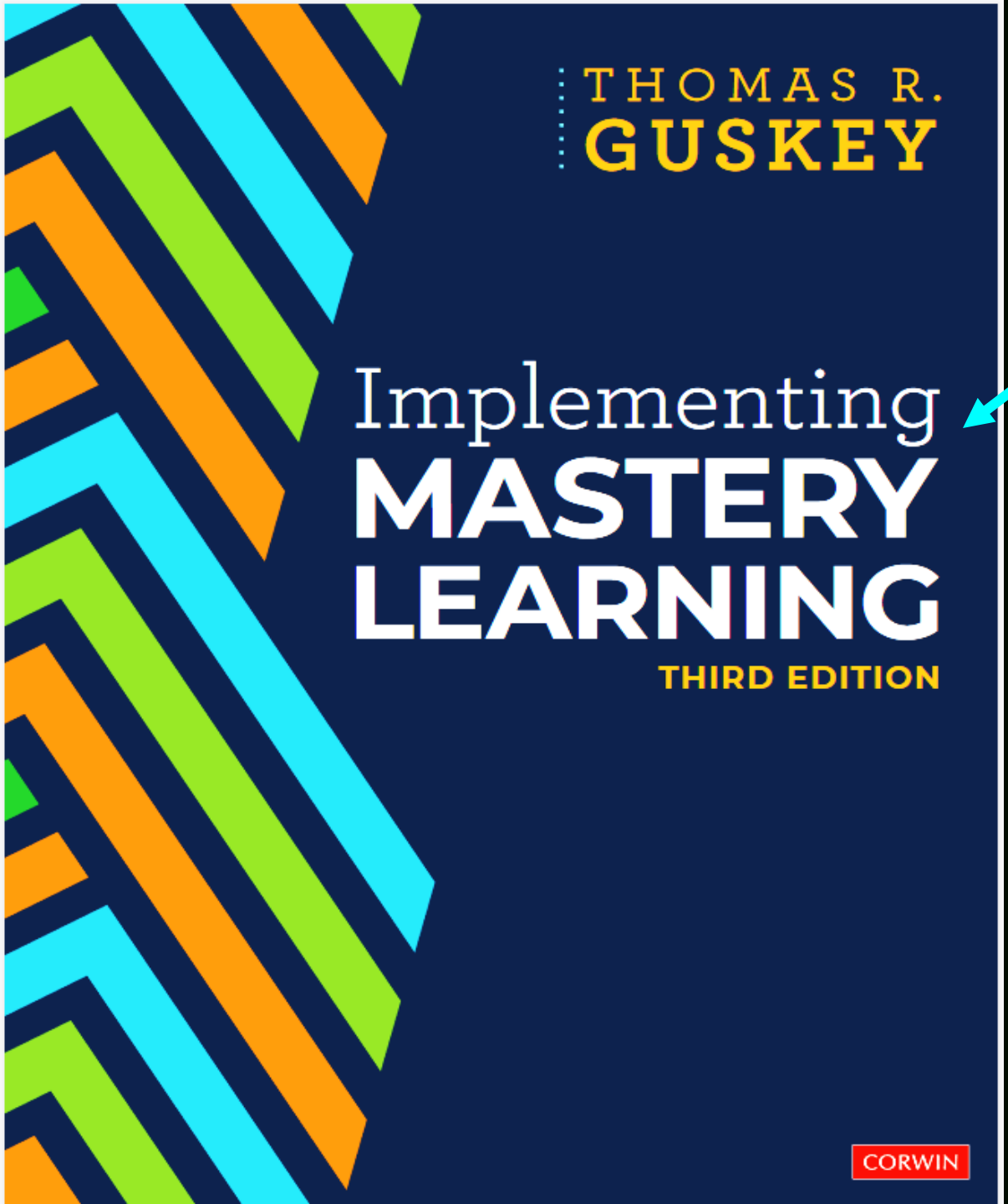






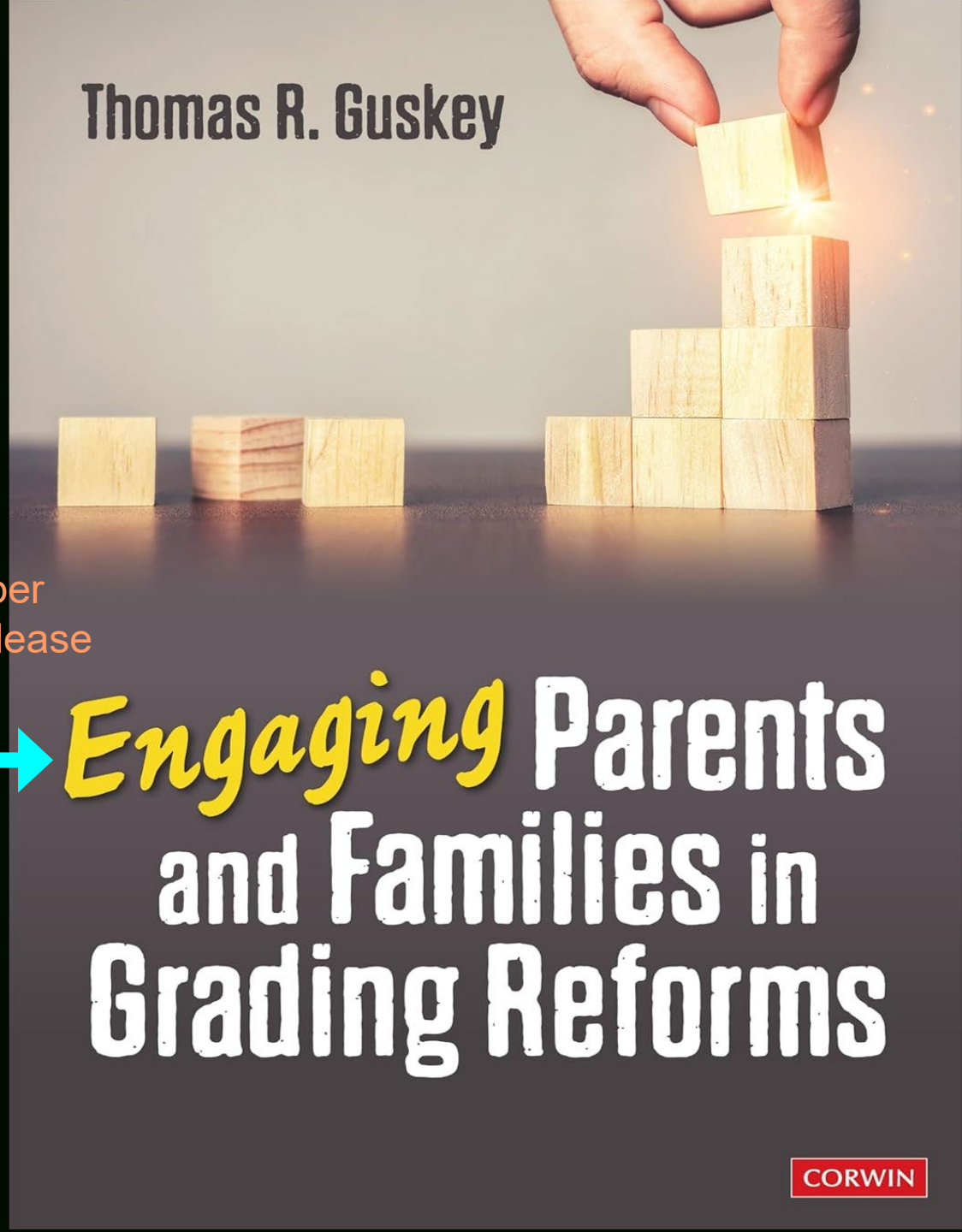


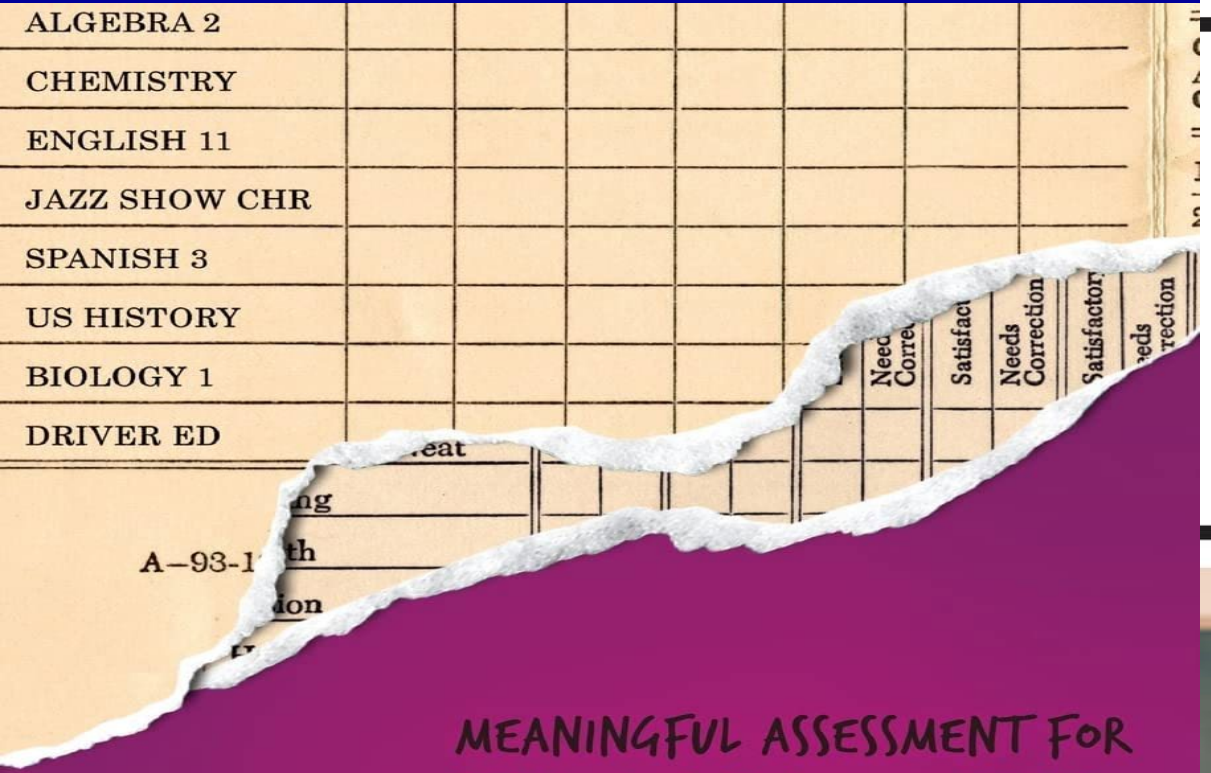
Recommended Resources



Released in 2023!

December 2023 release





