

# CHILD ASSESSMENT IN EARLY AND PRIMARY YEARS DURING VIRTUAL LEARNING



**The assessment of the children should be formative, continuous and flow from the experiences planned in the curriculum. Formative continuous assessment implies documenting the development of the child, by interpreting the evidence from the day to day experiences of the child with the purpose of recognising and encouraging strengths and addressing learning/developmental gaps.**

**Source -  
Early Childhood Education Curriculum Framework  
Ministry of Women and Child Development Government  
of India.**

## INTRODUCTION

Dear educators,

Many of us know that this academic year we will be conducting all learning and assessments online. This is the 'new normal' during this most difficult time brought on us by this Pandemic. Its time for mid year assessments and everyone is worried how to do them virtually. Well, ECA and APER has compiled this fantastic resource manual to help you conduct your virtual assessments in an age and developmentally appropriate manner. I am sure you will find this manual as helpful and resourceful as you found our Blended Learning Manual.

If your school is in a district that will soon allow the school to function physically then please read our School reopening safety guidelines too. All material is available to download free from our website [www.eca-india.org](http://www.eca-india.org)

### **What is assessment?**

To assess is to evaluate the value, importance, or quality of. ...This is what the dictionary defines assessment as. This definition clearly indicates that when we talk about assessing children it is actually the assessment of the teacher, the environment, and the learning process. So assessment in the Early Years is about assessing the value, importance, and quality of the teaching and learning environment, especially the new environment of virtual learning.

### **Why assessments?**

To answer this let me quote from the Te Whariki curriculum framework of the government of New Zealand, "The purpose of assessment is to give useful information about children's learning and development to the adults providing the programme and to children and their families (Te Whāriki, page 29). We undertake assessment: to understand children's learning better; to start discussions about children's learning; to share information with others; to reflect on practice; to plan for the learning of individuals and groups; to ensure that all children receive attention; to highlight the learning that is valued; to involve children in self-assessment; to discuss the programme with family/whānau; to share experiences with family/whānau".

### **So should assessment be formative or summative?**

Formative assessment happens during the learning process, it is ongoing so that the teacher can make modifications in the teaching learning process as it happens. In contrast summative assessments happen at the end of the teaching- learning process in the form of tests etc. so simply put the first one- formative assessments is for learning to improve and summative assessments are of the learning process. Assessment expert Paul Black puts it, "When the cook tastes the soup, that's formative assessment. When the customer tastes the soup, that's summative assessment." A portfolio maintained of the child's activities, drawings, photos is a kind of formative assessment and a traditional style report card that outlines grades or marks is a summative assessment. Quality assessments include, observation and interpretation. For observation there are various tools that a teacher can use, but just observing is not enough, the teacher will then have to interpret the observation to outline the goal or change in the teaching learning process, for this she will require knowledge about child development, and understanding of each child.

A fantastic observation tool that a teacher can use while assessing children virtually in their everyday interactions is-

**Checklist / Pre-coded categories-** teachers can make a list of any categories that they would like to assess the children on. Important to also note the age of the children, as developmental milestones do matter in assessments to do with age related abilities and learning.

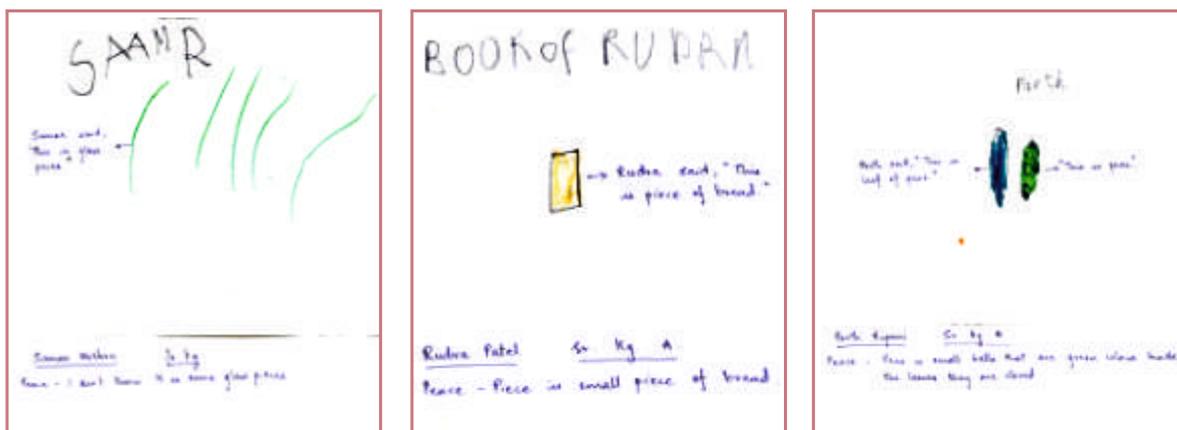
Activity	Amrita	Kalpana	Sarina	Farida	Anita
Age	3yrs 2 months	3 yrs. 6 months	3 yrs.	3 yrs. 10 months	3 yrs. 8 months
Stands on one leg for two seconds	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Hops on one foot	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Jumps from one step	X	X	✓	X	✓
Listens attentively	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Responds to instructions	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Able to sit and participate in the full session	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

**During virtual teaching-learning sometimes a simple drawing activity can help as an assessment-**

How do we know that children have understood the concept that we are trying to teach them? Or how do we know that the words we are trying to teach them are heard and interpreted in the same meaning? Here is an apt example of how a teacher may think that the learners in the class have understood the concept but the learners may be thinking of something completely different.

**Art as assessment:**

A teacher completed the unit about war and peace with her 4 year old learners, at the end of the unit she asked the children to draw about war and they drew relevant images of weapons, war etc. she then asked them to draw about peace and what unfolded in their drawings was that each one misinterpreted the word peace for 'piece' and 'peas', so their drawings were about 'bread piece', 'pizza piece', 'glass piece' and 'green peas'! The teacher was then able to use this to introduce a unit to help them understand about peace, piece, and peas!



The above is an example of Dynamic assessment



The document further expands the core idea of assessment that would aid teachers to understand the 'how' and 'why' of assessment, these are:

- Assessment implies that there are aims or goals for children's learning.
- Assessment involves making visible learning.
- Assessment is something that happens during everyday practice.
- Assessment is observation based.
- Assessment requires an interpretation that may include reflection and discussion (as we strive to understand our observations).
- Assessment is purposeful (puts our understandings to good use).
- Assessment analyses children's behavior from a positive viewpoint.
- Assessment acknowledges the child's strengths and interests.

And some pertinent advice about observation from Dianne MacLean "Record only what you see, feel, hear, and smell. Observation provides a non-judgmental documentation of a set of events free of subjective and often inaccurate conclusions."

The Development Matters document further outlines the steps to follow in the formative assessment process:

### **Observation**- Observe children as they act and interact in their play, everyday activities and planned activities, and learn from parents about what the child does at home.

#### **Assessment** - Consider the examples of development, observing what children can do' to help identify where the child may be in their own developmental pathway.

- **Planning**- Consider ways to support the child to strengthen and deepen their current learning and development, reflecting on guidance in columns given, practitioners will develop many other approaches in response to the children with whom they work.

Lets remember that assessment ends with planning! Planning the way ahead to take the child to the next level of learning or supporting the child who is struggling by planning activities, maybe even one on one activities, to ensure that every child achieves their developmental milestones in learning.

