

Designing Assessments for Higher-Order Thinking

Although higher-order thinking is often discussed broadly in the context of teaching, practicing educators have found it useful to distinguish students' ability to recall information from their ability to use knowledge in new situations (a process called transfer). When students use knowledge or transform it into something new, make decisions, or solve problems, they are more motivated to learn. "Higher-order thinking" is the term we use to describe these processes of transfer, critical thinking, and problem solving, when students use facts and concepts in different contexts from the ones they learned.

This course will show you how to design and carry out a range of assessments that involve higher-order thinking, whether for formative or summative purposes. You'll learn how to develop open-ended questions, conduct enriching discussions, and design brief and extended performance tasks all aimed at getting students to use higher-order thinking.

The final module focuses on the creation and use of appropriate rubrics to evaluate higherorder thinking, a key practice for keeping the focus on student learning outcomes rather than on mere activity completion.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you will be able to

Module 1

- Define assessment of higher-order thinking and distinguish it from assessment requiring only recall or comprehension.
- Analyze prepared examples of assessment questions and tasks and explain why they could (or could not) assess higher-order thinking.
- Analyze examples of assessment questions and tasks in your own teaching and determine whether these assess higher-order thinking.

Module 2

Explain the rationale for using open-ended questions in classroom lessons.



- Write and analyze open-ended questions in your content/grade level area.
- Implement a strategy for using open-ended questions in classroom lessons and evaluate its effectiveness.

Module 3

- Determine the appropriate level of thinking required for constructed-response assessment questions.
- Analyze prepared constructed-response assessment questions and revise them to match the intended level of thinking.
- Create and evaluate constructed-response test questions in your content/grade level area.

Module 4

- Determine the appropriate level of thinking required for performance tasks.
- Analyze prepared performance tasks and revise them to match the intended level of thinking.
- Create and evaluate a brief performance task in your content/grade level area.

Module 5

- Determine the appropriate level of thinking for extended performance tasks.
- Analyze prepared extended performance tasks and revise them to match the intended level of thinking.
- Create and analyze an extended performance task in your content/grade level area.

Module 6

- Understand and explain the characteristics of effective rubrics.
- Evaluate the quality of a rubric.
- Create a rubric for a performance assessment in your content/grade level area.







Course Syllabus

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Module 1	What Is Higher-Order Thinking?	
	Reading 1: Assessing Higher-Order Thinking: Five Ws and	
	an H	
	Reading 2: How to Assess Higher-Order Thinking Skills	
	Video: Key Concepts in Using Higher-Order Questions	
	Check for Understanding	
	Application 1: What Questions and Tasks Promote Higher-Order Thinking?	
	Application 2: In Your Own Practice: Analyzing for Higher-Order Thinking	
	Module Journal	
Module 2	Asking Questions for Higher-Order Thinking	
	Reading 1: Enriching Classroom Discourse: Planning for and Asking Strate- gic Questions	
	Reading 2: EL—What is the Value of Life? and Other Socratic Questions	
	Video: Higher-Order Questions: A Path to Deeper Learning	
	Check for Understanding	
	Application 1: Writing Open-Ended Questions	
	Application 2: In Your Own Practice: Implementing an Oral Discussion	
	Module Journal	
Module 3	Writing Constructed-Response Assessment Questions	
	Reading 1: Open-Ended Questions	
	Reading 2: Specific Strategies for Assessing Higher-Order Thinking	
	Reading: EL—Beyond One Right Answer	
	Media: How to Present Constructed-Response Test Questions	
	Check for Understanding	
	Application 1: Revising Questions to Match Intended Thinking Level	
	Application 2: In Your Own Practice: Using Constructed-Response Test Questions	
	Module Journal	







Module 4	Designing Brief Performance Tasks
Woodale 4	Reading 1: Assessing Analysis, Evaluation, and Creation
	Reading 2: Performance Assessment Tasks: The Basics
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	Video: Formative Assessment: Tools and Techniques
	Check for Understanding
	 Application 1: Revising Brief Performance Tasks to Include Higher-Order Thinking
	Application 2: In Your Own Practice: Writing a Brief Performance Task
	Module Journal
Module 5	Designing Extended Performance Tasks
	Reading 1: Performance Assessment Tasks: Varying the Amount of Structure
	Reading 2: Performance Assessment Tasks: Controlling Cognitive Level and Difficulty
	Video: Student Profile: Portfolio Defense
	Check for Understanding
	Application 1: Revising Extended Performance Tasks to Require the Intended Thinking Level
	Application 2: In Your Own Practice: Writing an Extended Performance Task
	Module Journal
Module 6	Writing Rubrics to Assess Higher-Order Thinking
	Reading 1: What Are Rubrics and Why Are They Important?
	Reading 2: Common Misconceptions About Rubrics
	Reading 3: Writing or Selecting Effective Rubrics
	Video: Using Checklists and Rubrics for Assessment
	Check for Understanding
	Application 1: Evaluating and Revising a Sample Rubric
	Application 2: In Your Own Practice: Writing a Rubric for a Performance
	Assessment
	Module Journal

Resources

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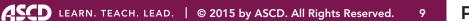
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