MEANINGFUL ASSESSMENT FOR STANDARDS-BASED LEARNING

Rethinking Grading

Cathy Vatterott

A PARENTS' GUIDE TO GRADING AND REPORTING

Being Clear about What Matters

Matt Townsley
Chad Lang

Foreword by Ken O'Connor

How to GRADE FOR LEARNING

Linking Grades to Standards

FOURTH EDITION

Ken O'Connor

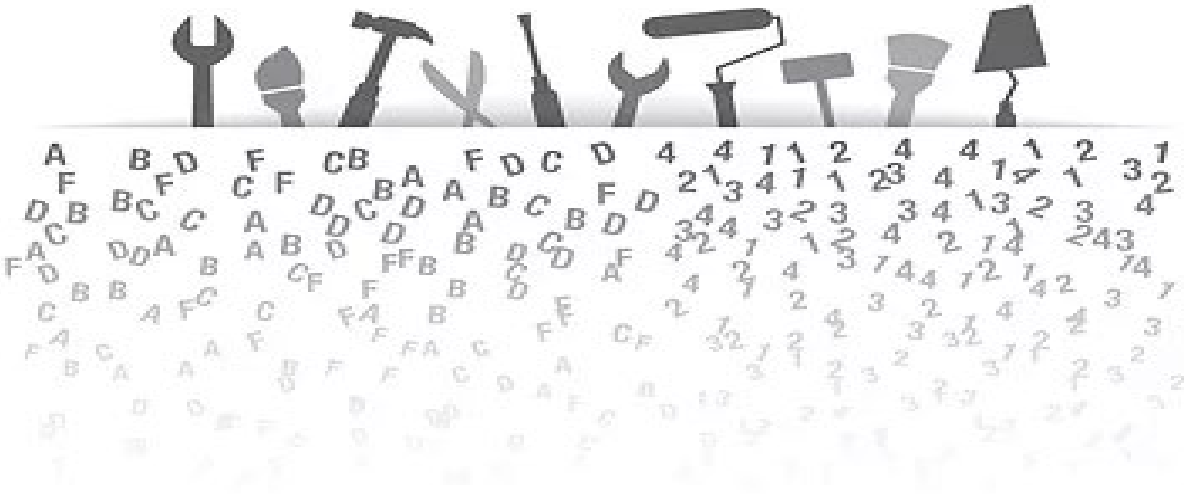
Forewords by Garnet Hillman and Rick Stiggins