We look forward to receiving your feedback on the ideas shared in this manual, once your have tried them out in your virtual learning program. Let us also caution you not to stress out children to achieve on academic learning or assessment, let us focus this year on language and socio-emotional skills.

All the best.

Warm regards,

Dr. Swati Popat Vats

President

Early Childhood Association

Association for Primary Education and Research

## WHY SHOULD EDUCATORS BE CAREFUL ABOUT ASSESSMENT IN EARLY AND PRIMARY YEARS?

Assessing children in the earliest years of life—from birth to age 8—is difficult because it is the period when young children's rates of physical, motor, and linguistic development outpace growth rates at all other stages. Growth is rapid, episodic, and highly influenced by environmental supports: nurturing parents, quality caregiving, and the learning setting.

## WHAT IS ASSESSMENT?

Assessment- a tool or method that enables you to see if you are meeting your goals with the children.

Mary Jane Drummond (2009, p. 13) uses the term assessment 'to describe the ways in which, in our everyday practice, we observe children's learning, strive to understand it, and then put our understanding to good use'. What Drummond is saying here, is that assessment in early childhood education is not about removing children from situations or implementing testing regimes; rather it is a process of observation, interpretation and analysis that is embedded in our everyday practice with children.

## WHY SHOULD WE BE CAREFUL ABOUT HOW CHILDREN IN EARLY AND PRIMARY YEARS ARE ASSESSED?

- Because young children learn in ways and at rates different from older children and adults, we must tailor our assessments accordingly.
- Because young children come to know things through doing as well as through listening, and because they often represent their knowledge better by showing than by talking or writing, paper-and-pencil tests are not adequate.
- Because young children do not have the experience to understand what the goals of formal testing are, testing interactions may be very difficult or impossible to structure appropriately.
- Because young children develop and learn so fast, tests given at one point in time may not give a complete picture of learning.
- And because young children's achievements at any point are the result of a complex mix of their ability to learn and past learning opportunities, it is a mistake to interpret measures of past learning as evidence of what could be learned.

For these reasons, how we assess young children and the principles that frame such assessments need special attention. What works for older children or adults will not work for younger children; they have unique needs that we, as adults, are obliged to recognize if we are to optimize their development.

## WHY SHOULD CHILDREN BE ASSESSED?

Assessments are conducted to:

- Find out what children are interested in.
- Find out children's strengths and areas of difficulty.
- Make informed decisions about interventions.
- Discover how children change over time.
- Learn what children know in particular areas, such as reading etc.
- Link with instruction, making sure instruction is responsive and appropriate, matching what children can and cannot do.
- Serve as a basis to report to parents.

Assessment is NOT conducted to classify the child's "readiness" for inclusion in an educational setting and assessment is DEFINITELY NOT conducted to exclude the child from preschool or Kindergarten because of an erroneously presumed lack of readiness.

It IS conducted to plan beneficial opportunities for each child.

## WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF ASSESSMENTS?

According to Jennie Tookoian , “Some assessments are helpful before the race even begins to help determine what the best running strategy is (**diagnostic**). Some assessments are beneficial during the race to track progress and see if adjustments to the strategy should be made during the race (**formative**). Some assessments are given to see if students in entire schools or districts, the entire running team, are moving forward and learning the material (**interim**). And some assessments are best at the very end of the race, to review performance, see how you did, and see how to improve for the next race (**summative**).”

## WHAT SHOULD YOU KEEP IN MIND DURING VIRTUAL ASSESSMENTS?

- For assessment to be widely used it must employ methods that are feasible, sustainable and reasonable with regards to demands on budgets, educators and children.
- Equally important, it must meet the challenging demands of validity (accuracy and effectiveness) for young children and an approach grounded in a sound understanding of appropriate methodology.
- Assessments should be age-appropriate in both content and the method of data collection.
- Assessments should be linguistically appropriate, recognizing that to some extent all assessments are measures of language
- Parents should be a valued source of assessment information, as well as an audience for assessment results.

## WHY SHOULD ASSESSMENTS IN EARLY AND PRIMARY YEARS BE 'VALID'?

The younger the child, the more difficult it is to obtain valid assessments. Early development is rapid, episodic and highly influenced by experience. Performance on an assessment is affected by children's emotional states and the conditions of the assessment.

- Validity is the degree to which a tool measures what it is supposed to measure.

In assessing young children, two aspects of validity have special importance – developmental validity and predictive validity.

- **Developmental validity** means the performance items being measured are developmentally suitable for the children being assessed.
- **Predictive validity** is the correlation between a tool score and future performance on a relevant criterion

When an assessment process or tool has validity, users can be assured that it measures what it says it will measure and not something else.

For example, an assessment checklist item that assesses the ability to sort objects would have high validity if it required a child to sort objects into groups to show evidence of sorting skills rather than to explain how to sort objects. It is possible that a child may not yet have developed a high enough level of language ability to explain why, but is able to sort when asked to. To assume the child cannot sort because he or she cannot explain how to sort means the assessment item lacks validity.

## WHAT SHOULD EDUCATORS KEEP IN MIND DURING AN ASSESSMENT PROCESS?

- Assessment should not make children feel anxious or scared.
- Information should be obtained over time.
- The length of the assessment should be sensitive to young children's interests and attention spans.
- The assessor should be knowledgeable regarding both the assessment materials and the children being assessed.
- Assessment should measure real knowledge in the context of real activities.
- They should resemble children's ordinary activities as closely as possible

## WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ASSESSMENT AND TESTING?

“**Assessment** is the process of collecting, synthesizing, and interpreting information to aid classroom decision-making. It includes information gathered about pupils, instruction, and classroom climate.” Airasian, P. (2002). *Assessment in the classroom*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

“**Testing** is a formal, systematic procedure for gathering a sample of pupils' behavior. The results of a test are used to make generalizations about how pupils would have performed on similar but untested behaviors.”- Airasian, P. (2002).

## WHEN SHOULD TESTING BE INTRODUCED?

“Table-top testing” and/or “pencil-and-paper standardized tests” are discouraged for children birth to age 8 for a variety of reasons. For example, young children and children in Kindergarten may not be able to use a pencil effectively to demonstrate their knowledge. A test of this type does not capture some of the skills that are critical to success in school (i.e., social and emotional development; approaches to learning) (Scott-Little & Niemeyer, 2001).

As children grow older (primary years) and their skills broaden they are better able to demonstrate their knowledge and skill. Again, assessment of children follows a continuum similar to children's developmental changes. Younger children need naturalistic opportunities to demonstrate their skills while this need begins to change as children grow older where they can more easily demonstrate their knowledge in a traditional test format.

## WHAT ARE STANDARDIZED TESTS AND WHY THEY SHOULD NOT BE USED IN EARLY YEARS?

Standardized tests represent the most formal extreme of the assessment continuum because they place the greatest constraints on children's behavior. These tests are given under strictly controlled, standard conditions so that, to the extent possible, each child is assessed in exactly the same way. Standardized test scores allow for fair comparisons among individual or groups of test takers. Because standard administration is essential to obtain valid results, the skill of the examiner is of particular importance when using this type of assessment.

There is some concern about how well standardized tests work with young children. The younger the child, the more difficult it can be to obtain valid scores. Preschoolers may not understand the demands of the testing situation, and may respond unpredictably to the testing conditions. Performance is highly influenced by children's emotional states and experience, so that test scores across time may be relatively unstable.

