**1 Feedback is timely (formative assessment component)**  
- **Complete Understanding 2 points**  
  Feedback is provided to students early enough that students can act on that feedback to improve their work before submission of a final project.  
  Feedback may include verbal feedback (in person or digitally) or it may include formal checks for understanding, such as digital quizzes, science notebook entries, or written quizzes.  
  If students receive summative feedback (or a grade) that they are not satisfied with, they may rework portions of their project and resubmit it for a better grade.  
  In the case of a written examination, students who perform poorly can have the opportunity to study more and retake the test, transforming the summative assessment into a formative assessment.

- **Partial Understanding 1 point**  
  Feedback is provided to students before submission of a final project, but students may not have enough time to improve their work based on that feedback.  
  Feedback is verbal, and does not include formal checks for understanding, such as digital quizzes, science notebook entries, or written quizzes.  
  If students receive summative feedback (or a grade) that they are not satisfied with, they may rework portions of their project and resubmit it for a better grade, but may lose credit as compared to the first attempt.  
  In the case of a written examination, students who perform poorly have the opportunity to study more and retake the test, but may lose credit as compared to the first attempt.

- **No Understanding 0 points**  
  Written feedback is provided to students only after the submission of a final project. Students do not have time or opportunity to act on that feedback to improve their grade.  
  Neither projects with rubrics, nor written examinations, can be resubmitted for a better grade.

**2 Direct and specific feedback**  
- **Summative feedback to students is written, provided in a timely manner, is specific to the student (does not compare students with each other), gives specific advice for improvement on future projects, AND rubric criteria describes degrees of proficiency along a continuum.**  
  Even if the student performed well (met highest standards and earned a good grade), feedback for

- **Partial feedback to students is written and provided in a timely manner.**  
  Feedback compares student's work with that of other students OR does not give specific advice for improvement on future projects OR rubric criteria does not describe degrees of proficiency along a continuum.

- **No feedback is given in a timely manner, it compares students to each other, does not give specific advice for improvement.**  
  Feedback compares student's work with that of other students AND does not give specific advice for improvement on future projects AND rubric criteria does not describe degrees of proficiency along a continuum.
| 3 | Aligns with Established Goals | Established Goals (content standards, course objectives, learning outcomes) are identified. | Established long-term goals are identified. | Goals are not identified, nor are they used to establish rubric criteria. |
|   | From those established goals, short-term, lesson- and unit-specific goals are identified. | Rubric criteria align with long-term, established goals. | Rubric criteria are written based on activities, rather than goals. |
|   | Criteria for the assessment align with short-term, lesson- and unit-specific goals. | Short-term, lesson- and unit-specific goals are not identified. |   |

| 4 | Transparent learning targets | Learning targets are provided to students at the beginning of the assessment process, and are made available to them throughout the process. | Learning targets were provided to students after the assessment process had already begun. | Learning targets are expressed verbally only, OR learning targets are in writing but are not provided to students until after the completion of the assessment. |
|   | Learning targets are discussed verbally as a whole group. If students wish to discuss learning targets, teacher is willing to provide clarification. | Learning targets are discussed verbally as a whole group. If students wish to discuss learning targets, teacher is willing to provide clarification outside of class time. | Learning targets are discussed verbally as a whole group. If students wish to discuss learning targets, teacher is willing to provide clarification outside of class time. |
|   | Learning targets are in writing, written at a level that all students can read, or accommodations are made to assist students with reading the learning targets. | Learning targets are in writing, written at the appropriate reading level for most students. | Learning targets are in writing, written at the appropriate reading level for most students. |
|   | Learning targets are posted in the classroom or in students’ work folders or are available in the learning management system that is used in the class. | Learning targets are posted in the classroom or in students’ work folders or in the learning management system. | Learning targets are posted in the classroom or in students’ work folders or in the learning management system. |