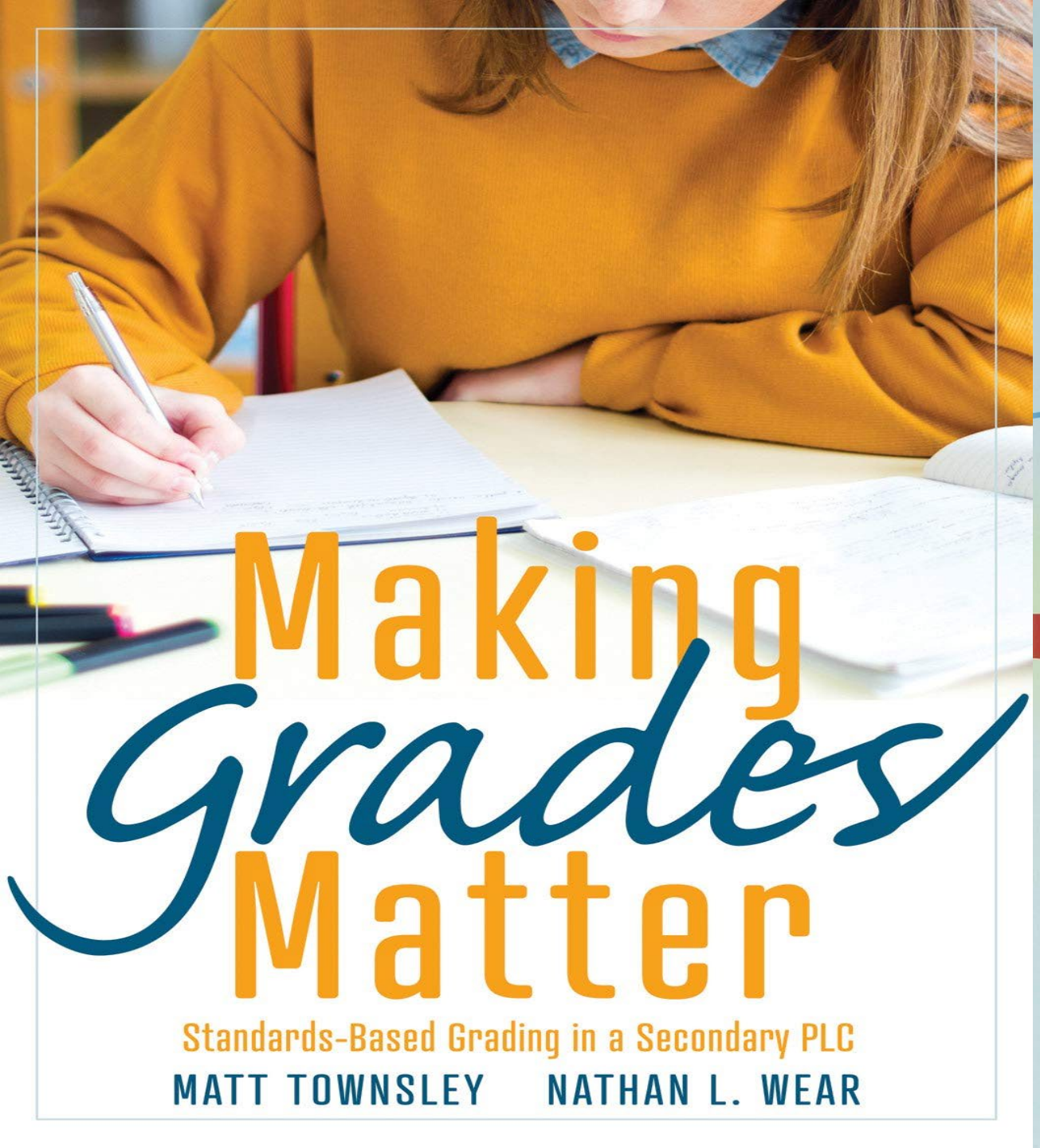
KEN O'CONNOR

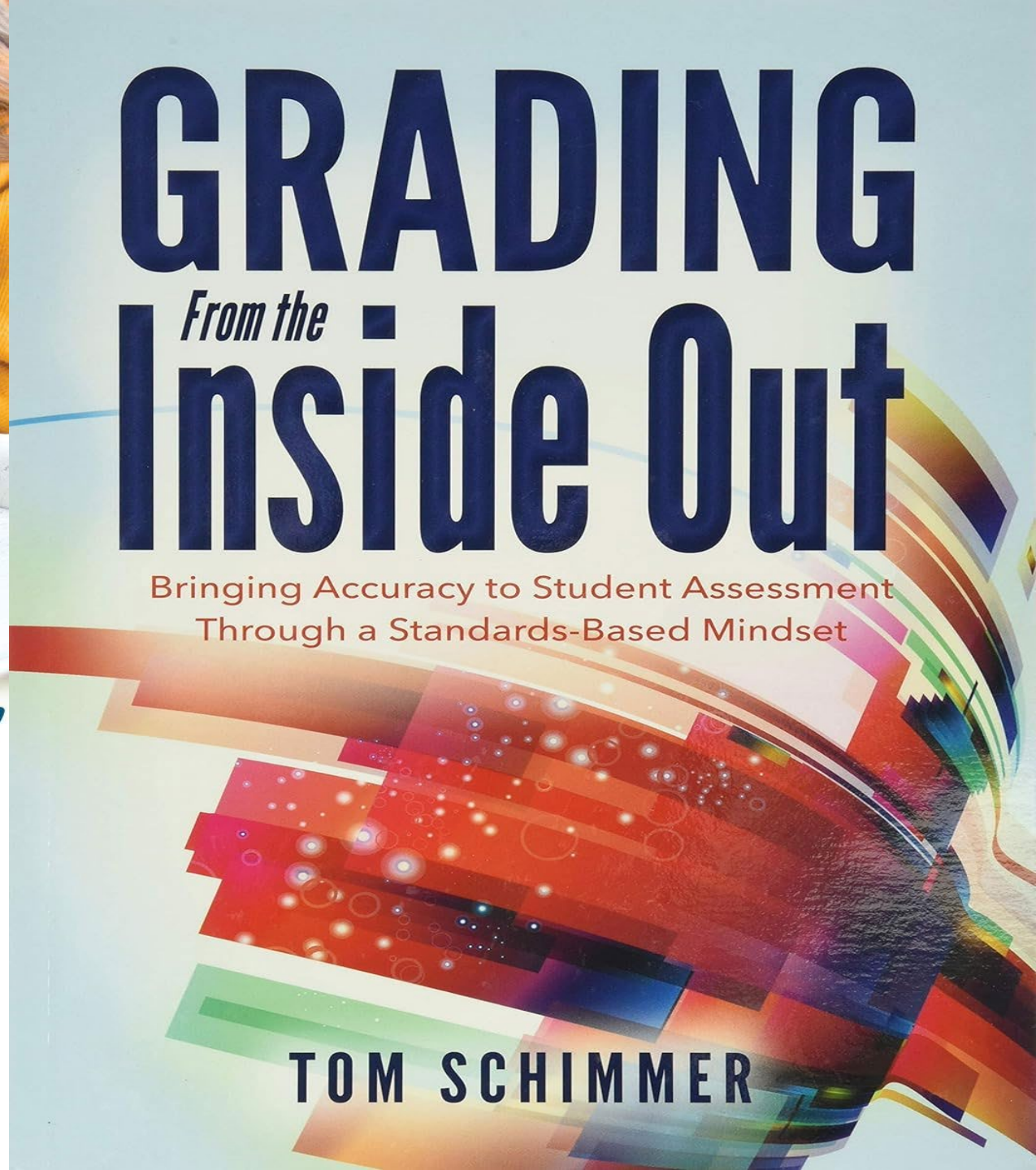
Foreword by Rick Wormeli

A REPAIR KIT FOR GRADING

15 FIXES FOR BROKEN GRADES




Making
Grades
Matter
Standards-Based Grading in a Secondary PLC
MATT TOWNSLEY
NATHAN L. WEAR


GRADING
From the
Inside Out
Bringing Accuracy to Student Assessment
Through a Standards-Based Mindset
TOM SCHIMMER

