

WROCLAW INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Assessment at Wroclaw International School

Assessment is the gathering and analysis of information about student performance. It identifies what students know, understand, and are able to do and perceive at different stages in the learning process. The main purpose and goal of any assessment given at Wroclaw International School is to strengthen student learning. Assessment is developmental and continuous and requires longitudinal measures of achievement. This means that from the day a student enters our classrooms to the day they leave we believe in providing prompt, regular and useful feedback to students in order to support and enhance their learning and to meet their needs. Further, we believe in providing students with information on targeted concepts, knowledge, skills, and attitudes before beginning new units of work. Teachers will collect evidence, evaluate performance, record data and effectively report their findings to parents. Teachers will also ensure that they are providing regular opportunities for students to demonstrate their understandings through authentic performance tasks. With the assessment information gathered, teachers will use the results to modify their teaching methods, adapt the classroom instruction, and assist students in identifying their own learning goals. Students will be given regular, structured opportunities for constructive self and peer assessment and will participate in a range of assessment strategies which reflect different learning styles, aptitudes and backgrounds. With this in mind, teachers differentiate assessment strategies to meet student needs.

In August 2011, as part of our curriculum review cycle, an assessment committee was formed to reevaluate the WIS Assessment Policy and make sure it is aligned with the current IBO standard and practices. Data was collected from each teacher in the form of a survey to acquire data of how teachers assess their students. This information was analyzed and the assessment committee presented current assessment practices approved by the IBO to the WIS faculty in the form of two full day professional development workshops. The assessment committee revised the policy using ideas and comments from the WIS faculty and current IBO assessment practices.

At WIS we believe assessment:

- Is designed to improve student learning;
- is valid and varied;
- allows the school to monitor effectiveness of programmes and provides direction for teachers, learners, parents, administration and overall school development;
- provides feedback for students and teachers to revise and advance performance, learning and teaching;
- considers the importance of different learning styles, developmental abilities, and cultural diversity.

At WIS effective assessments will:

- Allow students to demonstrate and share their learning and understanding;
- provide guidance for further learning, planning and curriculum development;
- identify needs, motivate learners and celebrate achievement.
- determine the level of current student knowledge and experience before embarking on new learning;
- be diagnostic, formative and summative;
- demonstrate what students know, understand and are able to apply;
- actively involve all learners;
- be flexible and/or differentiated to meet individual student needs
- be aligned with the IBO standards and practices
- improve the overall effectiveness of the program here at WIS
- improve the performance of the teachers here at WIS

At WIS the community will be involved in assessments by:

- Parent information evenings scheduled in September.
- Course literature is available to students and parents at both campus offices.
- Language liaisons provide translations for conferences.
- Curriculum information evenings given by PYP and MYP coordinators. These aid the understanding of the programs followed at WIS.

Assessment in the Primary Years Programme (PYP) at WIS

- Is the gathering and analysis of information about student performance;
- identifies what students know, understand, can do and feel at different stages in the learning process;
- is integral to all teaching and learning;
- is central to the PYP's goal of thoughtfully and effectively guiding children through the five essential elements of learning: the understanding of concepts, the acquisition of knowledge, the mastering of skills, the development of attitudes and the decision to take responsible action;
- Uses a variation of tools to assess the essential elements of assessment; these include observations, performance assessments, process-focused assessments, selected responses, open-ended tasks and portfolios.

Assessment in the Middle Years Programme (MYP) at WIS

Varied in approach

- Students might be assessed on project work, presentations to class, role-play and debate, essays, examinations or tests, etc.
- **Formative as well as summative**
- Formative assessment means that students will be given assessed feedback on their work to help them improve it. They will also be involved in this assessment, perhaps through assessing their peers or even themselves.
- Summative assessment is a task or activity which allows the learner to show what they have learned at the culmination of the teaching or learning process.

MYP Criterion-referenced, not deficit-based

- Assessment will not be based simply on "how many questions can they answer?" or "what percentage have they achieved?" but rather "what skills have they learnt?" or "what level of understanding can they demonstrate?"
- The results of assessments will be provided for parents primarily through a report-card system. The report cards are designed for the Middle Years Program. They include:
 - An appraisal of the Approaches to Learning skills shown during that semester.
 - A level for different MYP criteria in that subject, e.g. "Knowledge and Understanding" and "Experiment Skills" in sciences.
 - A comment by the teacher.

Types of Assessment at WIS *

Diagnostic Assessment occurs at the beginning of the teaching/learning cycle. This type of assessment will provide the teacher with an understanding of the prior knowledge and skills a student brings to a unit, as well as the strengths and specific learning needs of an individual or groups of students in relation to the expectations that will be taught.

Diagnostic assessment is conducted prior to and during teaching and learning to determine:

- what existing knowledge, skills, attitudes, interests, and/or needs the student has
- the range of individual differences in these
- what program plans and/or modifications are required to meet the needs of individuals or groups of students

Formative Assessment is connected to instruction and learning to provide instant and frequent feedback on the learning process. This allows both the teacher and the student to guide instruction, giving a glimpse into the effectiveness and enthusiasm of what is being learned.