These other methods often fall under the banner of “authentic” or “naturalistic” assessments. They engage or evaluate children on tasks that are personally meaningful, take place in real life contexts, and are grounded in naturally occurring instructional activities. They offer multiple ways of evaluating students' learning, as well as their motivation, achievement, and attitudes.

## WHAT ARE STANDARDIZED TESTS AND WHY THEY SHOULD NOT BE USED IN EARLY YEARS?

Methods of collecting assessment data include direct observation of children during natural activities; looking at drawings and samples of work; asking questions either orally or in writing; or asking informed adults about the child. The younger the child, the more appropriate it is to use observation.

As age increases, especially by third grade, the frequency of more formal assessment “events” should increase, but should still be balanced with informal methods. Across this early childhood age span, children should be introduced to and become comfortable with the idea that adults ask questions and check on understanding as a natural part of the learning process.

**OBSERVATION**- Assessing young children, the principal alternative to testing is systematic observation of children's activities in their day-to-day settings. Although careful observation requires effort, the approach intrudes minimally into what children are doing. Children's activities naturally integrate all dimensions of their development—intellectual, motivational, social, physical, aesthetic, and so on.

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**PORTFOLIO-** Another option is use of a well- constructed portfolio system. Arter and Spandel define a portfolio as “a purposeful collection of student work that tells the story of the student's efforts, progress, or achievement in (a) given area(s).

Evidence to support assessment judgments can be collected through the use of observations of children's learning in a range of contexts, photographs, videos, samples of recorded work, audio evidence and from conversations with children, parents or carers. Margaret Carr (2007) advocates the use of Learning Stories. This approach is reflected within Te Whariki, the New Zealand early years curriculum. Learning stories provide a powerful vehicle through which children's development can be documented over a period of time. They are written in an extended narrative style and provide contextual information relating to factors which may impact on the child's learning, as well as practitioner reflections on the child's development.

## ASSESSMENTS AND ZPD

Learning is most effective when it takes place in what Vygotsky (1978) referred to as the Zone of Proximal Development.

- This refers to the gap between what a child can do independently and what they can potentially achieve with support.
- Consequently planned learning opportunities and experiences should be pitched at a level slightly higher than the child's actual developmental level and children can be supported by practitioners, other adults or peers to achieve their proximal developmental level.
- Bruner used the term scaffolding to indicate that the level of support given is withdrawn when the child is independently able to master identified knowledge, skills and understanding (Wood 1998).
- When observing children it is of course essential to note their achievements but it is equally important to identify the ways in which current achievements can be built upon through carefully considered scaffolding techniques.
- These may including children in, modelling, questioning and explanations.
- Adult supported learning and independent learning provide opportunities for adult or peer-peer scaffolding.

## INVOLVING PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS IN THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

One critical part of assessment is the role of the parent. To fully understand a child's development a family-centered focus is important (National Association of School Psychologists, 2005). Parents and educators should work together as a team. Parents witness their children's functioning and behavior in a wide variety of contexts, and their input is valued as part of the child's overall assessment.

Here it is also important to consider families – do the interpretations of children's learning and development match the families understanding of their child? Is there additional information that a parent can provide that would change the interpretation of what has been observed? For example, an observation of an 'aggressive' toddler might be re-interpreted as a 'tired' toddler after a conversation with a parent.

- Many parents lack an understanding of the processes of assessment and what is expected and appropriate.
- An emphasis should be placed on explaining the importance of ongoing assessment to parents and how their role is critical to the process.
- Families need to understand how their child is being assessed and what the findings mean to them and to their child.
- The more that parents are included in the assessment process the greater their ability to make fully-informed decisions in addition to the likelihood of their cooperation with the education planning for their child.

## CHILDREN'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

According to Hutchin (2007), 'Children must be involved in their own assessment and their voices heard, regardless of age or ability' (p.72). Hutchin (2007) stresses that involving children in the assessment process demonstrates respect for children's rights and helps them to understand their achievements and learning needs.

The Reggio Emilia approach, founded in northern Italy by Malaguzzi, emphasises the importance of listening to children's ideas. Children are viewed as capable partners in their own learning and practitioners and children work in collaboration. Within this approach the views of children are greatly valued. Malaguzzi emphasised that '98' of the 'one hundred languages' that children are born with are lost by the age of six. Practitioners should therefore ensure that learning is evidenced in a range of ways and that young children participate in the process of gathering and selecting evidence for inclusion in assessment portfolios.

## CAN BLOOM'S BE USED IN ASSESSMENT FOR EARLY AND PRIMARY YEARS?

Bloom's Taxonomy can be applied to kindergarten and primary children's assessment in a few simple steps. As stated in **Bloom's taxonomy** (Bloom, 1956), learning is a sequential and hierarchical process. It starts from lower order thinking skills (**LOTS**) such as remembering and understanding to higher order thinking skills (**HOTS**) such as creating, evaluating and analyzing.

Each level is conceptually different. The six levels are remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating. Normally represented in pyramid form, the categories of Bloom's Taxonomy are:

1. **Remembering-** Observing and documenting a child's ability to remember concepts by asking him/her to repeat information back to you. Remembering is the foundation for learning in Bloom's Taxonomy. Ask simple questions with one word answers to build confidence. Ask more difficult questions that test the student's memory as he/she becomes more comfortable. For instance, when you teach what sound the letter "M" makes, ask the student to repeat the M sound.
2. **Understanding-** Motivate a child to explain the concept to you to show that he/she understands. Observing and documenting a child's understanding will help you gauge if the child can explain ideas. In the example of the sound the letter "M" makes, ask the child to explain how another child should go about making the sound.
3. **Applying-** Ask the child to apply the information she/he has learned in a new way. Provide an opportunity for the child to draw a picture of what the concept looks like. For example, ask the child what words begin with the letter "M." Or, ask the child to write the letter M on a piece of paper and then say aloud what sound it makes.
4. **Analyzing-** Request the child to combine the concept with previous concepts he/she has learned. Analyzing allows the student to compare and contrast how the new concept works in relation to other concepts. Ask the child how the sound "M" and the sound "A" are different, if you are teaching the sounds letters make.
5. **Evaluating-** Evaluate the child's understanding by observing and documenting her/him on the information learned. Ask the child specific questions, and ask them to support why they believe they have the correct answer. If you're assessing a student on letter and sound comprehension, ask the child to distinguish between two different sounds when given. For example, hold up a card with the letter "M" and say "E" and ask the child if that is the correct sound. Ask the child to explain why "E" is wrong.
6. **Creating-** Ask the child to create a project to show that he or she knows and can use the material effectively. In the case of letters and sounds, ask the child to come up with a string of five letters (or their name) and then ask them to say aloud the sounds each letter in their chain makes. You can evaluate the effectiveness of Bloom's Taxonomy by determining if the child knows the material well enough to create something.

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## THE IMPORTANCE OF 'HOT' QUESTIONING IN ASSESSMENT

“Do I ask the preschoolers I teach enough questions?” If the answer is yes, you might consider what kinds of questions you ask them. Varying the types of questions you ask is an important strategy to support thinking and learning. If the answer is no then you've made the first step toward improving your questioning techniques. You can now begin to explore some of the ways you can ask children questions throughout the day.

Asking basic recall questions such as “What color is this?,” “How many are there?,” and “What is this?” serves a purpose. Remembering information is the foundation children need to be able to answer higher-order questions such as “If four children are eating lunch, how many plates do we need?” Children need to remember information before they can understand it; they must understand it before they can apply it.

