

Pages 1 – 43

How to Grade for Learning: Linking Grades to Standards (4th ed.)

By Ken O'Connor

1

Getting Started

Page 1

Write each quote on an index card. Create several sets. Give each table a set of cards. Have them come to agreement on which quote “speaks” to them. Each table will share and defend their selection.

Have a group dialogue around the following questions:

- What do the quotes say to you concerning grading practices in your context?
- How do you think your colleagues, students, parents and community might react to the quotes?

2

Creating a Shared Understanding of Grading Terminology

Read the paragraphs on page 2 & 3.

- What comes to mind in terms of your own understanding and use of grading terminology?
- How has your school worked to develop a shared definition of grading? What more might need to be done?

3

Standards

Read the Standards Section on Pages 4-6.

- What are the two types of standards discussed on page 4? How has your school/district shared this information with your educators?
- How has your school/district established a foundation of standards-based learning?
 - Outline the work that has been or needs to be done prior to moving into standards-based grading.

- How is this necessary for implementing a standards-based grading system? Who needs to be involved?

4

Motivation:

Read the section on pages 7 to top of page 11.

Grades and motivation—Dialogue with colleagues around the “Carrots and Sticks: The Seven Deadly Flaws.”

- Read the article “**A Case Against Grades**” by Alfie Kohn. Pair up with a partner and discuss key points. (see MAC Reads recommended resource list for link: bit.ly/MAC-Reads-Resources2020)
 - How will you go about changing these practices within your school/district?
 - Begin to develop the beginnings of an action plan.

Define the Type 1 behaviors of Autonomy, Mastery and Purpose.

- How can these concepts impact the grading practices of you and your colleagues?
- How can these behaviors be changed to make grading about supporting learning, not punishing students?

5

Fixed and Growth Mindset

Read the section on pages 11-13

Compare and contrast behaviors exhibited with a growth vs. a fixed mindset? Create a **T-Chart** outlining your thinking (T-Chart template in MAC Reads 2020 Resources—Introduction). Compare your thoughts to the **Fixed vs. Growth Mindset Handout**.

- What can educators do to develop growth mindsets in themselves and their students?
- How does having a growth mindset relate to standards-based grading?
- Review and dialogue around Figure .03 Learning Zone vs Performance Zone...how does this relate to using grades to support learning?
 - **Watch Ted Talk by Eduardo Briceño** (see MAC Reads Resource Recommendations by Chapter)
 - Debrief key ideas from video as a group.
- Reflect on the advice from Jo Boaler on page 13.
 - Divide into groups, and have each group take a piece of advice.
 - Brainstorm on how that idea might look like in a classroom setting?
 - Record on large sheets of paper; hang up; gallery walk; discuss ideas found on others’ posters.

6

Why Grade?

Read pages 18-27

What are your thoughts on each of the seven perspectives?

- Which perspectives do you agree with? Disagree with? Why?
- Get with someone who disagrees with you; try to see each others' perspectives.
- How has your thinking been impacted by these perspectives?
- Review the graphic on page 26 (Figure 0.5)
- What is its significance to you? How might you explain this to a colleague? A parent? A student?
- As a group create some talking points.

7

Ingredients:

Read pages 38 to the top of page 41

- How can revising your thinking of what is included in a grade impact the grading system in your classroom, school, and or district? Share examples of your current report cards. How will changes, such as O'Connor is suggesting, alter your report card?
- What will need to occur to get the implemented system wide?
- How will you communicate this need and philosophy to all key stakeholders within your system?

8

Guidelines for Grading

Read pages 41-43.

Reflect and dialogue around Figure 0.14, 0.15 and 0.16.

- How are these three illustrations related?
- How do they relate to your current grading system?
- How will they impact the work ahead?
- Which guideline feels most imperative to your context? Spend some time prioritizing, as a group, related to where your district is regarding each guideline. Where will you start?