<p>| 5 | Self-assessment component | The assessment instrument requires students to assess their own work, using clear criteria, and to defend their assessment with evidence. | The assessment instrument requires students to assess their own work, using clear criteria, but does not require students to defend their assessment with evidence. | The assessment instrument does not require students to assess their own work. |
|   | The self-assessment may be done using the same tool the teacher uses, or may be done using a separate tool. | Language is clear and | Language is clear and |   |</p>
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<th>6</th>
<th>Provides multiple means of representation (requires only target knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) to complete)</th>
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<td></td>
<td>The assessment includes minimal (0-2) non-target KSAs (e.g., reading or typing), based on a review of which KSAs are necessary to demonstrate proficiency of a learning target. If non-target KSAs are included in the rubric, accommodations are made and accompany the assessment, such as additional illustrations, text translations (especially if done on a digital device), voice-to-text typing, or read-alouds.</td>
<td>The assessment includes 3 or more non-target KSAs (e.g., reading or typing), based on a review of which KSAs are necessary to demonstrate proficiency of a learning target. If non-target KSAs are included in the rubric, accommodations are made and accompany the assessment, such as additional illustrations, text translations (especially if done on a digital device), voice-to-text typing, or read-alouds.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Requires transfer of knowledge to demonstrate understanding</td>
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<td>The assessment requires students to demonstrate their understanding using an authentic performance task that includes one or more of the six facets of understanding: can explain, can interpret, can apply, have perspective, can empathize, have self-knowledge.</td>
<td>The assessment requires students to demonstrate their understanding, not through an authentic performance task, but by answering questions on a paper-and-pencil assessment.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Social component</td>
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<td>The assessment includes a small group (2-4 students) component in which students work collaboratively to complete an active learning task across multiple class periods. This task does not have a pre-determined solution, but is one in which students must solve an open-ended problem without one right answer. As part of the assessment, students must navigate social situations such as determining a course of action, assigning group roles, if applicable, are assigned to the students. Students have little need to navigate social situations, such as determining a course of action or helping a group member understand or catch up.</td>
<td>The assessment includes a small group (2-4 students) component in which students work collaboratively to solve a problem with a single right answer. Students have little autonomy as to how the task is to be completed.</td>
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roles, or helping an absent group member understand or catch up.

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<th>Technology component</th>
<th>The assessment includes 2-3 digital technology components. The teacher collects formative assessment data from the students, digitally provides differentiated feedback to the students, and allows students to respond to the feedback digitally.</th>
<th>The assessment includes one digital technology component. It may be the collection of formative assessment data from students or digital feedback to the students.</th>
<th>The assessment does not include a technology component.</th>
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<th>Provides multiple means of action and expression</th>
<th>The assessment provides four or more choices for students to demonstrate their understanding. The assessment also allows students to propose a different assessment, as long as their choice meets the assessment goals.</th>
<th>The assessment provides two or three choices for students but does not allow students to propose an additional option.</th>
<th>The assessment does not allow for student choice.</th>
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1: Feedback to students is timely to allow students to act upon it

Feedback should be provided early enough that students can act on it. That feedback can be provided to students during formative assessment (formal or informal), which reveals students’ progress toward a learning goal, their thought processes, and possible misconceptions (Trumbull & Lash, 2013, p. 2).

As contrasted with summative assessments which are “post-learning, after all is said and done” (Wormeli, 2010), formative assessments have a great impact on student achievement and provide useful and timely feedback to the teacher (Wormeli, 2010). Teachers typically spend most of their time developing summative assessments, Wormeli says, but the value of formative assessments should not be underestimated. Teachers should focus also on formative, ongoing assessment with checkpoints along the way and descriptive feedback. Teachers should ask three questions of students: (1) What was the goal? (2) Where are you in relation to that goal? (3) How can you close the gap? In addition to informal formative assessment, there should also be several formal checks for understanding and feedback to students. Assessments followed by descriptive feedback have a much greater impact on understanding (Wormeli, 2010).

Timing of feedback provided about the task is important, Hattie and Timperley (2007) note. It can be most effective and powerful during the task acquisition process. It can get diluted, however, if it also includes feedback about self as a person. In my experience, especially teaching coding, there are a lot of instances where students are learning a new coding skill. I give a lot of feedback about the correctness of using blocks of code to accomplish certain coding objectives. In the past I have not been careful or extremely observant about what other feedback, such as
feedback about the student as a person, that I was giving. In the future, I will be more aware of that and try to avoid that tendency.

**Evidence for complete understanding**

Feedback to students is provided early enough for students to be able to act upon it to improve their work. Feedback may be verbal or written. If students receive summative feedback, as a project rubric or a test that they are not satisfied with, they may redo their work and resubmit for a better score.

