



Rules of Thumb for Deconstruction of Standards

Classroom Assessment for Student Learning Update Training
with Jan Chappuis, December 6, 2010

1. Deconstruction of a standard should occur only when it makes the standard clearer- *but sometimes you don't know that until you try to deconstruct it.*
2. There are no 'product' targets/standards for reading. 'Product' target/standards in mathematics require students to produce a concrete tangible item; a simple sketch/drawing is not math product.
3. Phonics targets are *typically* knowledge targets. Mathematical procedures where students follow memorized rules or algorithms are knowledge targets because they only require procedural knowledge.
4. The only 'performance skill' in reading involves reading aloud, where the only way you could have evidence of attainment of the standard is to **LISTEN** to students. Everything else in reading is either knowledge or reasoning. The only 'performance skills' in mathematics include standards where you would actually have to **OBSERVE** students so you can **SEE** or **HEAR** them to know if they mastered the target.
5. A product target will *not always* have an accompanying performance skill target. Product targets sometimes produce evidence of target attainment that do not require a 'direct observation' of performance. (i.e., using the writing process to complete an assigned piece of writing). Teachers do not always need to **SEE** or **HEAR** the students drafting their ideas. The finished product will provide the evidence.
6. Performance skill and product targets assure that educators do not "scantron their way through life." The "screener" for determining whether or not a standard is a performance skill or product target is that it *cannot be assessed accurately using selected response or extended response assessment items.* Performance skill targets and product targets require observations, 'other' assessments, or specific products (that would be beyond any typical extended written response) that focus on *degrees of QUALITY, not just right or wrong.*
7. Don't belittle the knowledge category – knowledge does not equal 'easy or simple.' Knowledge includes procedural knowledge-- **KNOWS HOW**, as well as **KNOWS THAT** and **KNOWS WHEN**. (Tying your shoe begins as a skill, but becomes procedural knowledge once you have mastered it).
8. Product vs. Learning Task: Some standards may seem to imply that a "product" is called for when in fact WE impose a notion of HOW we would teach or look for mastery of the target (assess). In that case, the standard probably doesn't have an underpinning product target. Be sure when you are deconstructing standards that the **FOCUS** is on the learning intended– and not the instructional lesson or activity you would design.
9. Comprehension, just like *understands*, is a **FUZZY** term (i.e., different people interpret it in different ways). If you use that word in a target, it needs to be more clearly defined.
10. The ultimate reasons we categorize standards/targets include:
 - a. To reflect the true cognitive demand needed
 - b. To inform the best (valid and efficient) assessment method for gathering defensible evidence of student attainment.



***"Remember, your audience is teachers,
not the deconstruction police!"***

-Jan Chappuis, December 6, 2010