BREAKING WITH TRADITION

THE SHIFT TO COMPETENCY-BASED LEARNING IN PLCS AT WORK™

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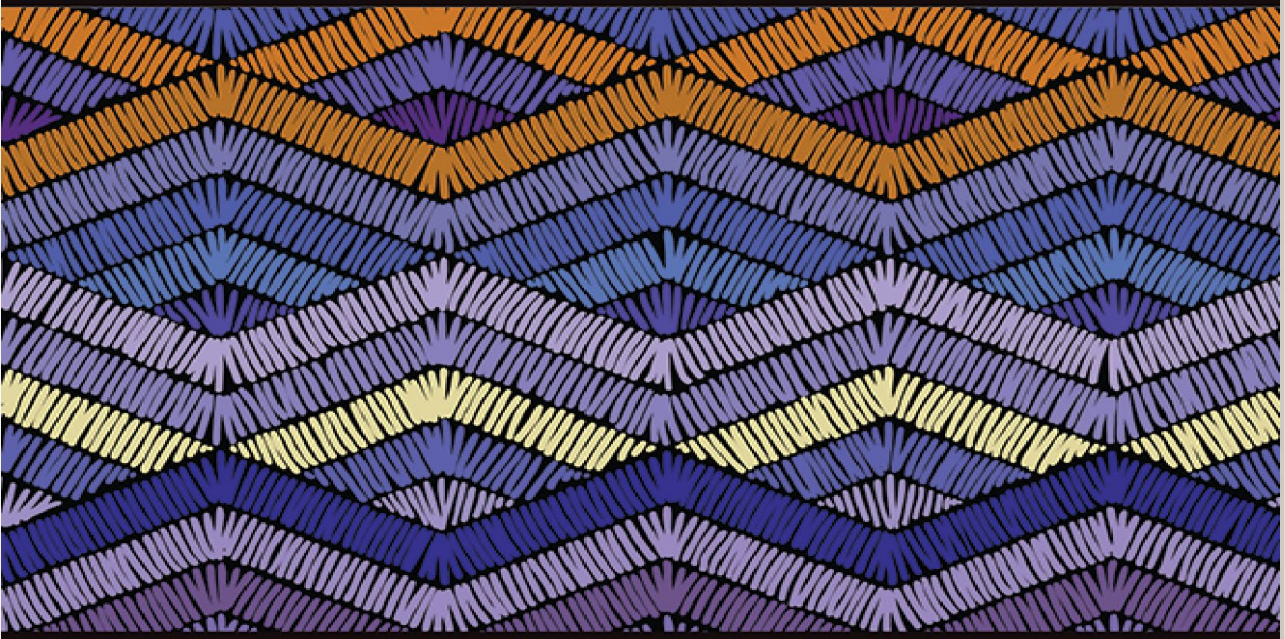

JOE FELDMAN

the standards-based classroom

Make Learning the GOAL

Emily Rinkema • Stan Williams
Foreword by Ken O'Connor

RICK WORMELI *with* *Dedra Stafford*

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Summarization IN ANY SUBJECT