**Evidence for partial understanding**

Feedback to students is provided before project submission but does not allow the student enough time to revise their work. Feedback may be verbal or written. If students receive summative feedback as a project rubric or a test, that they are not satisfied with, they may redo their work and resubmit for a better score, but that score may not be as high as it would have been initially.

**Evidence for no understanding**

Feedback is provided to students after the final project submission. Students do not have the opportunity to resubmit their work for a better score.

2: **Feedback to students is direct and specific**

According to Black and Wiliam (1998), feedback to students should focus only on the work of that student and should not involve comparisons with the work of other students. These kinds of comparisons can be damaging to students’ self-esteem and turn the focus of the class toward competition, rather than collaboration and an emphasis on improving learning.

Black and Wiliam (1998) further point out that feedback to students should be direct and specific, giving advice to students so they know what can be improved. This leads students to believe that they have the ability to improve. When they receive low marks and vague feedback, they are led to believe that they lack ability and that the circumstances of their performance are beyond their control.

Criteria in analytic rubrics, Wiggins and McTighe (2005) point out, should be independent and should “describe degrees of quality, proficiency, or understanding along a continuum” (p. 173).

As a teacher, I notice that students sometimes view themselves as “smart” or “not smart,” “talented” or “not talented.” By providing them with specific feedback that is directly related to their own performance, students develop a growth mindset. In other words, they learn that they can improve regardless of where they started.

**Evidence for complete understanding**

Feedback to students is written, provided in a timely manner, is specific to the student (does not compare students with each other), gives specific advice for improvement, AND rubric criteria describes degrees of proficiency along a continuum. Even for highest performing students, specific feedback is provided for improvement on future projects.
Evidence for partial understanding

Feedback to students is written and provided in a timely manner. Feedback compares student’s work with that of other students OR does not give specific advice for improvement on future projects OR rubric criteria does not describe degrees of

Evidence for no understanding

Feedback is not given in a timely manner, it compares students to each other, does not give specific advice for improvement.

3: Assessment aligns with established goals

As part of effective assessment design, Wiggins and McTighe (2005) tell us that Stage 1 of assessment design is the identification of Established Goals, or Goals for short. Goals include “formal, long-term goals, such as state content standards, district program goals, departmental objectives, and exit-level outcomes” (p. 58). These goals provide the rationale for short-term, unit- or lesson-specific goals. Teachers prioritize what to teach or leave out, and what to minimize or emphasize based on goals (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005).

By establishing long-term and short-term goals, then ensuring that assessment is aligned with those goals, teachers create a kind of road map for their curriculum. As a result, two things happen, according to Wiggins and McTighe (2005). First, teachers do not end up “aimless[ly]” covering content that is not necessary to be taught. Second, activities that are completed in class are relevant and related to content.

The establishment of long-term and short-term goals is intended to help teachers identify what their students ultimately need to achieve. The purpose of the related assessment is to determine whether the students demonstrated that they met those goals. Yet despite the importance of backward design and the necessity of identifying goals, in a study conducted by van den Berghe, Ros, and Beijaard (2013), “Most teachers could not report specific learning goal(s) for the observed lesson” (p. 351).

I really enjoy what I teach. Typically, I find myself trying hard to complete all of the lessons that are laid out in my curriculum. If I had more time, however, I could see how it would be easy to add fun activities that may not relate to the long-term goals. By keeping assessments in line with long-term goals, this helps teachers to stay on track.

Evidence for complete understanding

Established goals are identified, and used to develop short-term, lesson- or unit-specific goals. Those short-term goals are used to develop learning targets.

Evidence for partial understanding

Established goals are identified and used to develop learning targets. Short-term goals are not identified.

Evidence for no understanding

Goals are not identified. Learning targets are developed based on activities.
4: Learning targets/criteria are transparent

Students should have access to the criteria by which they will be graded. When criteria are transparent, “this satisfies a basic fairness principle,” (Shepard, 2000, p. 11), allowing students to achieve excellence by knowing what the standards require. Through true formative assessment, students have the ability to improve. According to Sadler, as cited by Shepard (2005), students must have the a clear understanding of the learning targets. They must be able to understand the teacher’s expectation for quality, be able to compare their current performance with the standard, and understand how to close the gap.