Examples of formative assessments in an IB classroom:

- class observations
- group discussions
- checklists
- inventories
- selected response (like a quiz or test)
- peer reviews
- Venn Diagrams or other graphic organizers
- self-evaluations
- drawings
- journal entries
- spontaneous response

Summative Assessment takes place at the END of the teaching and learning process and gives the children the opportunity to demonstrate WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED over a period of time. Summative assessments may include but are not limited to: acquisition of data, synthesis of information and application of knowledge. Assessment tasks should reflect the objectives and assessment criteria of the IBO program, (PYP or MYP). It should be assessing and demonstrating the knowledge and deeper understanding the student has gained when answering the guiding question of the unit. When designing the form the assessment will take, teachers need to decide on the criterion they will use to assess the knowledge. The students should receive the criterion rubric prior to completing the assessment.

Examples of summative assessments in an IB classroom:

- multimedia presentation of findings
- producing a model
- oral presentation to class
- written report
- creative presentation of information
- “what if” statements
- project
- defense of position
- argumentative/persuasive essay

At the conclusion of a unit, students are often involved in **peer assessment** as well as **self assessment** tasks affording the opportunity to reflect on their own learning and the knowledge they have gained.

Measurement Tasks (How will we gather the evidence?)

Observations

Observation is our main means of gathering information. We do it all the time, often without realizing it. It's quick and easy and very effective, especially when it is focused. Observation should be ongoing and involve making anecdotal notes regularly. There are 2 main types of observations:

- Incidental observations: these are informal and regular and occur while the teacher circulates through the classroom as students are engaged in classroom tasks and activities.
- Planned observations - teachers watch the student's performance in specific tasks and activities. Regular notes are kept, and over time show growth and development.

Specific Responses

These are measurement tasks where the information to be gathered is pre-determined, for example, a quiz, a spelling test, or a fill in the blank activity. They are quick to create and to administer, can be given to a whole class, and can be tailored to obtain very specific information.

Concept Maps

Concept maps are a graphic means for students to show how they're making connections. A central concept, key words, or questions are used as a starting point and students write or draw what they know. These can be very effectively used as pre and post measurement tasks, with the connections before and after being recorded in different colours for clarity.

Open-Ended Tasks

These are measurement tasks where the information to be gathered is unknown in content and/or format. They are very valuable in allowing individual students to respond in ways that suit their learning style. As they inevitably produce diverse results, such tasks need very specific criteria to enable teachers to objectively compare and measure such diversity.

Portfolios

Portfolios are more than a collection of work. They are selections of pieces by the student, teacher and even parents, which show what the student has learned. To be most effective they are used as a tool for student reflection about what they did, how they did it, what they learned, and what they want to learn next. They are also an excellent means of making connections with others, for example, with parents, with the next teacher, or with a new school.

Measurement Tools (How will we evaluate the evidence?)

Checklists

Checklists are lists of criteria that are either met or not met. Checklists are quick and easy to develop and use but they give very simple yes/no information, with no qualitative aspect to it.

Rubrics

Rubrics use the criteria from the basic checklist and add a measurement scale that can be either qualitative or quantitative or both.

Exemplars

Exemplars are sample pieces of work that illustrate the different levels of the rubric. Pieces of work can then be compared with the exemplars giving the teacher a visual as well as a verbal description.

Benchmarks

Benchmarks are exemplars used to set expectations for a particular grade level or age.

Continua

Continua use a measurement scale without breaking it down into specific levels. You can simply rate the student anywhere on the scale from 1 to 7 or from novice to expert.

Reporting at WIS (Reporting is a means of giving feedback from assessment)

Effective reporting at W.I.S should:

- Involve parents, students, and teachers as partners;
- Reflect what the school community values;
- Be comprehensive, honest, fair, and credible;
- Be clear and understandable to all parties. Where available, language liaisons will be used;
- Allow teachers to incorporate what they learn during the reporting process into their future teaching and assessment practice.

ref P.Y.P. Assessment "Making it Happen"

Types of Reporting at WIS

Written Reports

- At the end of each trimester grades are forwarded to respective parent(s) / guardian(s) of the student(s);
- an EAL reporting system is under review;
- Copies of each report card are kept in individual student files;
- Report cards have been better designed to better reflect the learner profile.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

- Parent/Teacher: meetings with individual teachers to discuss student performance and progress are scheduled after the 1st and 2nd trimester reports are sent home.
- Student lead: These will be held and implemented in Spring 2009.
- Individual meetings at any time with a teacher by appointment, to discuss student performance and progress.

Community Involvement

- Parent information evenings scheduled in September.
- Course literature is available to students and parents at both campus offices.
- Language liaisons provide translations for conferences.
- Curriculum information evenings given by PYP and MYP co-ordinators. These aid the understanding of the programmes followed at WIS.