Four Big Ideas

The four questions at right form the basis for all of the work moving forward as you learn more about how to effectively “Grade FOR Learning.” As you summarize your thinking and conversation from the introduction:

- Take time as a team to make notes around each of the four big ideas.
- Add important thoughts/take-aways from the introduction. This will allow you to record notes or things that need to be addressed after each section/chapter. This will be a place to record important key points and specialized notes that can be used as a planning tool for your team as you move forward with this work.

As you complete each chapter to come, explore/reflect on the four big ideas. Think about these questions related to your local school context and as it relates to the grading and reporting processes.

Four Big Ideas

1. Purpose of grades: a communication tool about student academic achievement.
2. Ensure grades are:
 - a. Accurate
 - b. Consistent
 - c. Meaningful, and
 - d. Support learning
3. There is no “right” grade, just justifiable grades
4. Students are self-directed learners, not grade point accumulators.

Additional Thoughts to Consider:

- How will these guidelines assist your current grading system in becoming more about students’ academic achievement?
- How will these guidelines help ensure grades within your system are accurate, consistent, meaningful and supportive of learning?
- How will these guidelines help teachers realize there is no “right” when grading, but that grades must be justifiable?
- How will these grading guidelines help develop students who are self-directed learners not simply grade accumulators?

Additional Resource:

PodCast TG2: The Impact of Grades with Jeff Friedman Episode 13

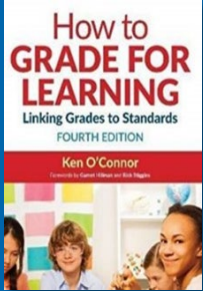
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STUDY GUIDE

CHAPTER 1: Basing Grades on Standards

MAC Reads 2020



Pages 44 – 66

How to Grade for Learning: Linking Grades to Standards

(4th ed.), By Ken O'Connor

“A student’s grade should redirect what he/she actually knows and can demonstrate on...assessment tied to specific learning standards.”

– Tarte (2015)

Guideline 1: Relate grading procedures to learning goals

- a. Use learning goals (standards or some clustering of standards (e.g., domains, strands) as basis for grade determination and grade reporting.
- b. Use assessment methods as the subset, not the set. (p. 44)

1

Getting Started

This guideline requires that grading procedures be aligned with stated learning goals. This alignment is direct, and ideally, a grade is determined and reported for each learning goal with no overall grade. (p. 45)

2

Learning Goals Priority Standards

Read pages 45-47

Grades must be clear, which requires that, in addition to all the other guidelines, grades must be directly related to learning goals for each grading period and in each classroom.

- Read the Educator Contribution by Carol Commodore, EdD (p. 46)
- Have a conversation around the following questions:
 - Where is your district/school in relationship to having essential standards as a base for what is taught, learned, assessed, and communicated to others?
 - How are learning goals currently being used for grading practices?

“One symbol cannot do justice to the different degrees of learning a student acquires across all learning outcomes.” (p. 45)

- Have a conversation as a team around the statement above.
 - Make a list of things that support this statement.
 - Make a list of things that are in opposition to this statement.
 - Make sure notes are kept from this conversation for future use.

3

Learning Goals/Priority Standards

Read pages 47-64

On p. 49, Chappuis et.al, (2017, p. 37) suggests characteristics necessary for developing priority standards.

- Discuss where your district (and departments) are in relationship to developing or already implementing priority standards for each content area.
- Make a list of how priority standards can support accurate reporting about student learning.

Read the section by Guskey and Bailey as they make a distinction between Curriculum Standards and Reporting standards. (p. 50) Discuss the content in the chart as a team.

4

NGSS Framework

Read pages 50-57.

Review how O'Connor uses the NGSS content to illustrate how standards may be chosen and how gradebooks could be used to represent learning based on the learning goals set by the team.

