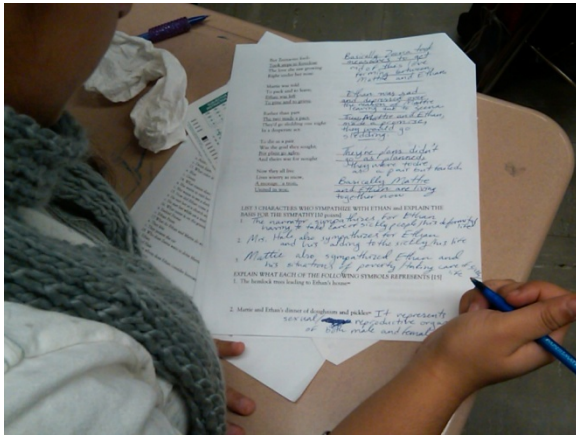


# Using Multiple Measures of Student Performance for Grading and Reporting Purposes

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Ms. Capri is sitting at her desk surrounded by an array of papers, a calculator, her grade book, and the daunting task of completing twenty-four report cards for her fourth grade students. Her school district has just adopted a new standards-based report card that replaces the E, S, and NI's (Excellent, Satisfactory, and Needs Improvement) of the old report card with performance levels 1, 2, 3, 4. She is thinking about a specific student, Ashley. Ashley loves to read and shares her reading experiences with the

class. She always has a book in hand and actively engages in literature circles. Her reader response journal is filled with anecdotes and questions but when it comes to her formal literary response essays, Ashley's work needs improvement. Her essays are brief, literal responses to the prompt. Ms. Capri wonders, "Should I give Ashley a 2 or a 3 on her report card? How do I convey what I know about Ashley as a reader and how will I support the my decision?"

The challenge facing Ms. Capri and many other teachers is how to identify the different types of assessments that exist within their classrooms, and make explicit and meaningful connections between the assessments, the appropriate grading methods, and report cards. In this article, I introduce multiple measures charts as tools that can assist teachers in making these connections so that they can more accurately assess and communicate who their students are as learners.

What is a multiple measures chart and what purposes does it serve in a grading and reporting system?

While a report card serves as the central tool for reporting out on student achievement, it is limited in its ability to communicate what assessments were used to determine student performance levels. A multiple measures chart is the missing link in a grading and reporting system comprised of the report card, supporting tools (i.e. curriculum documents, rubrics and checklists, portfolios) and experiences (i.e. parent-information night, student-led parent teacher conferences). It is an organizational tool that allows the user to see the relationships among different types of assessments, the grading system used to evaluate the assessments, and the report card. Therefore, it can serve as an intermediary measure to provide teachers with a way of articulating and communicating what the report card performance levels (i.e. 1, 2, 3, 4) mean, and how the assessments were used to determine which performance level most accurately describes the student. The chart shown on page 2 is an example of an elementary level multiple measures chart.

