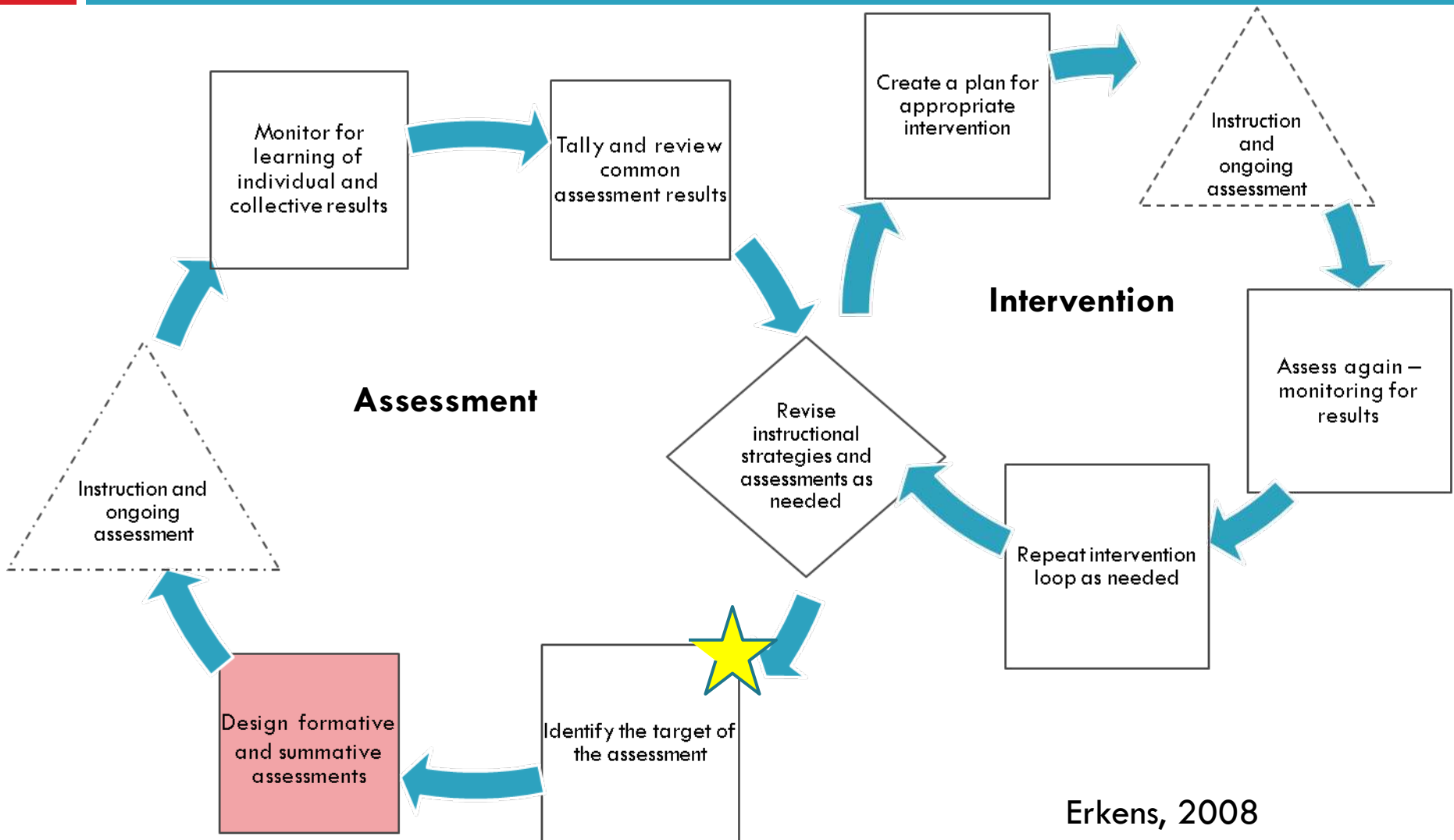# Assessment within the PLC

Essential Questions

1. What is the process for developing common formative assessments?

2. How do we develop high quality common assessments items?

3. How do we increase student involvement in assessment?

Essential Question #1

What is the process for developing common assessments?