Creating a solid base of content knowledge is important, but preschoolers' learning can be deeper and more complex. Asking children more complicated questions helps them become self-directed thinkers.

Most 3-year-olds are primarily concrete thinkers. This means that their speech and thinking are quite literal—often focusing on what is physically in front of them. Some 3-year-olds might not be able to answer the more complicated questions that older children can. Children begin moving into more abstract ways of thinking at age 4. For example, a group of 4-year-olds might engage in more advanced dramatic play, pretending that a stick they found outside is a fork or spoon.

Using conversations and oral defense: Anthony Poullard, an associate principal at Korea International School, said that “students must always be prepared to explain their thinking or learning with their teacher, and they know that a teacher may ask for an explanation of assessment answers one on one.” In an article on *formative assessment in distance learning*, I discussed conversations as one of the best ways to check for understanding, and this holds true for summative tasks as well. Students can do presentations or engage in an oral explanation or defense of their final product. This provides further evidence of student learning.

## SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT IN VIRTUAL LEARNING FOR PRIMARY YEARS

According to *Andrew Miller*, all of us are challenged with trying to implement effective teaching in this distance/virtual learning environment, and assessment is certainly part of that. Many schools are wrestling with grading practices, with some choosing pass/fail structures and others are sticking with traditional grading practices. And of course, there are others who are somewhere in between. But all of us will need summative assessments of student learning, whether we report them as a grade or pass/fail. It's important that we not rely solely on tried-and-true summative assessment practices and strategies during this time—we should reflect on those practices and strategies and approach assessment differently.

Stop assessing everything: By *everything*, I mean every single content standard. In order to make a “*guaranteed and viable curriculum*,” we need to make strategic decisions about what is “need to know” and what is “nice to know.” Take this time to work with teams to further clarify *which standards are priorities* to ensure that you're assessing the essentials.

Consider using the *R.E.A.L. criteria*—Readiness, Endurance, Assessed, and Leverage—to help you make those decisions. These criteria were developed by Larry Ainsworth, an expert in curriculum design and power standards.

### CONCEPT-

**“Assessment is the process of collecting, synthesizing and interpreting information to aid classroom decision-making. It includes information gathered about pupils, instruction and classroom climate.”**

**“Testing is a formal, systematic procedure for gathering a sample of pupils' behaviour. The results of a test are used to make generalizations about how pupils would have performed on similar but untested behaviours.”**

**- Peter Airasian,**

### What is assessment?

The term 'assessment' derives from the Latin word 'assidere' which means 'to sit beside'. In many respects that simple phrase tells a lot about the essence of assessment in the context of the primary school classroom.

Child assessment is a vital and growing component of high-quality early childhood programs. Not only is it an important tool in understanding and supporting young children's development, it is essential to document and evaluate program effectiveness.

### What should a preschool assessment include?

The Preschool Assessment Framework should:

1. Accommodate children from diverse cultural, linguistic and socioeconomic backgrounds and those with disabilities;
2. Rely on observable and measurable demonstrations of knowledge and skills in the typically occurring behaviors of children in the preschool program and at home;
3. Provide families and teachers with a means of monitoring and documenting children's individual growth and progress over time;
4. Assess meaningful and important markers that are matched to curricular goals at the preschool level;
5. Be reliable and consistent across classrooms, different sites and teachers;
6. Provide families and teachers with useful information that will help them to understand a child's individual styles and learning needs;
7. Identify for each child, areas of strength and interest, areas that need strengthening, appropriate goals, and potential concerns;
8. Engage families and teachers in a dialogue about how best to support a child's growth at home and at school;
9. Assist teachers in making instructional decisions and provide feedback to teachers about their programs -- whether they provide a range of experiences at appropriate levels of challenge matched to the interests and needs of all children; and
10. Be realistic, practical and easy to implement.

### Types of Reading Assessments for Pre-schoolers

Preschool reading assessments have to do with vocabulary understanding as well as acknowledgment of sounds many pre-schoolers cannot yet read. Visual assessments are also used to identify letters and words attached to particular pictures. These assessments allow teachers to know where a pre-schooler is in the learning process before starting to work with the student on reading skills.

#### Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness tests the child's ability to recognize sounds. Sounds are the basis for reading so working with the pre-schooler to determine if he can identify things such as rhyme determines the current skill level of the student. Teachers can read pairs of words and see if the child correctly identifies rhyming words or a word can be read and the student must come up with another word that rhymes. Rhythm is also important and helps identify syllables. Identifying similar sounds in a group of words assesses a student's ability to deal with different types of input. Read a small list of words such as; fix, fall, fun and then ask the student to identify the similar sound in all the words.

#### Fluency

Fluency tests for pre-schoolers deal with letters. In order to determine how well a child knows his letters requires providing a chart of letters not in the correct order. Going over the chart with the student gives the child the opportunity to name the letters as you point to each one. Another assessment takes letters a step further by going over the sounds individual letters make. It is important to test the child with the letters out of order as saying the alphabet is a memorization tool and does not work the same as reading.

### Vocabulary

Preschool vocabulary is limited. In order to assess the level of the child, you should sit with the student and ask him to define words in his own vocabulary. You can run the test over various types of words in order to determine how many words the student actually knows. It helps to have a set vocabulary list you wish the pre-schoolers to begin with in order to compare all the students on equal ground. If some students are performing better than others you can begin to work with prefix and suffix analysis as well.

### Comprehension

Comprehension for pre-schoolers involves reading small paragraphs or sentences and asking questions. This allows you to determine how much the student is retaining as well as how well he understands contextual tools. As the pre-schooler advances, contextual clues will become easier for him to understand, but the initial assessment should be done so you can mark the progress as the year progresses.

### Vision-Related Assessments

There are several types of specialized assessments specifically for students with visual impairments that a teacher may conduct with a child :

**Functional Vision Assessment** - The functional vision assessment is the cornerstone of the assessments done by a teacher of students with visual impairments. The functional vision assessment is done to find out how he is using his vision for near tasks (closer than 16 inches), intermediate tasks (16 inches to 3 feet) and distance tasks (greater than 3 feet). It combines formal tests, with informal activities that the teacher designs so that he or she can observe child using his vision. For example, a child may be asked to match toys according to their colour to indicate when he can see an object held to his left or right side. Based on the information gathered through such activities the teacher will make recommendations about ways to help the child learn to use her vision more effectively. These recommendations may include

- Changes to the environment
- Materials that may assist the child
- Instructional strategies
- Referrals for services from other professionals

**Learning Media Assessment (LMA)** - The Learning Media Assessment involves observing how the child uses his senses (primarily vision, touch and hearing) when he is involved in such activities as playing a game, walking outdoors, or looking at a book. The object is to determine the way in which the child takes in most of his information, also known as his "primary sensory channel." The teacher of students with visual impairments can use this information to make recommendations about whether the child should be starting to learn to read and write in print, braille, or both at the same time. The teacher will also make recommendations about the types of literacy tools (see How Students with Low Vision Read and Write and How Students Who Are Blind Read and Write) or assistive technology that can help the child with near vision tasks, such as reading a book, and distance tasks, such as watching an educational video in school.

