

ALL ABOUT ASSESSMENT

WHAT IS ASSESSMENT?

When you say the word 'assessment', the image that pops into most people's heads is a silent exam room, full of people furiously scribbling down answers to a test. But this is only one specific type of assessment. This guide aims to explain all about the different types of assessment that are used in our school.

Teachers use assessment everyday in the classroom. When carrying out activities in the classroom, teachers are constantly watching what the children are doing, talking to children, asking probing questions to find out what they understand, observing and recording how the children are progressing and deciding how to best challenge the children next. This all happens without the use of an exam or test.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF ASSESSMENT?

Assessment in schools can be broadly separated into two categories; summative and formative assessment. Summative assessment is the 'sum' of learning. It is designed to be a one-off test that assesses how much someone has learnt by the end of a unit, course or year. Formative assessment is ongoing assessment. It is the daily questions, marking, discussions and observations that are taken throughout each day and week, to inform how someone's learning is progressing and where to go next in the learning journey.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

This type of assessment takes many forms. Teachers will use learning objectives and success criteria in lessons, giving children a chance to self assess against the targets, either at the end of the lesson or during the learning. The teacher will use the success criteria to mark the work and decide how much the child understood and what the next steps are for improving further.

Formative assessment can also take the form of targeted questions. Teachers will ask children specific, open ended questions, to find out what the child has learnt and understood. The children's responses to these questions will allow the teacher to judge if the child understands the lesson and identify any misconceptions that they may need support with.

So, formative assessment is ongoing assessment. It can take the form of success criteria, marking, discussions with children, targeted questioning, observations and quizzes/challenges that test a child's deeper understanding of a subject. They happen everyday and help to inform what will happen next.

Formative assessment examples:

- Spontaneous quizzes or voting exercises
- Mind maps summarising what students know already on a topic
- Silent classroom polls
- Writing summary paragraphs on a topic
- Q&A exercises
- Creative exercises such as drawing or creating a collage
- Peer assessing work

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SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

This type of assessment is designed to test how much a child knows at the end of a unit, course or year. It is a one-off test that shows what the child knows on that one specific day. It is a total of all the learning that has occurred so far. In schools, these tests will possibly happen at the end of each half term, term or at the end of the year, to assess the sum of all the learning.

In school, KS1 and KS2 children complete summative assessments at the end of each term. These will take the form of Maths and Reading test papers that will inform the teacher of what the child has been able to recall of the learning from that period of time. This tells the teacher what gaps there may be in the subject knowledge and where the child may need extra support.

So, summative assessment is one-off testing, designed to find out what a child knows at the end of a period of learning. It happens at specific times and is not ongoing. The year 6 SAT's tests are an example of summative assessment, where children's total knowledge of the curriculum is tested in a series of tests in English reading, English grammar, punctuation, spelling and maths.

Examples of Summative Assessments:

- As well as their Year 6 SATs here are other summative assessments children might experience:
- End of term exams
- A final project or portfolio
- End of unit tests
- End of unit independent writing exercises

FORMATIVE VS. SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

While both formative and summative assessments will usually be used to fully assess how well a child has understood an assessment, they each have different benefits.

Formative assessments can be extremely beneficial to the teaching process in the moment. This is because teachers can use the results to understand how well students have taken on board the topic and adjust their teaching to support them further if necessary.

Summative assessments help teachers to bookend their teaching and assess the level that each of their students are working at.

In an ideal world formative and summative assessments would be considered equally important. However, since summative assessments include SATs, GCSEs and A-levels they typically get more emphasis put on them. But teachers can use formative assessments to ensure that students reach their full potential in those important exams.

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WHY DO SCHOOLS ASSESS?

Schools assess children to ensure they are progressing. The different types of assessment are used to find out how much your children are learning and identify areas that they can be supported in. In 2014, the government released the new national curriculum, which set out new expectations for targets that children must achieve at the end of each year group. Assessment is used to ensure that children are meeting the new targets and progressing, ready to move up to the next stage in their learning.

Teachers will share assessment information with parents and carers so that they are well informed about their child's attainment and progress.

EYFS

In our Early Years, we track the children throughout the year to identify which areas they are on track with and which ones they are not yet in line with age related expectations. The information from these assessments is then used to plan classroom learning and interventions to ensure any gaps in learning are addressed.

KS1 & KS2

Summative assessments are recorded and tracked for Reading, Writing and Maths. Children are assessed in four categories depending on how much success they have with their learning and the amount of support that they require.

Well Below	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is unable to access the curriculum of their year group or the one below without support and scaffolding. Likely to have SEND or EAL barriers to learning. May undertake tasks that are modified or completely different to the rest of the class. Struggles to grasp new concepts without significant support and scaffolding. Struggles to embed concepts.
Working Towards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is able to access the curriculum of their year group, will regularly require scaffolding and support. Does not grasp new concepts quickly. Needs support to embed concepts. Can apply concepts with support or scaffolding.
At	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets many of the expectations in the national curriculum for their year group. May make errors but is usually able to improve work following feedback and support. Has some gaps in learning. Is generally successful in grasping and embedding concepts. Can apply skills and understanding independently, but not always successfully.
Above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets the vast majority of the expectations in the national curriculum for their year group. Usually grasps new concepts and embeds them quickly and independently. Can apply their understanding and skills to a wide range of contexts and is generally successful. Can often explain and justify their ideas. Can critique their work and improve it.

Children assessed as 'Well Below' will have additional assessments completed, including our Toolkit Assessment. This is designed to break learning into smaller steps that are used to set individual targets and plan the bespoke learning that children require.