Process for Common Assessment

Monitor for learning of individual and collective results

Tally and review common assessment results

Create a plan for appropriate intervention

Instruction and ongoing assessment

Intervention

Assessment

Revise instructional strategies and assessments as needed

Assess again – monitoring for results

Instruction and ongoing assessment

Repeat intervention loop as needed

Design formative and summative assessments

Identify the target of the assessment

Erkens, 2008

PLC Role in Assessment Process

Working as a team, PLCs typically:

- Develop common assessments.

- Develop common rubrics.

- Examine student work.

- Analyze assessment data.

- Strategize common interventions.

- Provide objective feedback to one another.

- Use student results to revise assessment instruments.

Examples of Common Assessments

- Short quizzes
- Unit tests
- Mid-terms
- Finals
- Focus area assessments
  - Reading
  - Writing
  - Math Concepts
- Commercially designed assessments

How Often Should Common Assessments be Given?

- ☐ Common assessments are designed to give teachers feedback about how students are doing.
- ☐ Giving common assessments two or three times per year is helpful, but doesn't provide teachers enough feedback.
- ☐ Once per instructional unit?
- ☐ Begin small (1-2) and add new each year.

Developing an Assessment Plan

1. Determine the objectives for the unit you will be teaching.
2. Deconstruct the objectives as needed.
3. Write the learning targets into the plan.
4. Determine which assessment method will be used to assess the targets.
5. Decide on the percent importance of each target.
6. Develop assessment based on plan.

Stiggins, 2006

Test Plan Sample

Learning Targets	Type of Target	Assessment Method	Percent Importance
Acquire vocabulary associated with the physics of sound.	Knowledge	Selected Response	25%
Learn that sound originates from a source that is vibrating and is detected, etc.	Knowledge	Selected Response	5%
Use knowledge of physics of sound to solve simple sound changes.	Reasoning	Extended Written Response	20%
Understand the relationship between the pitch of a sound, etc.	Reasoning	Extended Written Response	10%
Use scientific processes to conduct investigations and build explanations: observing, comparing, etc.	Performance Skill	Performance Assessment	40%

Stiggins, 2006

YOU DON'T NEED TO REINVENT THE WHEEL, BUT YOU DO NEED TO KICK THE TIRES.

Use your professional filters

☐ Questions for common assessments may be taken from textbooks, black-line masters, sample test banks, or previously administered classroom tests.

Developing Assessment Plan Practice

☐ As a team, pick a CSO for which you would develop a common assessment.

☐ The CSO may be something you are planning to teach or you can use one of the deconstructed CSOs for the targets.

☐ Discuss the relative importance that each item might take in the assessment. Fill in the test plan for the CSO.

You have a plan - now what?

Essential Question #2

How do we develop high quality common assessments items?

Best Test/Worst Test

☐ Find someone from another table.

☐ Talk about the best test you have ever taken.

☐ Then talk about the worst test you have ever taken.

☐ What was it about the assessment that made it best or worst?

Developing Quality Items

	Target-Type Match	Writing Good Questions	Sampling	Avoiding Bias
Selected Response				
Extended Written Response				
Performance Assessment				

Selected Response

Target Type Match	Writing Good Questions	Sampling	Avoiding Bias
Knowledge and Reasoning	Keep wording simple and focused. Ask a full question in the stem. Eliminate clues to the correct answer within the question or across questions in a test. Answers should not be obvious. Highlight critical words.	4 to 7 items per target	Avoid items designed to mislead or deceive students into answering incorrectly. Keep vocabulary consistent with students' level of understanding. Keep reading level appropriate.

Test Item Quality Checklist

☐ Take a couple of minutes to read through the checklist.

☐ As you read through the checklist, mark all the items that you do as you develop assessments.