### Other Assessments

#### INFORMAL GROUP ASSESSMENT

This category of assessment options contains the activities that consume most of a teachers professional time. Also, these activities are an integral part of instructional techniques in classrooms where teachers are monitoring the learning process. These activities, for the most part, are teacher prepared and informal in nature. In many cases, the assessment option produces a permanent record (e.g., seatwork, structured interview) although this is not the case (oral questions during class and peer assessment). Information from these assessment activities may well identify individuals who will require special attention.

- Dr. Reeta Sonawat.  
Executive Director ECA - APER

**IDEAS  
TO USE IN  
EARLY YEARS  
VIRTUAL  
ASSESSMENT**

## SUGGESTIONS ON VIRTUAL STUDENT OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT

- By Ms Anjum Sulthana Samsidh MLZS - Bangalore

Early years are considered the most vital years in a child's development. These years lay the foundation for the rest of the child's life. Since children as like wet clay, we the early childhood educators act like potters who mould the children into good human beings keeping in mind the developmental domains. While at school, we observe the children on all aspects of physical, social, emotional and cognitive development and give exposure to, aids and platforms to build on these skills, the same may seem quite challenging in the virtual dais.

To our dismay, the times have changed now due to the novel Covid 19 where the children and facilitators are meeting virtually on certain days. However, the wheels must roll on and here are a few suggestions that we can think about the virtual observation and assessment techniques for the little children.

### Observations on physical development: Gross motor development

The facilitators can demonstrate simple warm up exercises with catchy phrases like stretching arms, rotating neck, a short hop, a wiggly waist and a thunderous clap. All these exercises will surely contribute to the physical development of the children. And the teacher can observe the children on screen, as the size of the class is quite small now.

### Fine motor development

Many exercises on practical life can be done with children with the available resources at home. Our good old aata (wheat flour) acts as the best resource; an alternate to clay where the children can knead it, soften it, mould it into shapes and what not. It can made colourful by adding vegetable juices while kneading the dough. The facilitators can demonstrate the way to knead the dough, make shapes from it in one of the classes with a prior intimidation to the parents on the readiness of the aata for the class. The children can follow the facilitators while doing this activity and the facilitators in return can observe the students doing this activity and record her observation on grip, muscle control, and eye-hand coordination. Same way the facilitators can observe many such activities on fine motor skills with prior information to parents on readiness of the material.

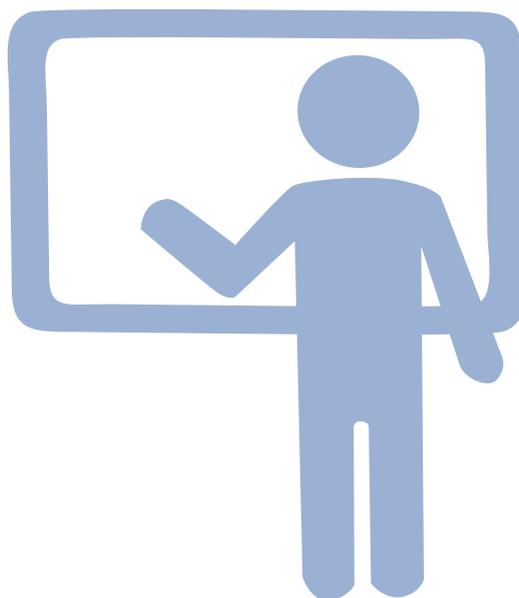
### Observations on emotional and social development

Many children would be attending the school for the first time and unfortunately their way of learning has become digital this academic year. Moreover, emotional and social development can be best developed when the children and facilitators meet, mingle and move along on a daily basis. However, the facilitators can still create opportunities to make the children comfortable and familiar with each other through "Meet and Greet" sessions, where the children get to talk to their peers in the group. It can just be a meet and greet session for the day, led by the facilitator at least once a week. With this, the children will get to know their peers in class. **The teacher can observe the confidence, language, usage of words, and the comfort factor of each child.**

## Observations on Cognitive development

The facilitators definitely are doing their best with regard to establishing this skill which can be best achieved through storytelling, puppet show and story illustrations apart from academics. The facilitator can narrate a story, lead the children into the imaginary world, and ask the students to come up with a new ending to the story. She can also ask the children to illustrate the story as per their perspective and can display the same with an appreciation note to each child virtually. (These activities are best to be conducted with Sr.KG students). Puppet show will definitely be fun and fruit bearing with the little ones of Jr.KG and Nursery. The teacher can ask questions and encourage the children to tell the answers and retell the story involving all. She can make her observations and assessment all-inclusive in such activities.

For language building and assessment, I feel conversation questions on a daily basis will work great as many children would be learning English for the first time. Also, a 2 minute "Show and Tell" can be organised with a group of 4 to 5 children at a specified time to encourage the children to speak on certain topic apart from the desired days for the online sessions. This will build a great rapport between the children and the facilitators and they can observe and assess the students on the areas like topic delivery, confidence, props used, vocabulary and presentation skills more closely giving ample individual attention.



## KINDERGARTEN ASSESSMENT IDEAS FOR VIRTUAL CLASSROOMS

- Dr. Kamini Rege

In Kindergarten, assessment and evaluation of learning should focus on the teacher's observation of an direct communication with students in the context of everyday classroom activities. During a typical day, Kindergarten teachers continually watch, listen and interact with their students to determine what they are doing and how they are doing it.

### Observation and communication involve:

- Watching the way students go about their work and the way they interact with others and their surroundings;
- Listening to students' ideas, thoughts and feelings to gain an understanding of their skills, knowledge and values;
- Talking with students about their ideas, creations, feelings and understanding so they can reveal the way they think and learn.

A teacher can assume different roles when observing children. The teacher as spectator observer watches, listens and records assessment information. The teacher, as participant observer, watches, listens and discusses to gain further information or to extend the learning, and then records the information. In both roles, the teacher is granted great insight into the child's strengths, understandings and progression towards the learning expectations during daily classroom experiences.

### When watching students, Kindergarten teachers should observe children:

- Interact with others in various settings
- Follow routines
- At play
- Select and complete tasks
- When they choose to be alone
- During teacher-direction lessons and activities.

### When listening to and talking with students, Kindergarten teachers should:

- Talk informally with children in a variety of situations throughout the day
- Listen to children talk among themselves and in group discussions
- Talk with and listen to children while they are reading and writing
- Organize opportunities for children to share their learning with the class, with a group, with a friend and with the teacher.

Effective observations provide a continuous record of a child's progress and the basis for appropriate programming that meets individual needs.

### Observations are most effective when:

- They are linked to learning expectations
- Records are dated, organized and maintained
- The teacher focuses his/her observations on one or two students at a time
- They are planned as part of the day.

### Consider using the following verbs to describe a child's strengths

identifies	Shows	Uses	expresses
experiments	Constructs	Recognizes	builds
produces	Creates	Organizes	solves
compares	Interprets	Participates	develops
extends	Illustrates	Explains	describes
recites	Displays	Retells	writes
discovers	Attempts	Matches	predicts

## VIRTUAL ASSESSMENTS – Kusum Kanwar

### Rubrics to use instead of good, poor, or grades like a-b-c:

- **Established** – Has in-depth knowledge of concepts and applies them in a wide variety of learning situations.
- **Developing** – Has thorough understanding of concepts; applies them in most learning situations.
- **Emerging** – Has general understanding of concepts; applies them in some learning situations.
- **Beginning** – Has limited understanding of concepts; rarely applies them in learning situations.

### Ensure that virtual assessments are on areas of development: Language; Cognitive; Physical; Social emotional; Creative.