60 Innovative, Tech-Infused Strategies for Deeper Student Learning

FAIR ISN'T ALWAYS EQUAL

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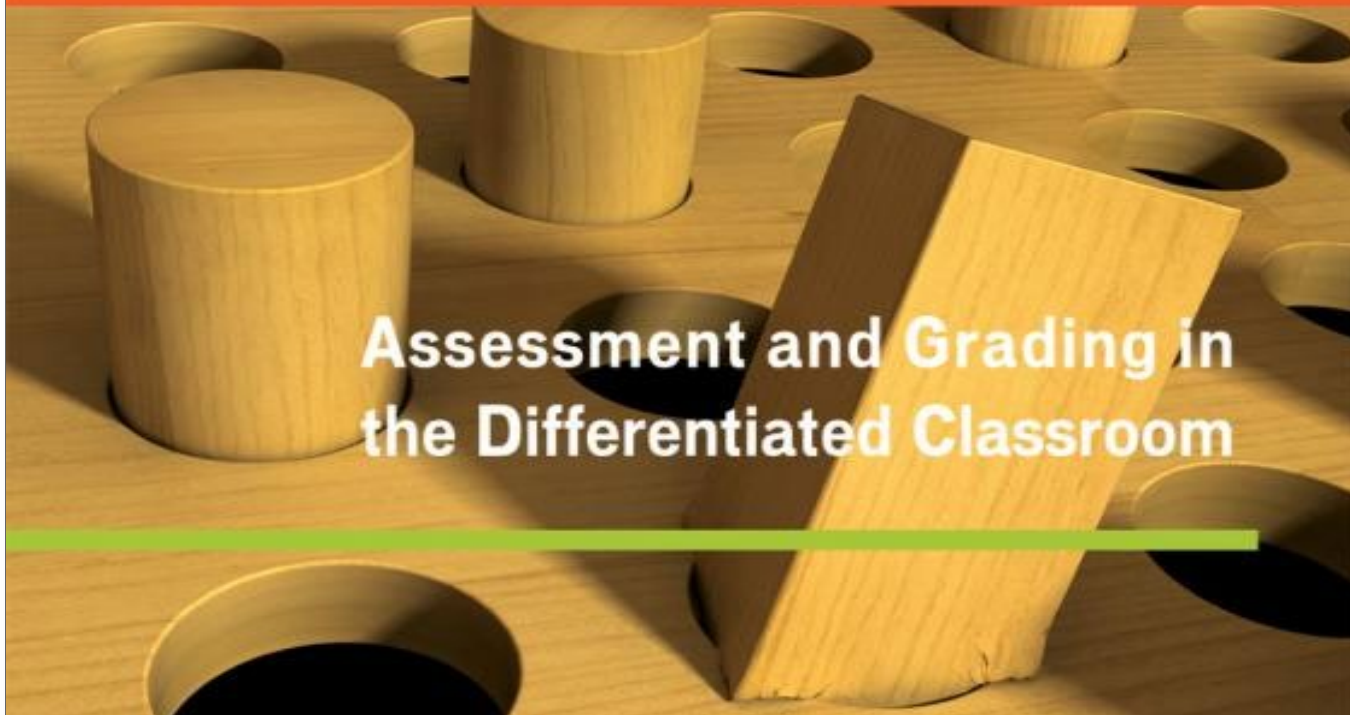
Rick Wormeli



Assessment and Grading in the Differentiated Classroom

Assistance as We Dive Deeper into these New Waters:

On Twitter: @tguskey @TomSchimmer @mctownsley @garnet_hillman @RoweRikW @MandyStalets @kenoc7 @leeannjung @CVULearns, @rickwormeli2, @myrondueck

Websites:

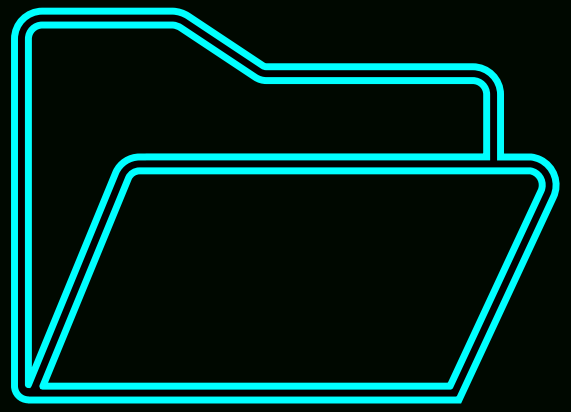
- https://www.firsteducation-us.com/
- mctownsley.net/standards-based-grading/
- tguskey.com
- oconnorgrading.com
- cafln.ca/ *(Canadian Assessment Learning Network)*
- *pearsonassessments.com/ati/ (This is the Assessment Training Institute)*
- tomschimmer.com
- rickwormeli.com
- crescendoedgroup.org/community/resources/

  (This is Joe Feldman's grading for equity organization)
- *aac.ab.ca (Alberta Assessment Consortium)*