- Discuss and make note of four things in this section that “squares up” with your teams’ thinking and/or current practices.
- First review figures 1.4 & 1.5 on pages 55 & 57 to the figures 0.6 & 0.7 on pages 31 & 33.
 - On chart paper, note similarities and differences that the team noticed between the two sets of figures.
 - Process of reviewing of grade books: use samples from gradebook from your team; or each person can review their own personal grade book for the following group conversation.
 - Discuss as a group, which figures match how the current grade books, in your district, are similar and/or different to the two sets reviewed above. Discuss which figures/grade books offer more clarity for students and parents? What does this mean to the current practices?

5

Other Ways of Organizing Learning Goals/Standards

Read pages 59-64.

After reading this section:

- Ask each person to share out one key point that resonated with them after reading this section.

Make a list of things the team believes is important to note from this section to ensure these key points are recorded for later use. Be as specific as possible to guide your future and action action planning.

Four Big Ideas

As you summarize your thinking and conversation from chapter 1, take time to make team notes around the four big ideas. Add important thoughts/take-aways from this chapter. This will allow you to document key ideas, general notes or things that need to be addressed. This will be a place to record important key points and specialized notes that can be used as a planning tool for your team as you move forward with this work.

What's the Bottom Line?

From page 64

- Grades should be based on learning goals (standards, expectations, etc.) not assessment methods, so teachers should use gradebooks where the columns primarily represent the learning goals and secondarily represent assessment methods.
- Grades should be for standards, not subjects, at least through Grade 8, and preferably unit after Grade 10.
- Teachers should have a clear understanding of what learning results are expected.
- Reporting should allow for focus on each learning goal.
- Credit should be granted when students are proficient on all of the critical learning goals.

Four Big Ideas

These four questions are the basis for all of the work as you learn more about how to effectively “Grade FOR Learning.”

1. Purpose of grades:
a communication tool about student academic achievement.
2. Ensure grades are:
 - a. Accurate
 - b. Consistent
 - c. Meaningful, and
 - d. Support learning
3. There is no “right” grade, just justifiable grades
4. Students are self-directed learners, not grade point accumulators.

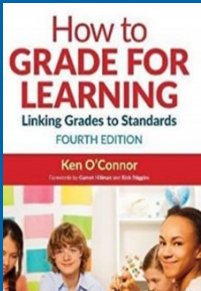
Additional Resources:

(see resources folder at bit.ly/MAC-Reads-Resources2020)

- LP: What are Learning Targets?
- LP: What Are Learning Progressions
- MAC: Learning Moment: How do we achieve grading practices that support high quality teaching and assessment?

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Notes:



Pages 67 – 94

How to Grade for Learning: Linking Grades to Standards

(4th ed.), By Ken O'Connor

“Performance standards specify “how good is good enough.” They are the indicators of quality that specify how adept or competent a student demonstration must be.”

– Ohio State Department of Education, (2017)

“But five right and five wrong it batting .500. That’s really good.”

– Family Circus: 4/13/17, Baseballer Billy to Mom, who is not happy with his test score.

Guideline 2: Relate grading procedures to learning goals

- The meaning of grades (letters or numbers) should come from clear descriptions of a limited number of levels.
- If they hit the goal, they get the grade (i.e., no bell curves)!

1

Getting Started

This guideline is critical because failure to describe performance standards clearly and making complicated conversions between levels and percentages and letter grades are two of the main reasons why standards-based grading has been challenged and, in some cases, rejected completely or partly.

2

Purpose and Key Elements of the Guideline

Read pages 68-69

Write a 12-word summary that summarizes the purpose and elements in your own words.
Share with your colleagues

Create a matching activity where each method is matched in table groups with the definition and key ideas of each method.

- Discuss or create a list of the pros and cons of each method.
- Dialogue around which might work best for your context.

3

How to Develop Performance Standards

Read pages 70-73

Consider how your team might use the process developed by faculty at the University of Dubai outlined in the Educator Contribution on pages 70-73.

- Could this process work for your faculty?
- Who would need to be involved?
- What resources would you need to complete?
- What modifications would you make for your own context?
- If this wouldn't work for you, what process might you conduct instead?