## A. LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

### LISTENING & SPEAKING

- Phonological Understanding
- Alliteration – distinguishes between sounds
- Rhyming
- Listens attentively to stories

### READING & WRITING

- Reading Readiness
- Phonics & Sight words
- Writing Readiness

## B. COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

- Symbolic Thinking – engaging in imaginative play
- Logical Thinking- Number & Operations
- Interdisciplinary themes – Science, Math, Social Studies etc.
- Numbers/ Mathematical Concepts – Shapes, Patterns; Classification of objects; number & operations

## C. PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

### GROSS & FINE MOTOR

- Sense of Balance
- Movements
- Eye hand Coordination
- Controlling small muscles
- Uses tools for writing & drawing
- Visualizes & represents ideas

## D. SOCIAL EMOTIONAL

### SENSE OF SELF AND OTHERS

- Adjusts easily to new situations
- Identifies & manages own feelings
- Demonstrates trust in adults
- Demonstrates assertive behavior

### Take responsibility for self

- Works Independently
- Respects & cares for classroom materials, tools & environment
- Follows classroom schedules
- Adheres to classroom rules

### PROSOCIAL BAEHAVIOUR

- Plays with peers
- Understand how others feel
- Shows awareness & respects the needs of others
- Resolves conflicts

## E. AESTHETIC DEVELOPMENT

### MUSIC & MOVEMENT

- Understanding the elements of music
- Uses Instruments to accompany music or songs
- Uses imagination & Creativity to express self through music & dance

### VISUAL ARTS

- Explores art tools
- Creates new things from available resources
- Takes Pride in creating

## SOME ASSESSMENT IDEAS WITH GAMES AND PICTURE CARDS

- Rashmi Kanakia

Hello. We at Symbi Stars ( Symbiosis Nursery School ) have conducted online interactive sessions for our students since the last one month. We have realised the importance of equity for the children and have thus divided the class into two smaller batches for the synchronous activities.

This helps the teachers to-

- Observe the children and gauge their needs and responses better .
- Bridge the parent- school divide caused due to the lockdown.
- Assess the children on daily activities and make a detailed continuous observation sheet

We have also realised that we will have to rethink the parameters for assessments and have made a tentative 3 point plan to for informal assessments -

- Have a small personal online interaction with the children where needed- based on the observation sheets.
- Make google forms for assessing some domains .
- Make the parents a partner in filling these forms so that they give the correct feedback to the teachers. This will then be used for preparing the future learning program.

I am attaching two sample forms made by our Jr. Kg Teacher- Ms Arti Suryavanshi , for your reference.

### Numeracy Assessment Jr. KG

**How many fingers are there in one hand?**

1 point

- 5
- 6
- 4



**What comes after 5?**

1 point

- 7
- 4
- 6



**How many seeds does a mango have?**

1 point

- 2
- 0
- 1



**How many wheels does an auto-rickshaw have?**

1 point

- 6
- 4
- 3



How many petals does a hibiscus flower have?  
1 point

- 6
- 4
- 5



How many legs does a giraffe have?  
1 point

- 5
- 2
- 4



How many elbows do we have ?  
1 point

- 3
- 6
- 4



How many chins do we have?  
1 point  
1 point

- 2
- 1
- 0



Picture Talk - Visit to a farm  
Jr.KG



How many cows are there in the picture?  
1 point

- 1
- 3
- 2

What is the colour of the t-shirt of the boy sitting on the bench?  
1 point

- Blue
- Red
- Yellow

Picture Talk - Visit to a farm  
Jr.KG



**Dog is a wild animal.**

1 point

Yes

No

**What is the house of a dog called ?**

1 point

Kennel

Den

Stable

**How many people are there in the picture?**

1 point

9

7

8

**What is the young one of a pig called?**

1 point

Cub

Kitten

Piglet

**How many sheep are there in the farm?**

1 point

1

3

2

**Name any two pet animals.**

1 point

Fox,

Horse

Dog,

Lion

Sheep,

Cow

**What is the young one of a horse called?**

1 point

Puppy

Foal

Baby

**What is the picture about?**

1 point

Picnic

Market

Farm house

## ECE ASSESMENT ON VIRTUAL PLATFORMS

- Sonal Jhajj

A new approach on discussing learning and knowledge assessments with inclusion of learning during everyday interactions, performance-based assessments for individualized learning instructions to progress monitoring and accurate curricular evaluation needs to be adopted. Early exposure to STEAM based learning module that covers science, technology, English, art and math along with other skills will lead children to increased comfort with these in later life and that early experiences are as important both for school readiness and as core foundation for future learning excellence. We need to incorporate provision of high-quality learning techniques early in development will pay off with increased long achievement in curriculum-based learning and student engagement.. Every educator needs to create a starting point to be able to design a and use the right assessment technique for clarification of goals for every child's learning which is proportional to his thinking skills and content We as educators need to ensure that every child gets proper learning opportunities that build on and lead to an expansion of the excitement, enthusiasm, content knowledge, and accurate reasoning skills that he or she will bring to the learning endeavors. Young learners too perceive the world in ways that remind us of the little scientists. The child should be provided with appropriate learning platforms to be able to engage himself /herself in multiple inquiry skills that will help them in making and describing observations in about different learning strategies. A teacher needs to assess individual child's learning and skills to guide individualized instructions for her student's, a researcher who can speak on ways to assess the effectiveness of a curriculum or a curricular program and a healthy learning environment. A pre-school teacher is charged everyday with observing children and communicating with them in ways that support their functioning, learning and thinking in cognitive, social, physical and emotional areas of development. The teacher observes and interacts with children to gain information then respond with activities, discussion materials and questions that encourage children to explore and learn more about the world around them. For this the teacher needs to understand child development and the expected sequences of learning across multiple domains. The five domains of early childhood development are the physical health, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development and communication skills. I have developed a 5 - minute APGAR score that can be used to assess the short term and the long -term cognitive outcome and developmental impairment. The APGAR Score measures the health status of newborn children based on heart rate, respiratory, color, muscle tone and reflex irritability. The APGAR scores ability helps to predict longer term cognitive outcomes such as reduced IQ , a lower numeracy and literacy score, neurological disability and low cognitive function at age 19 years. In school age children low APGAR scores links to minor motor, language speech, and developmental impairments. I have categorized the APGAR scores in preschool learning as **A-Auditory skills, P-Perception skills, G-Gross motor skills, A -Activity based learning skills, R- Readiness skills.**

The proper assessment through APGAR score can be distributed as:

- **A=Auditory Skills** of the child can be assessed through lesson plans that need auditory learning channels.
- **P=Perception:** The visual and perception skills can be assessed through how the child perceives the lessons that are being taught online. His/her eye co-ordination, observatory skills, his/her grasping skills through observations. Teachers can formulate these categories into various different teaching modules.
- **G=Gross Motor Skills:** The activities assigned, the eye hand co-ordination, the way a child points out to the teachers, his hand reflexes, his hand movement while teaching can be monitored by teacher with various different channels.
- 
- **A=Activity Based Learning Skills:** The activities that the teacher gives the child can be made into assessing his/her interest levels in doing those activities. Feedback can be taken by parents as to how the child is enjoying the activities and his/her self-mastery skills while doing certain activities.
- **R=Readiness Skills:** These skills can be modified into –
  - (a) Social skills- How social the child is, how he/she responses to the teacher.
  - (b) Intellectual skills- His/her IQ can be monitored through inquiry-based learning.
  - (c) Cognitive skills- His/her critical thinking capacity can be evaluated, his/her grasping power and responses to the thinking skills.
  - (d) Emotional skills- His/her Emotional Quotient is taken into consideration by charting out the child's emotional and mental health levels and his/her expression of emotion through different learning platforms.