☐ Now give yourselves a pat on the back if most or all of the items were checked off.
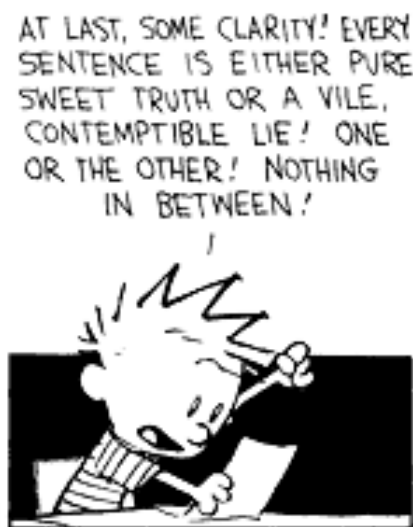
Extended Written Response

Target Type Match	Writing Good Questions	Sampling	Avoiding Bias
Knowledge, Reasoning and Product	- Set the context. - Specify the reasoning. - Point the way.	1 task per target. Don't give student choices.	Design good rubrics. Set clear criteria. Reflect target you are assessing. Keep reading level as low as possible. Devise clear instructions.

Sample Extended Written Response Question

During the term, we have discussed both the evolution of Spanish literature and the changing political climate in Spain during the 21st century. (Context)

Analyze these two dimensions of life in Spain, citing instances where literature and politics may have influenced each other: Describe those influences in specific terms. (Reasoning)

In planning your response, think about what we learned about prominent novelists, political satirists, and prominent political figures of Spain. (5 points per instances, total = 15 points). (Point the Way)

Performance Assessment

Target Type Match	Writing Good Questions	Sampling	Avoiding Bias
Knowledge, Reasoning and Skills	Novel and engaging tasks Provide information that will help students	Multiple samples may be needed to get an accurate picture of performance.	Performance criteria provide a clear and accurate picture of quality.

Evaluating Your Performance Assessment

- ☐ Did your assessment tool take into account whether learners were engaged in a real-world task or application?

- ☐ Did your assessment allow students an equal opportunity to perform?

- ☐ Did your assessment allow students to use higher-level thinking and problem-solving skills?

- ☐ Did your assessment allow students to achieve one criteria while advancing to another?

- ☐ Did you create a rubric to evaluate the students' progress throughout the task?

- ☐ Did you allow the students to help develop goals and criteria for the evaluation of the task?

Developing Quality Rubrics

Metaguide to Developing Rubrics

Content	• Does it cover everything of importance? • Does it leave out unimportant things?
Clarity	• Are terms defined? • Are various levels of quality defined? • Are there samples of work to illustrate levels of quality?
Practicality	• Will students understand what is meant? • Can students use it to self-assess and set specific goals? • Is the information provided useful for planning instruction? • Is the rubric manageable?
Technical Quality/Fairness	• Is it reliable? Will raters give it the same score? • Is it valid? Do the ratings actually represent what the students can do? • Is it fair? Does it avoid bias?

Stiggins, 2006, p. 203

Common Problem with Rubrics

- ☐ Counting items when quality is what really counts
- ☐ Leaving out things that are important
- ☐ Including things that are trivial
- ☐ Using unclear language or terms

Evaluating Rubrics Exercise

1. At your table, distribute the rubrics at your table (either individually or in pairs).
2. Compare the rubric to the Metaguide to Developing Rubrics.
3. Decide what you like about the rubric and what would need to be improved based on the Metaguide.
4. Be prepared to discuss your ideas in the larger group.

Rubric Resources

- http://school.discoveryeducation.com/schrockguide/assess.html

- http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/de/resources/rubrics/index.htm

Common Assessment in a PLC

Developing common assessments will become easier the more you do.

"Creating common assessments that honor the content and nature of our discipline while keenly and clearly assessing what students know and can do is complex, important, and challenging work.

By working collaboratively with your colleagues and starting always with Steven Covey's "end in mind," we're likely to produce assessments that are meaningful to both students and their teachers."

Ellen Moir, Director of the New Teacher Center, UC Santa Cruz

Where do we go from here?

☐ Teachers in this school have worked together to clarify and focus on the essential outcomes for each course, each grade level, and each unit of instruction

☐ These common essential outcomes reflect the teacher's efforts to build shared knowledge regarding best practice

☐ Teachers in the school have worked together to clarify the criteria they use in judging the quality of student work and they apply the criteria consistently

☐ Teachers in the school have worked together to monitor student learning through frequent formative assessments that are aligned to state and local standards

Common Assessments Brainstorm

☐Brainstorm the necessary steps for your school to implement common assessments.

