



Chapter XII

Designing an Online Formative Assessment that Helps Prepare Students and Teachers for a Summative Assessment: A Case Study—A Two-Year Pilot Project Pairing an Online Classroom Assessment with a Statewide High- Stakes Test

Stephanie JL Gertz, Riverside Publishing, USA

Sally Askman, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, USA

Abstract

Across the nation, even prior to the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001, many states had instituted statewide assessment programs. In response to these initiatives, school systems were interested in how to better prepare their students and teachers for the statewide assessment. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, founded in January 2000, was, and is, committed to exploring the ways in which the

improved technology in the 21st century can be utilized to improve educational processes and programs. Based in Seattle, the foundation was interested in working closely within its home state. So the Washington State Education Department, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), and the foundation worked together on funding and managing an online formative assessment system. From 2000 to 2002, a classroom online assessment system was piloted in several districts in the state of Washington. The goals were threefold:

1. *To determine the effectiveness of classroom online assessment*
2. *To give teachers a tool to help them assess student competency during the course of the year toward meeting or exceeding state-required standards*
3. *To increase teacher knowledge of the state standards*

Background

In 1997, the state of Washington introduced its new standards-based statewide assessment program, the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL). The state assessment program initially assessed reading, writing, and mathematics in Grades 4, 7, and 10. Although the high stakes accountability era ushered in by No Child Left Behind was still to come, a high stakes aura was already attached to the state tests. The Grade 10 tests were eventually going to be required for graduation. The score releases each fall for all grades were big media events, and the teachers and students were feeling the pressure. In 2000, a parent of a fourth grade student said, “. . . despite our efforts to convince her this isn’t a life or death thing, she’s starting to get worried about passing the official test” (Hunt, 2000).

At the 2000 Annual Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction Conference, WASL was one of the main topics. “People [teachers and administrators] are afraid that they won’t know enough to help their kids or that someone will take their job away,” said State Schools Superintendent Terry Bergeson. “They hear all this stuff about accountability and that someone will come if their kids don’t have high enough scores next year and fire them” (Harris, 2000).

Although no one was being fired over the test results, it was true that those teachers might not receive the test results from the WASL in time to help their students. Paper and pencil tests, the predominant assessment method throughout the state and the nation, did not provide quick turnaround time and feedback. It seemed that something else was needed to help prepare students and teachers and to reduce the anxiety that was only growing (Bennett, 2001).

The corporate sector had been turning to technology to process information more efficiently for years, and there was a growing realization that technology could also be applied in the classroom to help teachers process information about their students more effectively (Palaich, Good, Stout, & Vickery, 2000). Specifically, online

9 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/designing-online-formative-assessment-helps/27673

Related Content

Measurements and Characterization of Photovoltaic Modules for Tolerance Verification

C. Calò, A. Lay-Ekuakille, P. Vergallo, C. Chiffi, A. Trotta, A. Fasanella and A.M. Fasanella (2013). *Advanced Instrument Engineering: Measurement, Calibration, and Design* (pp. 144-152).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/measurements-characterization-photovoltaic-modules-tolerance/78176

An Architectural and Evaluative Review of Implicit and Explicit SIP Overload Handling

Marco Happenhofer, Joachim Fabini, Christoph Egger and Michael Hirschi (2013). *Advanced Instrument Engineering: Measurement, Calibration, and Design* (pp. 257-273).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/architectural-evaluative-review-implicit-explicit/78184

Evaluating Electronic Voting Systems to Enhance Student Learning: Some Evidence from Teaching Economics

Gregor E. Kennedy, Quintin Cutts and Stephen W. Draper (2006). *Audience Response Systems in Higher Education: Applications and Cases* (pp. 155-174).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/evaluating-electronic-voting-systems-enhance/5395

Determination of Uncertainty in Gross Calorific Value of Coal Using Bomb Calorimeter

N.K. Mandavgade, S.B. Jaju and R.R. Lakhe (2011). *International Journal of Measurement Technologies and Instrumentation Engineering* (pp. 45-52).

www.irma-international.org/article/determination-uncertainty-gross-calorific-value/68157

An Observation on Least Action Principle in Classical Mechanics Oriented on the Evaluation of Relativistic Error Concerning the Measurements of Light Propagating in a Liquid

Alessandro Massaro and Piero Adriano Massaro (2013). *Advanced Instrument Engineering: Measurement, Calibration, and Design* (pp. 166-176).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/observation-least-action-principle-classical/78178