



Daystar Academy

An IB World School

PYP Assessment Policy

Philosophy of Assessment

At Daystar Academy, assessment is used as a means of ongoing communication between teachers and students with the goal of improving teaching and learning. It is through this cycle of continuous feedback from assessments that we are able to understand our students' current level of achievement, make adjustments to the curriculum and teaching practices to support improvement, and offer further opportunities for our students to demonstrate their learning.

Assessment Practices

In all subject areas, teachers will use a variety of strategies to assess student achievement. These will include:

Pre-assessments: This informal assessment will typically occur at the beginning of a unit of study. It's purpose is to help the teacher and student reflect on what prior knowledge there is about the subject in order to inform planning, teaching, and learning during that unit of study. It can also help identify the individual needs of learners.

Formative Assessment: This type of assessment takes place throughout the unit of study. It helps provide both students and teachers information about student comprehension and whether they are ready to continue on to the next level of learning. Formative assessment aims to promote learning by giving regular and frequent feedback, as well as gathering ongoing data (through observations, anecdotal records, checklists, etc.) about student learning. This helps teachers to plan for future teaching, identify where program adjustment is needed and continue to provide learning opportunities for all students. Formative assessments can be in the form of short homework or classwork assignments, checklists, exit tickets at the end of class, informal observations, questioning, etc. For the purpose of K-5 reporting, formative assessments will be marked on the following point scale and entered onto quarterly progress reports as follows.

3	Meets or exceeds expectations for target consistently
2	Approaching the expectations. Partial mastery of target. Demonstrates partial understanding, or can perform portions of the target with assistance.
1	Below the expectations. Little mastery of the learning target. Student progress is below the expectation at this time.
0	Far below the expectations. Does not demonstrate mastery, even with teacher assistance.
--	Not yet assessed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Targets are based on proficiency expectations for this session. Targets up to and culminating in complete mastery increase with each marking period.

On quarterly progress reports, K-5 teachers will also report on progress toward proficiency in the common core standards and the characteristics from the IB learner profile utilizing the same scale. On bi-annual progress reports, Pre-K teachers will also report on progress toward developmental goals and characteristics from the IB learner profile.

Self-Assessment: When possible, students will be given opportunities to self assess and reflect on their learning. Utilizing the Responsive Classroom approach, students set individual goals for the year.

The Responsive Classroom website states the following regarding self-assessment:

When built into daily schoolwork, goal-focused self-assessment fosters academic achievement by helping students:

- **Develop valuable lifelong skills**, including the ability to think critically about their own work; know themselves and their learning styles; reflect on their individual strengths and challenges; and measure their progress toward goals.
- **Become autonomous learners** who take responsibility for their learning and become actively engaged in the academic life of the classroom.
- **Develop a growth mindset**. Regular use of assessment tools promotes what social psychologist Carol Dweck calls a growth mindset—the belief that basic qualities (such as the ability to learn new things) are not fixed, but can be cultivated through personal effort and persistence. Students with a growth mindset want to improve; they seek out learning, stretch themselves, and develop more effective learning strategies (Dweck, 2010)
- **Build resilience**. Self-assessment helps students understand their learning process and consider how to take on learning challenges. Faced with a difficult task, they think about strategies they've used in the past to grapple with new material, increase concentration, or keep going when things get hard. They then decide how to apply those strategies to their current challenge. As a result, they become stronger, more resilient learners.

Summative Assessment: This type of assessment aims to give teachers, students, parents, and others a clear insight into what a student has learned to that date with reference to predetermined criteria. Summative assessment is the culmination of the teaching and learning process and gives the students opportunities to demonstrate what they have learned throughout a unit of study. Assessments can be in the form of projects, performances, process journals, presentations, quizzes, or tests during each unit of study. Students in 4th and 5th grades will be given clear directions and rubrics before completing the assignment. At times, teachers may give students the option to choose which type of assignment they will do to complete their assessment task. Assessment marks will be reported to parents and students through quarterly progress reports.

Portfolios

Each year student work will be collected and added to an individualized portfolio. This documents the quality of student work and gains insight into their thinking and ability to reflect on their work. The goals of the portfolios are:

- To document student learning across the curriculum
 - From each learning domain (interdisciplinary units, language and writing, math, social studies, science, etc.)
- To document student progress and growth with units of inquiry over the course of the year
 - Requires continuous collection periods to represent work from all units of inquiry
- To involve students in assessing their own work
 - Guided reflection
 - Progress over time
 - Personal goal setting

Student portfolios at Daystar are not a “showcase” or “best work” portfolio. Every year, parents are invited to portfolio night where students share their work and reflect on their learning.

Homework

Homework is the natural extension of classroom work that is necessary for reinforcement, remediation, relearning, and/or extension of skills already introduced in the classroom. Homework facilitates communication and cooperation between staff, student and family. It also encourages independent thought, self-direction and self-discipline. Homework is for practicing or integrating new learning and can be used as a formative assessment. In general at Daystar Academy, students will receive 10 minutes of homework per night beginning in kindergarten. This will increase by about 10 minutes each year. Kindergarten and Grade 1 students should expect 10-15 minutes of homework, Grade 2 should expect 20-30 minutes of homework, Grade 3, 30-40 minutes, Grade 4, 40-50

minutes and Grade 5, 50-60 minutes of homework. Additionally, students should make time to read consistently and will have regular conferences with their teachers to gauge the volume and assess the quality of their reading experiences.

End of Quarter Reporting

At the end of every quarter, each student will receive a progress report. K-5th grade parents will receive a printed copy at the end of each quarter. Pre-K progress reports will be handed out twice a year.

Standardized Assessment Data

Daystar Academy utilizes NWEA MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) for 2nd-5th grade students as a tool for universal screening and progress monitoring in Mathematics, Reading and Language Usage. NWEA MAP tests are administered three times per year with the goal of identifying students' learning needs, setting goals for improvement, and monitoring the students' progress toward these goals. Students in grade 2-5 at Daystar Academy take the NWEA MAP tests in fall, winter and spring. The results of this assessment are used to analyze school and grade-level trends and plan for curricular improvement. Individual results are used to inform individualized instruction, including remediation and enrichment.

Students in grades 1 through 5 are assessed with the Benchmark Assessment System (BAS). This provides students instructional and independent reading levels. Teachers utilize this assessment data twice a year to inform instruction and to communicate reading levels to parents.