

Aligning Achievement Targets to Assessment Methods

Target to be Assessed	<i>Assessment Method</i>			
	Objective Test	Essay Test	Oral Questioning	Performance Assessment
KNOWLEDGE MASTERY	Yes Multiple choice, true-false, and fill-in can sample mastery of elements of knowledge	Yes Essay exercises can tap understanding of relationships among elements of knowledge	Yes, but... Can ask questions, evaluate answers and infer mastery—but a time consuming option	No Not a good choice for these targets—the other three are preferred
REASONING PROFICIENCY	Yes Can assess understanding of basic patterns of reasoning	Yes Written descriptions of complex problem solutions can provide a window into reasoning proficiency	Yes Can ask student to “think aloud” or can ask follow-up questions to probe reasoning	Maybe Can watch students solve <i>some</i> problems and infer about reasoning proficiency
SKILLS	No Can assess mastery of the knowledge prerequisites to skillful performance—but cannot rely on these to tap the skill itself		Yes, but... Strong match when skill is oral communication proficiency. If not, then can only assess mastery of the knowledge prerequisites to skillful performance	Yes Can observe and evaluate skills as they are being performed
ABILITY TO CREATE PRODUCTS	No Can assess mastery of knowledge prerequisites to the ability to create quality products—but cannot use these to assess the quality of the products themselves		No Can probe procedural knowledge and knowledge of attributes of quality products—but not product quality	Yes A strong match can assess a) proficiency in carrying out steps in product development, and b) attributes of the product itself.

Adapted from material in Rick Stiggins' book, Student Centered Classroom Assessment, 2nd Edition. (Merrill, 1996)