MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

USING OBSERVATIONS, CONVERSATIONS & PRODUCTS FOR STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Eastern Ontario Catholic Curriculum Corporation

"So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." (Genesis 1:27).

At a Glance

Knowing Your Learner	Curriculum Connections	Data	Assessment and Evaluation

Triangulation of Evidence

Growing Success advocates for educators to gather evidence of student learning through diverse methods. By engaging in **conversations,** making **observations,** and analyzing student **written work,** teachers can collect data that reflects students' mastery of overall course expectations.

Each student might showcase these skills in unique ways; these triangles symbolize the various combinations for the **triangulation of evidence** that can be used to determine a grade based on these three components. The markbook can be different!

Dignity of the Person

The foundational belief that every student deserves the opportunity to learn can be powerfully illuminated by weaving together Catholicism and contemporary educational policy. By looking at Genesis 1:27 ("So God created humankind in His image, in the image of God He created them; male and female He created them."— Genesis 1:27 (NRSV) alongside the Ontario Ministry of Education's cornerstone document, Learning for All (K–

12), we find a shared argument for universal educational opportunity: one rooted in inherent human dignity, and the other in systemic equity and professional responsibility.

Approaching assessment and evaluation through the lens of strengths and possibilities, we celebrate the whole child. Every child is remarkably made; their education should honour their full potential. Educators are encouraged to identify ways in which students show their learning in all aspects of classroom life. Through the use of conversations with students, observations of their learning and capturing both the process and product of their discoveries captures a true sense of their ability.

Teachers should not assess all students in the same way. Some students may show their skills more effectively when they are observed, some during conversations with their peers or the teacher and others will need opportunities to create tangible written or performance pieces. This differentiation ensures all students are able to reach their full potential.

Knowing Your Learner

Do you have students on Individual Educational Plans? Do you have multilingual language learners? What are your students interests? What are their strengths and needs? When you know the answers to these questions, you can leverage the responses to maximise engagement and achievement.

While it is crucial to understand your students through formal avenues—such as educational or psychological assessments, Ontario Student Records, past IEPs, and previous report cards—there is so much more to truly "getting to know" them. It all starts with building relationships. Meaningful teaching, learning, and authentic assessment cannot truly begin until a teacher has started building a genuine connection with their learner.

Building Relationships

Kinder/Primary	Junior	Intermediate	Senior
Song: We Are Family	All About Me Poster	All About Me	Knowing your Learner
Talking Circle Activity	1-Minute Desk Conference	The Story of Your Name	Curricular Concentric Circles
Virtual Book: Our Class is a Family	"Find Someone Who" Bingo - editable	Student Interest Survey	The Tower of Commonality
Identity Flower Art Activity and Flower Template	Icebreakers - Team Builders		Asset Based Class Profile

Curriculum Connections

Guided by the Catholic Graduate Expectations, an **Effective Communicator** articulates ideas and information with clarity, listens actively, and critically evaluates the world through the lens of Gospel Values. As educators, we are called to embody these skills by providing diverse opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding. Communication takes many forms, and our diverse student population requires a wide variety of ways to show their knowledge.

Deeply familiarize yourself with the curriculum for your grade level and subject areas (see Ontario Curriculum for kindergarten to grade 12). How are you creating activities for students to engage with the material? How are they going to show their learning?

You can effectively help your students understand the curriculum expectations through **Learning Goals and Success Criteria**. Sharing learning destinations for students sets them up for success. Furthermore, co-constructing success criteria has a positive impact on student achievement.

Kinder/Primary

Kindergarten: The Kindergarten Curriculum (2026)

Overall and Specific Expectations: Curriculum at-a-glance

Primary: Curriculum Documents

Learning Skills and Work Habits

- responsibility
- organization
- independent work
- collaboration
- initiative
- self-regulation

Blog: Create a Rubric

Ontario Math Supports (OAME)

- It offers free lesson plans specifically mapped to areas of the Grades 4–6 Math curriculum (like Fractions, Spatial Sense, and Financial Literacy).
- The lessons are designed around **Mathematical Modeling** and multi-step tasks. Since many of the lessons rely on students using manipulatives, whiteboards, or collaborating in groups, teachers can easily collect **Observations** and **Conversations** data in real-time.