4

Criterion- or Norm-Referenced

Read pages 73-top of 76.

Dialogue with your team around the following questions. Keep note of big ideas and thoughts that arise.

- Why is the use of a bell curve inappropriate in a K-12 setting?
- How does the quote by Rick Stiggins in paragraph 3 page 74 reinforce the statement above?
- What is the concept of grade rationing and why is it also inappropriate?
- Reflect on the sample scenarios on page 75...what is the consensus of your team?

5

Level, Labels, and Descriptors for Performance Standards

Read pages 76-82.

Using your new knowledge and understanding of the concepts engage in the activity found in the "What do you Think?" box on page 82. With your team.

- What do you see as the strengths and areas for improvement in the performance standard descriptions in Figures 2.7, 2.8 and 2.9.
- How would you change them to make them (a) higher quality and/or (b) more user friendly especially by students and parents?
- Additional questions for reflection:
 - How do they compare to your current performance standard descriptions?

- If you don't have these developed yet, how might these examples influence your development of performance standard descriptions?

6

Establishing Classroom Assessment Performance Standards

Read pages 82-92.

Break your team up into two groups. Have Group A read and discuss the Educator Contribution by Natalie Bolton (pgs. 83-85) and Group B read and discuss the Educator Contribution by Tom Hierck and Garth Larson. Have each group write the main part and pieces of each educators thinking on how they believe these performance standards should be developed.

- What are their similarities?
- What are their differences?
- Which would work best for your context?
- Why? And Why not?

On page 88, in the last paragraph, Ken O'Connor states... "I believe that achievement should be seen as the grading variable, with growth and progress being seen as reporting variables."

- Do you agree or disagree?
- How might Figure 2.12 impact your thinking on this assertion?

Complete the reading of this chapter on pages 90-92.

- Engage your team in thinking about the impact of the information in this chapter to your own context and educational situation. Complete the "What's the Bottom Line?" and determine how this fits into your overall plan of implementing standards based grading.
- Develop a plan of action to begin the work outlined in this chapter or update your current action plan to include and or revise (as needed) these pieces.

Four Big Ideas

As you summarize your thinking and conversation from chapter 1, take time to make team notes around the four big ideas.

How does this chapter help emphasize the four “big ideas” woven throughout this book?

Extended Learning Opportunity

Read the following articles and dialog around their implications.

- **Learning Point**—Criterion- and norm-referenced score reporting: What is the difference?
- **Learning Point**—Models of proficient achievement: Why are they important?
- Grading for learning: Guidelines for supporting student success

What’s the Bottom Line?

Standards must be developed (ideally by teams of teachers) that clearly describe levels of student performance based on proficiency, with a limited number of levels. The levels must be made public, be based on sound expertise, be clearly stated, and supported by exemplars or models. Additionally, all teachers should be engaged in calibrating their understanding of these levels in order to implement as consistently as possible.

Additional Resources:

- Georgia Performance Standards (GPS)

Four Big Ideas

These four questions are the basis for all of the work as you learn more about how to effectively “Grade FOR Learning.”

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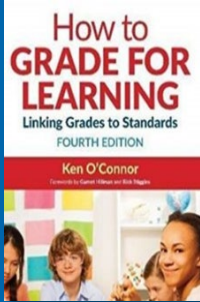
Notes:



STUDY GUIDE

CHAPTER 3: Grading Individual Achievement

MAC Reads 2020



Pages 95 – 121

How to Grade for Learning: Linking Grades to Standards

(4th ed.), By Ken O'Connor

“When anything other than the level of achievement on the stated learning goal is figured into a...grade, we lose the meaning of a grade.”

O'Connor, p. 95

Guideline 3: Grading Individual Achievement

Limit the valued attributes included in grades to individual achievement.