The 3 R's i.e. Reading, Writing and Arithmetic through fun and learn concepts can be assessed by taking those skills into competency-based learning.

## ASSESSMENT PLATFORMS FOR VIRTUAL ASSESSMENTS

-Dr. Deepali Singh

Principal, White Canvas Preschool

I wish to share the platforms we are using for online assessments, they are fun filled and enjoyable for the little ones.

- <https://www.flippity.net/>
- <https://wordwall.net/community>
- <https://www.baamboozle.com/game>

I still have to explore the following platform, which I have come across recently

- [exam.net](http://exam.net)

The ideas that I have shared are all being used in online sessions.

While offline we assign tasks to the children which they perform at home and post the final product on Class Dojo, which is assessed by the educator and assigned to respective portfolios.

**FLIPPITY:** <https://www.flippity.net/>

- This allows us to make google spreadsheets into different kinds of game formats for children to do at home, like a scavenger hunt activity, quiz matching game, spelling words, word search and so on.
- Thus this can be used as an interactive activity for children to do in the Parent-child Interaction activity.
- We can also incorporate these activities to play during the playdate sessions also.
- The activities to be played is sent through a link.
- 

**Wordwall:** <https://wordwall.net/community>

- The easy way to create your own teaching resources comprising of Quizzes, match ups, word games, and much more.
- Interactive games are played on any web-enabled device, like a computer, tablet, phone or interactive whiteboard. They can be played individually by students, or be teacher-led with students taking turns at the front of the class.
- There are ready games also which can be used as per themes but spread upto Primary level. So a mix.
- The best part is it can present one activity in 6-7 different formats of playing.
- It also has 18 interactive games and 5 games we can create in the free version after which they have a paid version for more.

**Baamboozle:** <https://www.baamboozle.com/>

- It is an educational game that has a list of games which is updated every day. There is a range of games on the website that covers art and craft, language, animals, colours, language, math, grammar, movement, fun riddles, etc.

### Suggestions by Mr. Shehraz Hilluwala, Hill's Nursery.

I would like to suggest that instead of the term "assessment", we should use "Knowledge check" or "Check understanding". There is an app called "Kahoot" which can be used reasonably well. It is very colourful, child friendly and offers multiple types of questions. With a little help from the parents initially, it would become an auto pilot mode for Junior and Senior Kindergarten students.

We have divided our 1 hour sessions in 4-5 parts daily covering various age appropriate skills. Eg.

Circle time revision, Theme, Concept of the day, Different activities on different days- dance, story, music etc and exercise.

We have adopted 5 ways for doing assessments for our preschool students in this pandemic situation.

- We send them daily work ( activities and written )and they have to send the photographs of the completed assignment back to their teachers. Teachers send them their feedback on audio messages.
- Every Friday we have kept time for the teachers and students to only interact with each other on the basis of the concept taught in the week. Children also prepare a few lines to speak in the online sessions.
- Every week the teachers make a one to one call to the students to assess their learning outcomes and also to support them in emotional and social development.
- Speak to parents as required for their feedback as we work together.
- We always have two teachers present in the sessions so that when one is conducting the session the other notes down the observations which are later helpful in guiding the students to support where it is needed ,based on the developmental skills.

So in this way we can assess all the developmental skills of children by taking various activities in the online sessions as we used to take in school.

#### **HOW TO USE Kahoot:**

- We can create 3 different kinds of quiz to play with a timer for each question.
- This has to be played in a group.
- Each child has to punch the answer on their screen when the question is displayed.
- Then the analysis of wrong and right answer comes on the screen.
- However this tool is more for usage with adults as we have used in our training than children.

Dr.Nivedita.Dipankar- Little Explorers Preschool .

**IDEAS TO USE  
FOR  
PRIMARY YEARS  
VIRTUAL  
ASSESSMENTS**

## ASSESSMENT IN COVID 19 TIMES SHOULD BE MINDFUL

By Tasneem Dohadwalla

For Mindful Assessments we need to redesign the relationship between teaching and learning and how we can assess the skills being developed in students through the virtual learning platforms.

I would like to share 11 assessment engagements for Primary students which can be done in the virtual classes .

### 1) Quizzes

These are a fun way to assess learning eg. Kahoot and Pear Deck . Another novel way is Peer Quiz - students plan their own questions after a concept has been taught and then quiz each other. By default when they are checking on their friends responses, they are revising their own understanding further .

### 2) Creative Collages - Art virtual class

We can ask students to make a collage using photographs from old magazines/ newspapers and create interesting pictures using scrap materials in order to demonstrate their understanding about a particular concept or topic. Thus we can assess their creativity and artistic skills .

### 3) Email - History Virtual class

Students need to choose their favourite historical personality and write an email to another historical personality from the same era. They can discuss a significant event from history that has just occurred eg The Indian Independence Movement .

### 4) 2X2 Journal - Social Studies virtual class

This is an interesting reflection tool to check for learning. Students write in their journal about the two most interesting things they learnt during a virtual class . Then they can inquire further about these two things and begin their journey of self learning.

### 5) Talk Show on the Online Platform - Science Virtual class

Students can host their own talk show and discuss the important points of their science virtual lesson . Thus the teacher can assess their learning in a fun way in each virtual group.

### 6) Teacher Self Assessment

At the end of a week , each student answers the following questions presented to them on a power point through screen share by the teacher.

- . Which was my most interesting class ?
- . What did I like in that class ?
- . What did I learn ?
- . How can I apply my learning?
- . What questions do I have about it?

This will enable teachers to self assess themselves in order to improve, enhance or change their virtual teaching style .

### 7) 3-2-1 - English Virtual class

This is a popular tool . Students could talk about 3 things they learned, 2 things they still want to learn, and 1 question they have. Thus helping the teacher gauge the understanding of the concept taught in the virtual class .

### 8) Four Corners - Hindi virtual class

This is a great way to encourage dynamic movement in a virtual class . Ask the students in advance to designate 4 corners in their room to represent A, B, C, and D. Now the teacher asks a multiple choice question with 4 alternatives. Students go to the corner that they believe corresponds with the correct answer. Its fun and very engaging.

### 9) Traffic Cards - Maths virtual class

Students to create cards with a large green circle on one side and a red circle on the other side in their Art virtual class .

Then they can use this traffic card in their Maths virtual class . If they are following along and understanding the math lesson, the green side of their card is upright and visible to the teacher . When they do not understand something and need clarification, they flip the card to show the teacher the red side. So the teacher knows which children need to meet her one on one later for more explanation.

**10) Roll the Dice:** The teacher has an oral assessment sheet ready . She asks each student to keep a dice ready with them before her class . Then she asks each child in her class ( small groups ) to roll a dice . The teacher asks them the question according to the number rolled by the student, from her sheet

**11) Exit cards-** Exit cards are responses written by students to the questions asked by the teacher at the end of a lesson. These are a quick and fun way to assess students understanding of the concept taught

## ASSESSING IN THE VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

By : Farzana Dohadwalla

Teachers have worked hard , jumped in the deep end of the pool to meet the challenge of transforming their classrooms into virtual ones, trying to maintain connections with thumbnail images of their learners on online platforms like Google Meet , Microsoft teams or Zoom.