Conversely, according to Black and Wiliam (1998), when students do not have a clear picture of their learning targets, “they appear to become accustomed to receiving classroom teaching as an arbitrary sequence of exercises with no overarching rationale” (p. 143). Having transparent criteria also allows for self-assessment by the student, which is identified as Skill 3 in this rubric.

I have noticed that when students have clear expectations laid out for them, it actually takes the guesswork out of what they need to do and prevents a lot of questions from being asked of me, the teacher. Students do not need to ask or guess what quality work looks like because clear guidelines have already been laid out for them.

Evidence for complete understanding

Learning criteria are discussed verbally and are in writing, available to students from the beginning and throughout the assessment process. Learning criteria are posted in the classroom, in students’ work folders, or in the learning management system that is used in the class.

Evidence for partial understanding

Learning criteria are in writing, but were provided to students after the assessment process had already begun. Learning criteria are not posted in the classroom, in students’ work folders, or in the learning management system that is used in the class.

Evidence for no understanding

Learning criteria are not available to students.

5: Component of self-assessment by student

Self-assessment by students should be included in both formative and summative assessments. According to Quellmalz (2013), self and peer assessment in which “students are actively engaged in assessment themselves” (p. 3) is one attribute of effective formative assessment.
When students have the opportunity to assess their own work, the criteria of the assignment and the feedback from teachers and peers becomes more important than the grade alone (Shepard, 2000). Students and teachers are able to develop a collaborative relationship in which students take responsibility for their own learning, appreciating “that standards are not capricious or arbitrary” (p. 12). Further, students become very honest about their own work and are prepared to defend their work with evidence (Shepard, 2000).

In my teaching experience, when students assess their own work, they use what they discover to improve their own work. On their own, they iterate on their projects and make improvements.

**Evidence for complete understanding**

The assessment instrument requires students to assess their own work, using clear criteria, and to defend their assessment with evidence.

**Evidence for partial understanding**

The assessment instrument requires students to assess their own work, using clear criteria, but does not require students to defend their assessment with evidence.

**Evidence for no understanding**

The assessment instrument does not require students to assess their own work.

6: Assessment provides multiple means of representation (requires only target knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) to complete)

One approach to creating valid and fair assessments is to require only target knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) to complete the assessment. Assessment designers first identify what evidence is needed to judge whether students have demonstrated specified aspects of learning. After determining what knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) are required, assessment designers then examine the assessment tasks to determine whether other unwanted, non-target KSAs are required to complete the assessment. If unwanted KSAs are included in the assessment, the assessment will yield results about the target KSAs and non-target KSAs, such as language skills or math skills (Trumbull & Lash, 2013). Therefore, non-target KSAs should be eliminated or represented through multiple means (Meyer, Rose, & Gordon, 2014).

For example, in a math assessment, students may be asked to answer a story problem. The target KSAs are the math skills to be assessed; however, reading is a non-target KSA that would be assessed by this story problem. Since the teacher is not trying to assess the student’s reading ability in this context, students who struggle with reading or a language barrier should be able to access that assessment through multiple means of representation. By Providing Multiple Means of Representation, teachers provide options for comprehension, provide options for language, mathematical expressions, and symbols, and provide options for perception (Meyer, Rose, & Gordon, 2014). In this specific example, the teacher would be providing options for language by promoting understanding across languages and illustrating through multiple media.

In one of my own classes last week, students were working in small groups to build a testbed to discover how the inputs and outputs of our robotics kits work. The students enjoyed building the testbed but were getting frustrated at the subsequent testing steps during which they were required to read and follow four pages of written instructions broken into four parts. As students
worked on this process over a few class periods, I realized they were being inadvertently assessed on their reading skills (a non-target skill). Between class periods I photographed the testbed at each of the four major steps they were to work toward, annotated the photos, and shared them with students, eliminating the need to do the reading. While I recognize the importance of learning to read, I also recognized that reading skills were not what I was trying to assess in this activity. Students who had struggled with reading were then able to complete the rest of the assessment independently.