☐Identify the challenges involved in implementing the steps you outlined.

☐Brainstorm actions your school will need to undertake to address the challenges.

Choose a recorder to document your school's responses on chart paper and hang on wall for sharing with others.

00:00

Gallery Walk

☐ In your groups, take a marker and do a gallery walk.

☐ Read the group responses and add ideas/comments/suggestions regarding the challenges they face.

Essential Question #3

How do we increase student involvement in assessment?

Student Involvement

"When students are required to think about their own learning, articulate what they understand, and what they still need to learn, achievement improves."

Black and Wiliam, 1998; Sternberg, 1996; Young 2000

Student Involvement: Guiding Questions

☐ Where am I going?

☐ Where am I now?

☐ How can I close the gap?

Royce Sadler

Seven Strategies of Assessment for Learning

Where Am I Going?

Strategy 1: Provide a clear and understandable vision of the learning target.

Strategy 2: Use examples and models of strong and weak work.

Where Am I Now?

Strategy 3: Offer regular descriptive feedback

Strategy 4: Teach students to self-assess and set goals.

How Can I Close the Gap?

Strategy 5: Design lessons to focus on one aspect of quality at a time.

Strategy 6: Teach students focused revision.

Strategy 7: Engage students in self-reflection and let them keep track of and share their learning

Where Am I Going?

- Provide a Clear and Understandable Vision of the Learning Target
  - "I Can" statements
  - Scoring Guides and Rubrics
- Use Examples and Models of Strong and Weak Work
  - Common problems
  - Analyze samples
  - Justify judgments

Where Am I Now?

☐ Offer Descriptive Feedback

- ☐ What the student is doing correctly
- ☐ What needs work
- ☐ Be selective in feedback

☐ Teach Student s to Self Assess and Set Goals

- ☐ Identify own strengths and weaknesses
- ☐ Write in a response log
- ☐ Select work samples for portfolios
- ☐ Offer descriptive feedback to classmates

How Can I Close the Gap?

☐ Design Lessons to Focus on One Aspect of Quality at a Time

☐ Teach Students Focused Revision

☐ Engage Students in Self-Reflection and Let Them Keep Track of and Share Their Learning

Our Goal: Students Who Are…

☐ Informed about their learning

☐ Analytical regarding their learning

☐ Actively involved in their learning

☐ Personally invested in their learning

You Be George

Student Involvement in Assessment *for* Learning – Self-Reflection and Goal Setting.
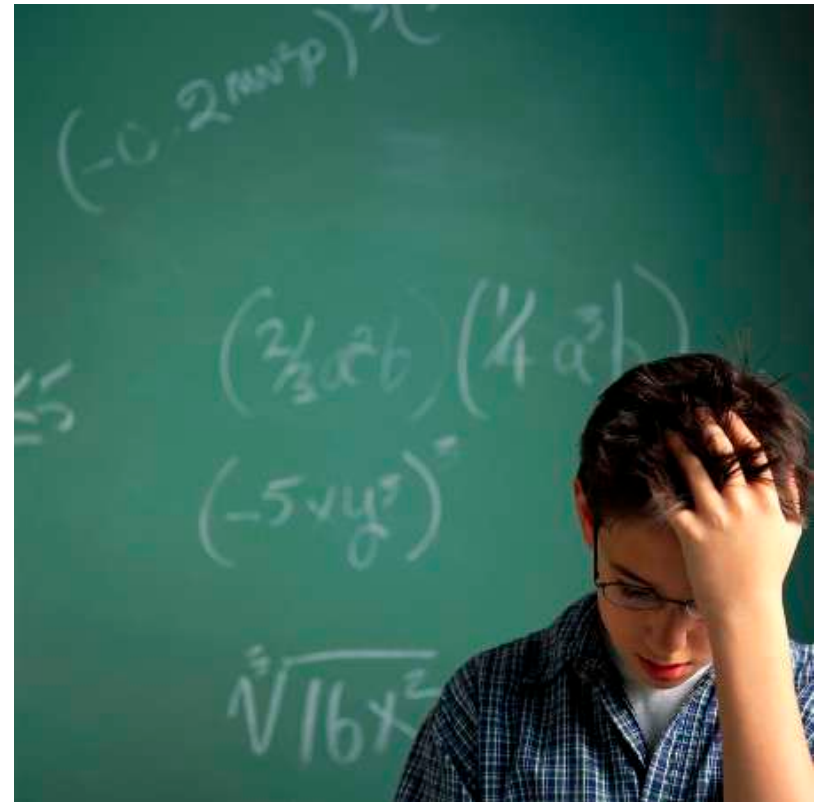
What The Teacher Does (Elementary Version)

☐ Identify what learning target each test item represents.

