

Chapter 3 Clear Achievement Expectations: The Foundation of Sound Assessment

Chapter Central Idea or Focus – The Concept of Learning Targets –

A learning target (also called an achievement target) is the attainment expectation you have as a teacher regarding a selected area of accomplishment. You would have numerous learning targets as you teach your class.

Validity –

Every assessment must be valid for its intended purpose.

Validity as thought of in terms of the learning target concept

As a teacher, ask yourself, “Are the targets 1) appropriate and 2) clear to us as teachers and clear to the students?” . . . **it is important for you and your students to see the target clearly right from the beginning and it (the target) must “hold still”.**

Defining Achievement Targets – think of the target as a bull’s-eye surrounded by concentric circles. It will be unlikely that students hit the bull’s-eye on first attempt. Practice and guidance are needed as their trials move closer and closer to the bull’s-eye. It is an assessment maxim that if targets are appropriate and clear, if the learners are provided appropriate practice and guidance, all students have a chance to reach the targets.



"Etymological meanderings"

The English longbow yeomen were directed to practice frequently and it has been stated that in small hamlets there was often a practice held immediately after church services (the only time during the week when many of the archers could gather). A common target was the white skull of a bull, and the greatest skill could be illustrated by getting a "bull's eye".

Another common shooting term derives from this activity. When the archer is far from the target, the arrow must be pointed high, due to the arched trajectory of an arrow. When the archer is very close to the target, then he may point directly, without aiming above the white bull's skull, hence "pointing at the white", or "point blanc" as it was stated in those times. The term is now an established military term, "point blank" range, or the distance at which a firearm can be directly aimed at the target without consideration of the arched trajectory.

Hmmm . . . hard to quarrel with these benefits outlined below.

Arguments in Favor of Clear and Appropriate Targets

Benefit 1: Control of Your Professional Success

Benefit 2: Enhanced Student Academic Self-Efficacy

Benefit 3: Greater Assessment Efficiency

Benefit 4: Accurate Classroom Assessments

Hmmm . . . I notice lots of links on the instructor's web site related to this section outlined below.

Sources of Information about Achievement Expectations

Common Core Achievement Standards

State and Local Standards

Local Written Curriculum

Professional Development and Networking

Hmmm . . . I notice that the Learning Targets discussion outlined below is used in each of the chapters on different assessment item writing . . . I should pay close attention to this as we go on . . . so I will save my focus on this for later.

Learning Targets for the Twenty-First Century

Knowing and Understanding Targets

Reasoning Targets

Performance Skills Targets

Product Development Targets

Disposition Targets—the Affective Domain

Summary of Targets

The Critical Connection: Standards to Classroom Learning Targets

Scaffolding Standards

Student-Friendly Targets

Summary: Clear Targets Are Essential for Sound Assessment

Practice with Chapter 3 Ideas