TVO Learn

A Ministry-approved portal that breaks down the Ontario curriculum into a simple digital pathway.

- By selecting Grades 4, 5, or 6, you gain access to learning activities mapped out strand-by-strand for Language, Math, Science, and Social Studies.
- Every unit contains **"Apply the Learning"** prompts and discussion questions. Teacher can pull these open-ended prompts to conduct quick diagnostic interviews (**Conversations**) or use the action tasks to make notes on how a student

Junior

approaches a problem (**Observations**).

Intermediate

Ontario Curriculum

Use the curriculum to:

- Identify overall and specific expectations.
- Plan learning experiences aligned with curriculum outcomes.
- Develop Learning Goals and Success Criteria.
- Design assessment tasks that provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate learning.

Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting

Ontario's assessment and evaluation policy that outlines:

- Assessment for, as, and of learning
- Learning Goals and Success Criteria
- Descriptive feedback
- Triangulation of assessment evidence
- Achievement Chart categories
- Professional judgement in evaluation

Learning Goals and Success Criteria

A practical Ministry viewing guide that supports classroom implementation:

Learning Goals & Success Criteria Viewing Guide (EduGAINS)

Video Playlist This resource explains:

- Developing meaningful learning goals
- Co-constructing success criteria
- Student self-assessment
- Assessment for learning strategies

Ontario Assessment Resources (OntEd)

Includes resources on:

- Triangulation
- Planning assessment
- Questioning
- Descriptive feedback
- Self-assessment
- Peer assessment
- Learning goals

Senior

This **slide deck has several offline-strategies** for students to show what they know in many different content areas.

The Socratic Fishbowl (Focus: Conversations): The Socratic Fishbowl moves the educator from a director of conversation to an evaluator of evidence. Because students manage the pacing and transitions themselves, the teacher is freed up entirely to record high-quality transcript dialogue notes and evaluate performance markers without managing individual turn-taking behaviors.

The Pathway Gallery Walk (Focus: Observations): The physical movement and distinct chart areas make student thinking fully visible. Instead of attempting to gain insights from a quiet room of individuals, the teacher can systematically walk the perimeter, observe real-time collaborative dynamics, and gather solid criteria-based evidence for specific group competencies.

Clipboard Checklists & 1-on-1 Guides: Maintain a checklist featuring

student names down the left column and distinct Success Criteria headers along the top. Use coding symbols (+ for exceeding, ✓ for meeting, Δ for next step required) during group structures to eliminate heavy grading backlogs.

Applying Professional Judgment & Proactive UDL Design: To foster authentic growth, teachers apply Professional Judgment—understanding that triangulation can and should look different for every unique learner. Evaluation must never become a mathematical average of numbers; it is a holistic interpretation of accumulated evidence.

Data

In what ways can you collect data to observe student success?

Your gradebook should not look the same for each student. Once you can clearly identify what curriculum expectations you are evaluating, students can be successful in a variety of ways. It can feel 'more accurate' to stick to a project or a test as there is a clear record of the achievement. However, there are more inclusive ways to collect data when the learning connections happen organically too.

Observations	Conversations	Products
• Anecdotal record • Checklist • Video recordings • Photos, screencasts, whiteboard • Google Forms (examples ENL1W - Google Form to Track Observations & Conversations - will force a copy or - Microsoft Forms Observations and Conversations ENL1W – Copy form	• Anecdotal record • Checklist • Rating scale • Rubric • Audio/video recordings • Discussion boards • Comments and replies, postings on slides, discussion boards	• Learning Wall/Rubric • Checkbric (i.e. merging a checklist with a rubric) • Single Point Rubric • Rating Scale supported by anecdotal comments • Scoring Guide/Marking Scheme, rubric for extended response

Here are examples of how data can be collected in your classroom...