**Evidence for complete understanding**

Based on a review of which KSAs are necessary to demonstrate proficiency in a given criteria, the assessment includes minimal (0-1) non-target KSAs (such as reading). If non-target KSAs are included in the rubric, accommodations are made and accompany the assessment, such as additional illustrations, text translations (especially if done on a digital device), or read-alouds.

**Evidence for partial understanding**

Based on a review of which KSAs are necessary to demonstrate proficiency in a given criteria, the assessment includes 2-3 non-target KSAs (such as reading). If non-target KSAs are included in the rubric, accommodations are made and accompany the assessment, such as additional illustrations, text translations (especially if done on a digital device), or read-alouds.

**Evidence for no understanding**

Based on a review of which KSAs are necessary to demonstrate proficiency in a given criteria, the assessment includes non-target KSAs without accommodations.

7: **Assessment requires transfer of knowledge to demonstrate understanding**

According to Bloom (as cited in Wiggins & McTighe, 2005), “To understand is to be able to wisely and effectively use—transfer—what we know, in context; to apply knowledge and skill effectively, in realistic tasks and settings” (p. 7), “to take what we know and use it creatively, flexibly, fluently, in different settings or problems, on our own” (p. 39).

Experts in their field, those who have deep understanding of their content, are able to “build large, organized, interconnected knowledge structures,” (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, as cited by Quellmalz, 2013, p. 2). Experts are able to make connections from what they are experiencing to what they already know; are able to organize what they know around a schema; and are able to draw information from long-term memory without having to store it in short-term memory. This is the result of deep learning (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000).

Students who truly learn something, as opposed to merely memorizing it, begin to construct their knowledge around a topic. According to Vygotsky, as cited by Trumbull and Lash (2013), students build new knowledge around what they already know. In order to build this new knowledge, to begin constructing such an interconnected network of knowledge, they must truly understand.

The ability to transfer knowledge means that students can take the relatively small number of facts, skills, and examples and apply them to other issues, problems, and settings. Six facets of
transfer ability as identified and defined by Wiggins and McTighe (2005) are: can explain, can interpret, can apply, have perspective, can empathize, have self-knowledge (p. 84). A well-crafted assessment that assesses students’ ability to transfer what they know should include an authentic performance task “involving one or more of the six facets of understanding” (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005, p. 126).

The assessment tool should clearly describe criteria for degrees of understanding. Understanding should be assessed separately from other traits, like mechanics, organization, and craftsmanship. According to Wiggins and McTighe (2005), those other traits should be assessed in a separate rubric, or all of the traits should be assessed in a grid-style rubric.

As an elementary arts educator, I almost never assessed students using any kind of paper-and-pencil test. Regardless of what artist, technique, or style we were studying together, an art project was the authentic assessment my students completed. While some students might have had a difficult time stating the definition of a horizon line, they were able to create artworks with horizon lines in them. This authentic demonstration was more meaningful than being able to choose from multiple choice options on a written test.

**Evidence for complete understanding**

The assessment requires students to demonstrate their understanding using an authentic performance task that includes one or more of the six facets of understanding: can explain, can interpret, can apply, have perspective, can empathize, have self-knowledge.

**Evidence for partial understanding**

The assessment requires students to demonstrate their understanding, not through an authentic performance task, but by answering questions on a paper-and-pencil assessment.

**Evidence for no understanding**

The assessment does not require students to demonstrate their understanding through an authentic performance task or in a written assessment.

**8: Assessment includes a social component**

In today’s knowledge society, students need lifelong learning skills, not just the ability to receive knowledge that is transmitted from a teacher. These skills may be gained through active learning (van den Berghe, Ros, & Beijaard, 2013). Active learning may take different forms, but typically includes students working in small groups to complete self-directed tasks or to complete teacher-directed activities that are under students’ control (van den Berghe, Ros, & Beijaard, 2013).

During active learning, teachers place an emphasis on students developing certain skills more than on transmission of information. Among those skills is the ability to work collaboratively in groups, via a social component (van den Berghe, Ros, & Beijaard, 2013). Within a social context, learners construct their own knowledge (Trumbull & Lash, 2013). And social processes help
students develop their cognitive skills, as we now know that intelligence is not a predetermined quantity (Shepard, 2000).