☐ Fill out the first two columns of the form "Identifying Your Strengths and Focusing Further Study."

Clear Targets and Student Goal Setting

Problem	Learning Target	Right?	Wrong?	Simple mistake?	Don't get it
1	Write numerals in expanded…				
2	Write numerals in expanded…				
3	Write numerals in expanded…				

What The Student Does

☐ Step One: Looks over the corrected test and marks on the form "Identifying Strengths and Areas for Improvement" whether each problem is right or wrong.

☐ Step Two: Reviews the wrong problems and decides if the error was due to a simple mistake or to not knowing how to do the problem.

Clear Targets and Student Goal Setting

Problem	Learning Target	Right?	Wrong?	Simple mistake?	Don't get it
1	Write numerals in expanded…	X			
2	Write numerals in expanded…	X			
3	Write numerals in expanded…	X			

You Be George

- George, a third-grader, filled out the form on page 32. Please imagine you are George.

- Using the information from page 32 , do a little self-analysis and goal setting by completing the form on page 33.

- You will have to make some stuff up.

Student Involvement Examples

- ☐ Students name their learning targets.
- ☐ Students manage their materials and their data, tracking their own progress on achievement.
- ☐ Students set goals and learning plans or activities for themselves as learners.
- ☐ Students self-assess, self-evaluate, and peer-evaluate their work.
- ☐ Students reflect on what they have learned.
- ☐ Students generate possible test items.
- ☐ Students participate in rubric development.
- ☐ Students engage in meaningful dialogue.
- ☐ Students support each other in addressing gaps.