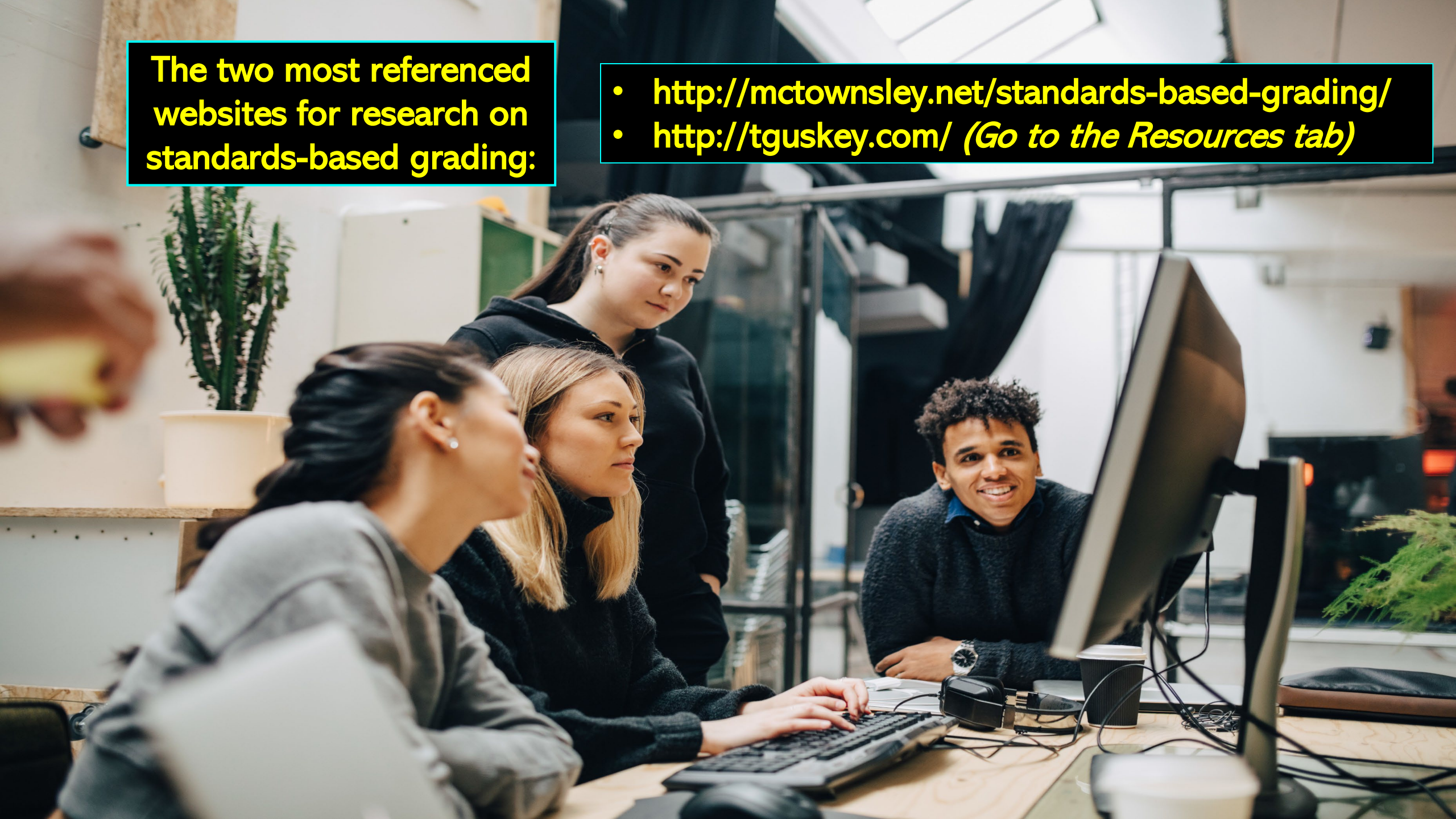
Sample Look at High Schools that Do SBG and Research on College Preparation when Experiencing it in High School:

- Sanborn Regional School District (SAU 17) in New Hampshire
- Solon High School in Iowa
- Maine Township 207 Schools in Maine
- Des Moines Public Schools video - http://grading.dmschools.org/
- Arlington Public Schools
- Albemarle County Public Schools
- Journal of School Administration Research and Development
- “Getting High School Students Ready for College: A Quantitative Study of Standards Based Grading Practices” written by Matt Townsley and Matt Varga, University of West Georgia at chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1168171.pdf

Four recent articles that may help:



- www.amle.org/where-do-we-find-the-time-to-do-all-this-stuff/
- https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2023/02/06/should-homework-be-graded/
- https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2023/11/14/rethinking-way-teachers-assign-student-grades/
- https://www.amle.org/grading-students-identified-as-special-education-ell-rti-mtss-or-otherwise-in-general-education-classes/



The two most referenced websites for research on standards-based grading:

- http://mctownsley.net/standards-based-grading/
- http://tguskey.com/ *(Go to the Resources tab)*