In my experience, when students are working in small groups, with few exceptions, they are motivated and engaged. This is not always the case when I am leading whole-group instruction. For example, in my current fifth grade class, we are working to program robots to move autonomously (with minimal human intervention). During one recent class in which I attempted to give whole-group instruction, students took turns disrupting class and causing distractions. The next day, I had small groups work independently on their robots while I moved from group to group. Almost all students were on task and productive the entire class period.

**Evidence for complete understanding**

The assessment includes a small group component where students have the opportunity to solve an open-ended problem using collaboration skills. Students will be expected to navigate social situations, such as determining a course of action as a team and assisting a group member. The members of the group will assign group roles, if necessary.

**Evidence for partial understanding**

The assessment includes a small group component where students have the opportunity to solve a problem with a single solution. Group roles are assigned by the teacher, if necessary.

**Evidence for no understanding**

The assessment does not include a small group component. All work is done independently.

**9: Assessment includes a technology component**

Assessments should include a digital technology component for two reasons. First, technology can help to support alignment of embedded assessments with standards and targets (Quellmalz, 2013). Technology can support teachers as they strive to provide timely feedback and differentiated follow-up with students. Teachers are even freed from having to create all of these assessments, as many are available through their curriculum or from other sources.

In *Knowing What Students Know*, Pellegrino, Chudowsky, & Glaser (2001) go on to say that when technology is included in the classroom, teachers are able to “employ more complex tasks, capture and replay students’ performances, share exemplars of competent performance, and in the process gain critical information about student competence” (p. 6).

Second, digital technology skills are becoming increasingly important in today’s workplace, yet students do not inherently have the skills they need to thrive in today’s digital economy. According to Prensky (as cited in CEP813, n.d.), “digital natives” have been discussed since the beginning of the Internet but what we have actually observed is that students tend to use digital technology for socializing and entertainment. Digital technology skills that are needed for higher education or work must be taught intentionally.

In today’s horizontally-structured workplaces, digital information is shared and used by every team member, and students must be literate in new literacies of digital information (Leu,
Kinzer, Coiro, Castek, & Henry, 2013). The digital technology skills that students need are outlined and described in ISTE’s Standards for Students (International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), 2016).

**Evidence for complete understanding**

The assessment includes a digital technology component in which the teacher collects formative assessment data from the students and provides feedback to the students digitally.

**Evidence for partial understanding**

The assessment includes one digital technology component. It may be the collection of formative assessment data from students, or digital feedback to the students.

**Evidence for no understanding**

The assessment does not include a technology component.

*10: Assessment provides multiple means of action and expression*

Assessment, as discussed throughout this rubric, includes summative and formative components. It also includes both the processes and the products of assessment. By utilizing Universal Design for Learning (Meyer, Rose, & Gordon, 2014), teachers make assessment accessible for all learners.

In criterion 6, I described the importance of making content accessible for all learners, and the provision of multiple means of representation to do that. By also allowing multiple means of action and expression, teachers give students the opportunity to express themselves and demonstrate their understanding of course concepts in whatever way best suits them. A flexible curriculum that allows “each learner... [to] find the right balance of challenge and support” (Meyer, Rose, & Gordon, 2014, p. 7) leads to engagement. When learners are engaged, it can impact the learning environment as a whole.

A choice of tasks is beneficial for all students, not just students who need to be accommodated in some way. Black & Wiliam (1998) note that choice should be available to students for classwork and homework, as long as those tasks meet the learning objectives for the lesson. Again, choice leads to engagement for all students.

My own children attended elementary and middle school at a project-based learning school. As a parent, I always appreciated the opportunity for my children to choose how to demonstrate their learning through projects. My oldest son constructed a Civil War camp-inspired tent to show his understanding of Civil War life, a project which he was engaged in and enjoyed completing with the help of his father. Had he been required to write an essay, his learning experience would have been quite different.

**Evidence for complete understanding**

The assessment provides four or more choices for students to demonstrate their understanding. It also allows students to propose a different assessment, as long as their choice meets the assessment goals.
Evidence for partial understanding

The assessment provides two or three choices for students but does not allow students to propose an additional option.

Evidence for no understanding

The assessment does not allow for student choice.

REFERENCES


CEP813. (n.d.). 4.1 Learn. Retrieved from https://d2l.msu.edu/d2l/le/content/585048/viewContent/5241072/View