## Elementary Multiple Measures Chart

	1 Student is not yet progressing. The student needs many more opportunities to learn the skill.	2 Student is demonstrating individual growth. He or she is showing progress toward learning this skill; requires extra time, instruction, practice	3 Student is meeting the current expectation; moving toward end of year expectation.	4 The student has met the end of year expectation.	5 The student has exceeded the end-of-year expectation.
Tests • Unit Tests, Skill Tests • Quizzes	65% below	65 – 75%	75 – 85%	85 – 95%	95 – 100%
Written Assignments • Original Stories • Expository • Literary Response • Essays • Research Reports	Writing Rubric Score 1	Writing Rubric Score 2	Writing Rubric Score 3	Writing Rubric Score 3 – 4	Writing Rubric Score 4
Projects may include • Lab Reports • Technology • Oral Presentations • Charts, Graphs, Tables • Experiments/Investigations	Project Specific Rubric 1	Project Specific Rubric 2	Project Specific Rubric 3	Project Specific Rubric 4	Project Specific Rubric 5
Performance • Observations • Literature Circles • Guided Reading	Anecdotal Records (referencing state performance indicators)	Anecdotal Records (referencing state performance indicators)	Anecdotal Records (referencing state performance indicators)	Anecdotal Records (referencing state performance indicators)	Anecdotal Records (referencing state performance indicators)
Process Assessments • Reader Response • Writer's Notebook • Graphic Organizers • Problem-Solving Notebook	✓ -	✓ -	✓	✓ +	✓ +
Class Participation • Oral Response • Group Work • Independent Work • Being Prepared to participate in groups	✓ - • Unprepared • Needs constant redirection and supervision to complete all tasks	✓ - • Not always prepared • Needs reminder to behave appropriately and stay on task • Assignments partially completed • May need teachers supervision or redirection to complete work	✓ • Prepared • Behaves appropriately • Stays on task • Completes assignments • Responds to teacher redirection	✓ + • Prepared • Demonstrates expected behavior • Stays on task • Completes assignments • Works independently	✓ + • Prepared • Takes leadership role or models appropriate behavior • Stays on task • Carefully completes assignments • Works independently
Homework	✓ - Majority of work is incomplete or not handed in	✓ - Does not complete all assignments	✓ Completes all assignments but shows the need for further work on a skill or strategy	✓ + Completes all assignments and demonstrates an understanding of skill or strategy	✓ + Completes all assignments • Neatly • Exceeds expectations • Takes ownership of work

## How is a multiple measures chart created?

By engaging in the design of a multiple measures chart teachers are able to reflect on their own assessment and grading practices, better understand their students as learners and use reporting tools more effectively to share this understanding with other stakeholders. The first step in creating a multiple measures chart is for teachers to examine their assessment practices in light of grade level expectations (which are communicated as report card descriptors). In order to be able to do this, teachers need to be familiar with the different types of assessments and how the choice of assessment is based on what is being measured.

Teachers use a variety of assessment that can be distilled into four types; information recall, performance, product and process assessments (Martin-Kniep, 2000). **Information recall** assessments include formats such as multiple-choice questions, true/false statements, and short answer questions. **Performance** assessments focus on what students do and include collaborative work, classroom discussions and formal presentations or performances. **Product** assessments are tangible items such as written assignments, posters, displays and models. **Process** assessments come in the form of either a product or performance but focus on metacognition and on illustrating or describing “how”. All of the assessments have their strengths and limitations but each type is a part of a quality assessment repertoire because together they can accurately portray a student as a learner.

In order for different types of assessments to be used properly, the assessments must be congruent to the learning targets. A learning target is the expectation for student learning (Stiggins, 1997). Learning targets are communicated through national, state and local standards and may reflect skills, knowledge or dispositions. On a report card these learning targets are summarized as report card descriptors. A first challenge teachers face in making connections between classroom assessments and the report card is in aligning their learning targets to the report card descriptors.

When creating the multiple measures chart, teachers explore each of the report card descriptors individually so that they can identify the assessments that will be included on the multiple measures chart in the left hand column. For example, “understanding mathematical concepts and skills” can be evaluated using all types of assessments. However, “speaks audibly with developmentally appropriate vocabulary and grammar” cannot be evaluated using information recall or product assessments. It can only be evaluated through multiple performances. On the multiple measures chart, the assessments for each of these learning targets may be listed as math tests and quizzes and as speeches.

## How does a multiple measure chart distinguish between levels of performance?

Each of the four types of assessment relies on different means for evaluation. The multiple measures chart includes the appropriate means for distinguishing between different levels of student performance and then links them to the grading system. This is important for two reasons. First, it honors the original intent of the assessment. For example, a formative assessment such as a draft of a writing piece is intended to give the teacher information about how well a student is engaging in the writing process and provides an opportunity to provide feedback to the student. A teacher may record this exchange as a □ in her grade book to document the writing process but this assessment does not require a score as would a finished product. The finished product would be evaluated against the criteria for which the writing assessment was created. If the criteria were communicated to students through a rubric, the teacher would record the rubric score. Second, teachers are not forced to “translate” grades from one system to another, for example, rubric scores to percentages. A multiple measures chart allows for each of these evaluation or documentation methods to remain intact.

