



## Webinar Viewing/Discussion Guide for The Assessment Landscape in Alberta

During the webinar, you will need a copy of the Alberta Program of Studies for the subject area of your choice. At various points in the webinar, you will be invited to pause the recording to apply the points discussed in the webinar to your specific subject area. This viewing/discussion guide is organized around the Essential Questions from the webinar.

### Essential Question #1 (5:20 of the webinar recording) How do we know that we are teaching what matters most?

- Examine some statements from the front matter of the program of studies.
  - How do these statements reflect the 'big ideas' of the discipline?
  - How might a focus on these 'big ideas' impact the way instruction and assessment are designed?
- Examine a section of grade level outcomes from the program of studies.
  - Use Bloom's taxonomy to identify the level of cognition of the various grade level outcomes.
  - Which outcomes have the level of cognition explicitly stated, and for which outcomes must you infer this level?
  - How might knowing the level of cognition impact the way instruction and assessment are designed?
- Consider the relationship between the front matter and the grade level outcomes.
  - How does the front matter support the specific detail of the grade level outcomes?

### Essential Question #2 (11:40 of the webinar recording) How do we know that learning has occurred?

- Use the additional handout provided to work through the process of setting criteria for some learner outcomes in your selected subject area.
  - How does knowing the level of cognition help focus the process of setting criteria?
  - Why is it essential to retain the original language of the outcomes alongside the criteria?
  - How can criteria make the learning more transparent for students?

**Essential Question #3 (16:40 of the webinar recording)****How do we engage students in instruction and assessment?**

- Examine some learner outcomes from the program of studies.
  - Determine the level of cognition.
  - Use the Balanced Assessment document <http://www.aac.ab.ca/resources/PDF/BalancedAssessment.pdf> to consider the various strategies that could be used to gather evidence of learning.
- What is the advantage of having multiple appropriate strategies from which to choose?
- When there is a choice of strategies, how do you decide which strategy to use?

**Essential Question #4 (22:30 of the webinar recording)****How do we help students to do their best?**

- Consider the two-fold purpose of assessment for learning (AFL).
  - Teachers receive information about student learning in order to guide ongoing instruction.
  - Students receive information about their learning in order to improve work in progress.
- Track your use of AFL to ensure that both purposes are evident.
  
- Examine your assessment planning. The use of the ‘planning the learning backwards strategy’ can help link formative and summative assessments in purposeful ways.
  - Do some summative assessment tasks require more scaffolding and support?
  - Are there any tasks that have been designated as formative that are simply ungraded, but don’t actually support students towards attaining the learner outcomes?
- Note that the link between formative and summative is not about test prep (content knowledge) but rather about skill development.
  
- What impact might assessment for learning have on student learning in the short term? Over the long term?