Final Thought

Students may not hit the target today…

the important thing is that they remain willing to shoot at it again tomorrow.
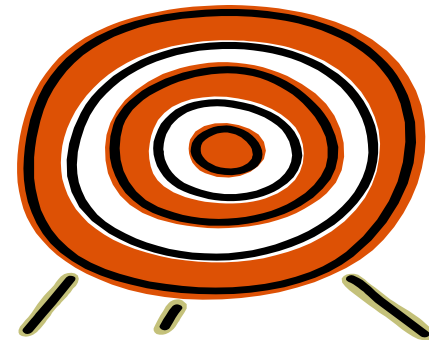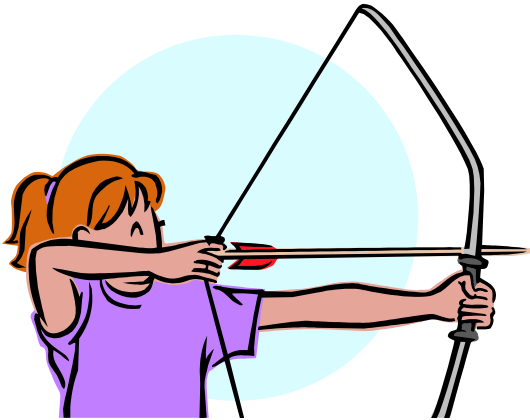
Team Reading/Resources
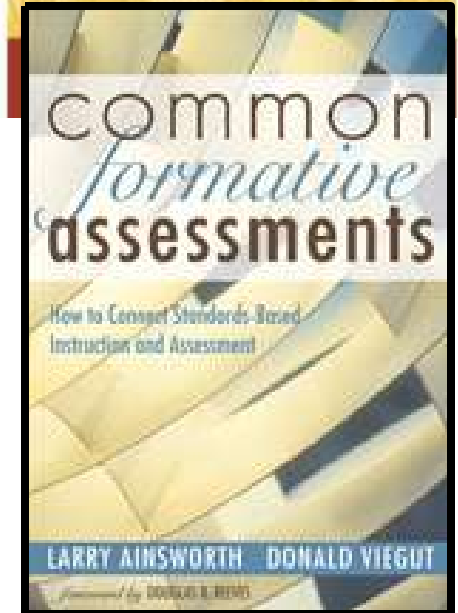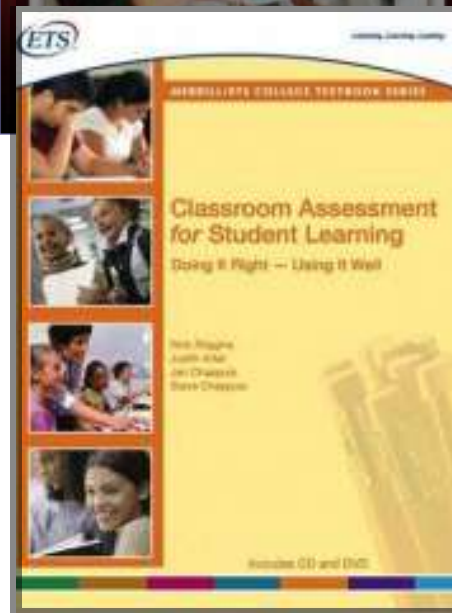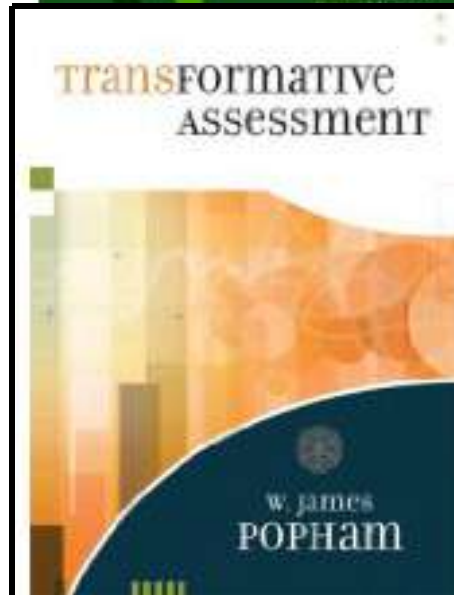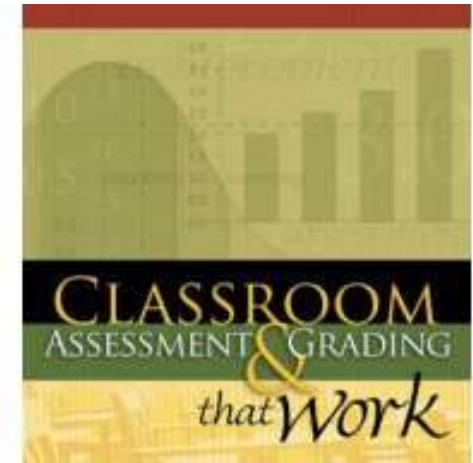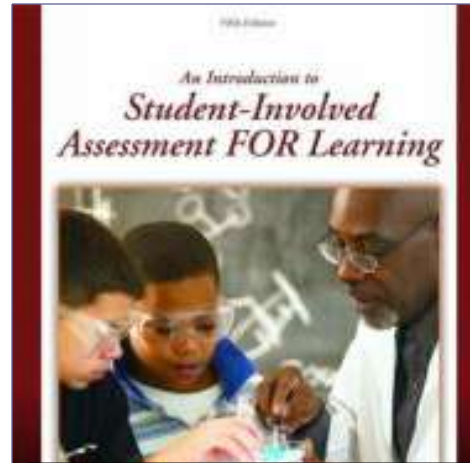
Resources

- Chappuis, S. & Stiggins, R. *Finding balance: assessment in the middle school classroom, middle ground*, October 2008, 12 (2), 12-15. Retrieved from:

- http://www.nmsa.org/Publications/MiddleGround/Articles/October2008/Article1/tabid/1755/Default.aspx

- Stiggins, R.J., Arter, J.A., Chappuis, J. & Chappuis, S. (2006). *Classroom Assessment for Student Learning: Doing it Right-Using it Well*. Portland, OR: ETS.

- Jakicic, C. , Presentation Handouts, Solution Tree