In the physical classroom, assessment for all age groups was much easier as teachers were so familiar with the different methods . But in the virtual classroom evidence of learning ie assessment has to be planned differently and creatively .

As quoted in the Glossary of Education Reform

- # In **education**, the term **assessment** refers to the wide variety of methods or tools that educators use to evaluate, measure, and document the academic readiness, learning progress, skill acquisition, or **educational** needs of students.”

So in the New Normal lets rethink , reimagine and reboot ourselves to think out of the box assessment solutions . I have listed a few ideas to help teachers in their teaching journey in these Covid 19 times .

- # To assess an early learner , the teacher needs to conduct the virtual class in small groups so she can **observe** the child and this observation will help the teacher to understand where each child is in his / her learning journey .
- # Teachers should keep some post it notes handy and jot down what they observe In the virtual class . Such **records** will help feed into the next steps of planning based on the students needs .

Record your virtual classes so that you can view it again later and assess which child in your virtual class was struggling or needed further help .

- # A teacher in her own self assessment may realise that one particular synchronous session didn't go as well as she had planned and thus she would need to reteach that concept in a different way, or she realises that a few students need more support - so at the end of a synchronous session these few students would be asked by the teacher not to leave the meeting and she would spend some more time with these students .

- ### Using online apps which are gamified make assessment fun and stress free like

Funbrain Jr.

Poptropica

Fish School

PBS Kids Games

Khan Academy Kids

- # Conversing with your students is the most powerful and meaningful way to assess their understanding eg - a one on one video call is a powerful tool . We could ask a student to read or show his written work or art work on the video call or just simply have a conversation . This weekly conversation would help build a bond between the teacher and her student .
- # Teachers should assess the emotional well-being of their students too . Social distancing is required but not emotionally distancing . Taking care of the Emotional Quotient is very important in these stressful times .
- # Parent Virtual Meets would help parents to get tips from teachers on how to engage their child in creative activities to ignite their curiosity or maybe teach some basic life skills . So parents can help the teacher in assessing the skill acquisition or enhancement in their child as in these pandemic times the students are at home.
- # Virtual Play Dates could be organised by the teacher which would help her to assess the social skills of her students by observing them online.

## ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES DURING PANDEMIC FOR EARLY AND PRIMARY YEARS

- Ishpreet Kaur

The outbreak of the pandemic COVID-19 has ushered an era of online learning. It has brought about everyone on the virtual mode and the education system is no exception. Teachers who were accustomed to face to face teaching are now displaying their vigor, expertise and spontaneity over the camera. Students are also enjoying their new classroom settings from the comfort of their home. Teachers have done a commendable job by reviewing and altering lessons to fit the virtual delivery platforms. Speculations are taking rounds that the schools are likely to remain closed for months to come and as we are approaching mid-year, mind boggling questions on the assessment parameters are also rising. This makes us realize that the otherwise offline assessments are now to be done virtually, which becomes a challenging task for the educators.

Assessment is a learning tool which is an integral part of the learning process rather than evaluation. We need to focus this year on “**Diagnostic Assessment**” rather than “Evaluative”. This means the key reason to take assessment this year should not be giving grades, marks, credits or positions to the children, rather it should be the effective diagnosis of the key areas that require change in the pedagogical delivery and ensure learning happens holistically to the maximum extent. Since online education was never a part of the curriculum delivery, so we need to gauge and assess the areas that require a change in the teaching pedagogies so that we can check the success of alternate instructional programs.

### Learning > Grading

Secondly, the aim should be decreasing the learning poverty in this unprecedented time. Parents need to be involved in this teaching-learning journey. They need to be given an instructional to transform little moments at home into learning opportunities.

Here are a few of the strategies that I have been able to devise -

- **Formal assessments to informal observations:** - Since the inception of modern education system in India we have been taking formal assessments. But this is the year we break the monotony and shift to more informal modes of assessment. This includes keen observation of the students through online instructional mediums and providing a feedback on the same. The teachers can use synchronous and asynchronous mediums to make such observations. She can give quiz, questions, tasks, and activities to the students and ask them to have a discussion on the same.
- **Instruct, Observe, Document, Reflect, Analyze and Evaluate:** - This means that the key to assessments this year can be documentation of the student's response during the classes, interactions, revert to the quiz or activities rolled out. The teachers can keep a micro document of the students and this will help her to see the improvement in the child's learnings.
- **Parent's feedback:-** In this time when the school is at home, parent's involvement is imperative to the child's growth and learning. Parent's feedback about the child's performance handling at home should be given weightage to. Also here they need to be sensitized about being honest and transparent while sharing their observations.

### Feedback > Grades

- **Dialog Simulation:** - Apart from taking the group online classes, teachers should hold a O-o-O meeting with the students and parents every fortnight so that individualized feedback can be shared with them based upon the records and documentation done during the course of online delivery. This will give the parents and students a fair idea on the areas of improvement and teachers can also ensure individualized instructional delivery of the curriculum during this call.
- **Online Quiz:** - Teachers can use online platforms such as iSpring Suite, Kahoot, Quizlet, etc to prepare customized quiz for the students. The quiz and activities can be rolled out and students can attempt the same and enjoy.
- **Google Forms** are extensively used to by the educators to receive a mini-feedback of the sessions delivered online.

This pandemic has made us realize that teaching children how to count is important, but teaching them what counts is even more important. We have realized the importance of skills, discipline, family, thriving, mental wellbeing, kindness, gratitude, and effective communication in this pandemic. I hope the above-mentioned pointers made sense to you.

## GAMES AS ASSESSMENT - Swati (K2 Teacher) MMI Kharadi

I know during this gloomy time we as a Teacher, we have a very important role for our Students. I feel mental strength is more important than physical particularly to face this Pandemic. Actually I missed the date due to my personal reason, as my husband is not well. So please accept my observation of the virtual class.

Online teaching has become the new reality. It came as a boon to the students who otherwise would have lost valuable time for studies. But it's a matter of pride also for a Teacher who has adopted this new way of teaching. These online classes mimic a real classroom and We have been able to provide an enhanced learning experience to the students with our real-time interactions, videos, worksheets, assignments.

As an educator, I personally feel there is much more to learn and explore online teaching but as we do that we can ensure that learning continues.

### # DRAG AND DROP ACTIVITY

Drag-and-drops are a type of assessment that shows a learner's ability to link information and apply knowledge to solve a practical problem.

You can incorporate both images and text in a drag-and-drop activity, giving it a real-world feel that is both challenging and engaging.

It's essential to use this assessment type when you want learners to be able to apply knowledge in a real-life situation.

### # ONLINE QUIZZES BASED ON STORY

Online quizzes are ideal for measuring learning results across a wide audience. Since each student takes the same test, We can compare and contrast results across students.

### # GAME TYPE ACTIVITIES

Game-based assessments are considered fun, and not "tests", so they are generally a good indicator of true skills and knowledge.

Besides, they have been shown to enhance learning by promoting the development of non-cognitive skills, such as discipline, risk-taking, collaboration, and problem-solving.

So this way I feel we can assess a child during a virtual session.

I personally feel young learners are often eager to answer during lessons, so having them use a gesture such as waving at the screen when they know the answer is a good way to keep them engaged and use up some energy.

We can play a fun guessing game with our students too. I do personally while taking the virtual class and that gives me an idea about students cognitive skills.

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