

Authentic Assessment

What is it?

According to Fenwick and Parsons (2009), authentic assessment allows learners to demonstrate learning throughout the instructional process compared to an evaluation on a final examination or test. Authentic assessment uses various methods such as journals, portfolios, rubrics and performance tasks to evaluate learning. Fenwick and Parsons state that authentic assessment aims to produce authentic learning experiences that are truthful and relevant with valuable evaluative feedback. Authentic assessment should measure an assortment of abilities, attitudes and ideas.

The following are the Principles of Authentic Assessment described by Fenwick and Parsons (2009)

1. Authentic evaluation is ongoing
2. Authentic evaluation is valid and reliable
3. Authentic evaluation is comprehensive
4. Authentic evaluation is communicated
5. Authentic evaluation uses a variety of methods

Why is it important?

Authentic assessment helps learners to develop and grow through ongoing feedback. Fenwick and Parsons (2009) state that the continuing support and direction allow learners to apply guidance directly to their learning. In contrast, an assessment at the end of a module or unit may not provide learners with an opportunity to use feedback immediately. Moreover, Fenwick and Parsons explain that fear can be associated with a final examination or test. Since authentic assessment is ongoing and evaluation is conducted using various methods, fear is eliminated (Fenwick & Parsons).

How can you use it?

Accurately gather information throughout the learning experience to evaluate learner growth and development. Allow opportunities for learners to assess their learning and performance through journals, self-reports and self-evaluation. Fenwick and Parsons (2009) explain that instructors should also consider teaching methods, program design and learning materials. Fenwick and Parsons highlight the importance of using various evaluation methods and ensure that evaluation methods are clearly communicated. Evaluation criteria must be consistent and well defined. Grades, including any feedback, must be understood (Fenwick & Parsons).

Examples

<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Observation● Self-reports● Peer-reports● Testing● Journals● Performances Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Writing● Projects● Presentations● Demonstrations● Portfolios● Rubrics
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References

Fenwick, T. J., & Parsons, J. (2009). *The art of evaluation: a resource for educators and trainers*. Thompson Educational Publishing, Inc.