Where there is no evaluation tool such as a rubric, the multiple measures chart may include or refer to specific criteria that a teacher would use when determining performance. It must also then identify how the teacher will record differences in performance. In many cases, teachers use a check system (□-, □, □+) to delineate differences. In a similar fashion, teachers may develop a coding system that allows them to document the review of a process assessment.

## What are the implications of a multiple measures chart for the way in which teachers record and grade?

With expectations at the forefront of using multiple measures, teachers will need to rethink their grade books. No longer can a grade book be driven by an assessment or activity but rather by the learning target being assessed as shown in the following example:

Student: John Smith

	Written Expression	Organization	Conventions	Spelling	Revision Process
Memoir	3	3		2	✓ conferencing
Social Studies Essay	3	2	2	✓-	✓ graphic organizer
Readers Response	✓				
Spelling Test				90%	

## How do teachers use multiple measures charts?

The primary purpose of a multiple measures chart is to help teachers to use multiple measures to inform the grading and reporting process. Let's return to Ms. Capri to illustrate how a multiple measures chart would function. Ms. Capri used three types of assessments to evaluate student comprehension: literature circles, reader's response notebooks, and literary essays. Each of these assessments would have been included under the appropriate label on the multiple measures chart. *(For this example only these specific assessments are listed. On a completed multiple measures chart, they would be listed with other examples)*

	1	2	3	4
Performance Assessments: Literature Circles	Literature Circle Rubric 1	Literature Circle Rubric 2	Literature Circle Rubric 3	Literature Circle Rubric 4
Product Assessments: Literary Essays	Writing Rubric Score 2	Writing Rubric Score 2-3	Writing Rubric Score 3-4	Writing Rubric Score 4
Process Assessments: Reader Response Notebooks	- Indicates difficulty in using the reader response notebook	✓- Indicates inconsistent use of the reader response notebook	✓ Indicates consistent use of the reader response notebook	✓+ Indicates reader response notebook is an interactive component of the students reading

Ms. Capri would examine her records and highlight Ashley's performance on the multiple measures chart as shown in the example above. Ms. Capri could with confidence, give Ashley a performance level of 3 on the report card and support her conclusions with evidence and documentation.

## How does a multiple measure charts serve as communication tools between teachers, parents and students, and pave the way for the purposeful collection of student work?

The second purpose of the multiple measures chart is to communicate with parents. Most are unfamiliar with performance levels commonly found on standards-based report cards because they did not exist when they were in school. A multiple measures chart clearly explains each level. More importantly, however, a multiple measures chart provides a more detailed account of who a student is as a learner by identifying his/her specific strengths and needs. The multiple measures chart communicates a student's strengths and weaknesses not only in terms of content but also process. It may reveal the modality in which a child learns best and how a child communicates his/her understanding. For example, Ashley is best able to communicate her knowledge orally and in informal settings. She struggles in her

ability to communicate her knowledge using a formal structure. Further examination of the report card, might reveal this to be common across disciplines.

In addition to revealing strengths and weaknesses, a multiple measures chart can serve as a catalyst for connecting student work to the grading and reporting system. Student work samples that illustrate the student's strengths and weaknesses are often collected to share with parents during parent-teacher conferences or to send home with a report card. Typically, these samples are peripherally linked to the report card or chosen en-masse for an entire class rather than according to student. A multiple measures chart provides a list of student work linked to the specific assessments identified on the chart. The multiple measures chart, accompanied by these work samples, can greatly support conversations with parents.

What other purposes does a multiple measures chart serve?

A multiple measures can also impact instruction and intervention. As teachers become more aware of students strengths and weaknesses they can better differentiate instruction to meet student needs. Ms. Capri can provide Ashley with visual tools and organizers for planning her writing and she can conference with Ashley during writer's workshop to help her clarify her thinking as she writes.

A multiple measures chart can also play a role in level one (or Tier 1) of Response to Intervention Plans. These charts, accompanied by student work, can document student performance on the variety of classroom assessments used. They can support the selection of interventions and, over time, these interventions and their impact can be documented. Finally, as educators seek to ensure all children learn, multiple measures charts can allow teacher to more clearly assess and report on students as learners and help them to provide the instruction and support that their students need.



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