Kinder/Primary	Junior	Intermediate	Senior
Book: Pedagogical Documentation in Early Childhood	Math Rubric	Single Point Rubric	The Interactive Learning Wall & Co-Constructed Rubric
How to Collect Evidence/ Data	Grade 4 Writing (Language)	Rating Scale for Data Collection	The Formative Checkbric (Merging Checklist & Rubric)
Kindergarten Connection Website	Class Observation Log	Canva or Padlet Data Collection (Grade 9 Religion).pdf	The Behavioral Rating Scale with Anecdotal Tracking

Article/ Infographic: The Power of Documentation			
Kinder Days Website Pedagogical Documentation	Guided Reading Anecdotal Form	Using Brightspace Portfolio in Intermediate/Secondary Classroom	The Analytical Scoring Guide

Assessment and Evaluation

The primary purpose of assessment and evaluation is to improve student learning *(Growing Success, 2010).* Teachers need to use a variety of assessment methods in the classroom to acquire information about student progress in their mastery of curricular expectations.

Conversations	Observations	Products
Conferences Exit Tickets (primary, any grade) Journal (kinder, primary) Blogs Moderated Online Forums Student Feedback Focused Conversations Portfolio Conferencing (Kinder/Primary) Video Response Student-Led Conferences Sharing Circles (Intermediate) Storytelling Podcasts Socratic Seminars Small Group Participation (any grade) Planning/ Reflection Webs	Child Observation Blog (kinder) Vocabulary Checklists (Intermediate) Notes from Literature Circle Annotations Observation Checklist Anecdotal Observation (any grade) Questioning (primary) Presentations Listening & Speaking (junior) Group Skills Sharing Circles Land-Based Learning Reciprocal Peer Teaching Community-Based Problem-Solving Small Group Participation (any grade) Progress Monitoring	Performance Tasks Tests (junior, all) Reader Responses Portfolios (Intermediate, primary) Checklists Videos Journals (primary) Projects Written Responses (junior) Graphs Audio Recordings Annotated Bibliographies Podcast Production Digital Portfolios with Multilingual Reflections (primary) Written Exams

Assessment For/Of/As Learning

Using all three types of assessment is crucial because it creates a balance to capture a student's entire learning journey rather than just one single test or project. While assessment of learning ensures necessary accountability and benchmarks, including assessment for and as learning provides the safety that students need to make mistakes,

receive feedback, and develop the reflective skills to learn and grow.

Ultimately, combining these methods completely changes the classroom dynamic. It shifts assessment away from being just a stressful final grade and turns it into a responsive roadmap—one that helps teachers tweak their lessons on the fly and empowers students to take the responsibility through opportunities for feedback for their own learning.

Assessment Type	When Does It Happen?	Who Is It For?	Main Purpose	Examples
FOR Learning Formative	During the learning process	Teachers & Students	To guide and improve the ongoing learning process with immediate feedback	Exit tickets, class discussions, think/pair/share
OF Learning Summative	At the end of a unit after the learning is complete	Teachers, Parents, System	To assess final achievement to ensure learning expectations are met	Final exams, standardized tests, projects, papers, report cards
AS Learning Self-Reflection	Throughout the learning process	The Student	To build self-awareness and independent learning habits	Self-assessment rubrics, peer editing, setting personal goals

Self & Peer Reflection

In Ontario, a **Level 3/B** (70-79%) is the Provincial Standard. While we always encourage growth, it means a student is meeting grade level expectations and is prepared for the next grade in that subject area. It's important for teachers to use exemplars and clear success criteria to help their students understand where they are in their learning. Consider using Generic Rubrics to help students develop a sense of the expectations. These can also be a great resource when a student asks, "How can I earn a level 4/A?".

Here are some more strategies that allow students to reflect on their learning...

Junior	Intermediate	Senior
Student Self-Assessment of Learning Skills and Work Habits		Your Metacognitive Superpowers: A Senior Student's Reflection Toolkit
Kinder/Primary		
Blog: "The Power of Collaboration Learning Strategies in Elementary Group Projects"	Visual Self Assessment	Video: 5 Tips for Student Collaboration

Additional Resources

The Environment as the Third Educator - Workshop Slide Deck

Ministry of Education: The Kindergarten Environment

Ontario Capacity Building: Student Self Assessment

OECTA - Get Ahead of the New School Year: Assessment and Evaluation Considerations and Planning

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