- a. Grades should be based on achievement (i.e., demonstration of the knowledge and skill components of the standards). Effort, participation, attitude, and other behaviors should be reported separately.
- b. Grades should be based on individual achievement. (p. 95)

1

Getting Started

The basic principle in Guideline 3: Grades are limited to achievement and should not be used as punishment for poor attendance, inappropriate behavior, or lack of punctuality.

Before you begin today as a group, take a moment and think about how you are intentionally linking grades to standards. Ask yourself, am I grading based on individual achievement only or am I including things that may distort the reporting of what an individual student knows at the end of the learning cycle.

2

Pre-Reading Activity

Materials for this session:

- 1 large piece of chart paper
- Multiple 3 X 3 sticky notes (all the same color)

Directions

- Label the Chart: What is currently included in our grading practices?
- Provide multiple 3 X 3 sticky notes for each member. (all the same color)
- Members will independently write (as large as possible; considering the size available) one item per sticky note that is part of your current grading system.

Processing (Affinity Mapping)

- As individuals finish, they will **silently** begin to add their sticky notes on the chart paper, **without any talking/conversation**.
- As people begin to add their notes, all team members are encouraged to participate in moving sticky notes into “like categories” while ensuring all notes are still visible by all participants. This work should be done without any conversation.
- After all notes have been added, the facilitator will read the groupings of items aloud to the group. The facilitator may group additional “like” Items into one stack to help with spacing, but will leave the notes that are similar, but contain additional information, just outside of that particular grouping.
- Leave the chart up for later use.

3

Group Reading (7 groups A-G)

Read pages 96-119 (divided by group)

Group Reading Process: Using the 3-2-1 Protocol (See Protocols folder at

Facilitator will divide individuals into diverse groups based on one of the 7 assigned (A-G) groups listed below. Each group will read their given section and record their discussion using the following **3-2-1 Protocol**:

- (3) Create an **overarching summary** of their assigned area of reading. (Write on an 8 X 11 sheet of paper)
- (2) Write a **one sentence statement** that the group felt was important or really powerful. (Write on a sentence strip)
- (1) Write a **one-word summary** that represents the groups thoughts about the topic. (Write on a large index card)

Each group will share with the larger group their written notes at the end of the session. NOTE: The facilitator needs to keep these notes for future action planning work.

Reading selection assignments

A. Grading Achievement Only (p. 96-top of p. 100)

B. Behaviors That Must Be Addressed (pp. 100-104)

B1. Attendance

B2. Academic Dishonesty

- (after reading this section, review the **Academic Integrity Policy** (pp. 11-13) in the Hillview Middle School Student and Parent Handbook (link can be found in the MAC Reads 2020 Recommended Resources List)

B3. Culture of integrity (p. 104)

What Should Not Be Included in Grades?

C. Effort, Participation, Attitude (pp. 104-107)

- Reflecting On...Grading Plans
- What should be noted in the discussion based on the Educator Contribution on pp. 106-107?

D. Late Work (pp. 108-113)

- Think About This...What message are we sending when timeframes are more important than learning?
- How might you create a Culture of Responsibility?
- Educator Contribution: Flexible Learning

E. Extra Credit and Bonus Questions (p. 114)

F. Grading Individuals (pp. 115-118)

G. No Fail policy (pp. 118-119)

4

Post-Reading Activity

Materials for this session: 1 large piece of flip chart paper per assigned group

Have each group A-G report out separately their end of reading 3-2-1 notes. Each summary will include:

- (3) An **overarching summary** of their assigned area of reading that includes 3 big ideas. (written on an 8 X 11 sheet of paper)
- (2) A **single sentence statement** that the group felt was important. (written on a sentence strip)
- (1) A **one-word summary** that represents the groups thoughts about the topic. (written on a large index card)

Create a Chart:

- Note similarities/differences in your grading practices compared to what was in the book. Brainstorm items that need to be considered for revision, or make note of things that should be added or adjusted in the current policies/practices, within your local context?
- All team members will write notes, on the three different color sticky notes, listing items they feel need to be considered for possible revisions:
 - (Yellow sticky notes) Revision to the current policy/practice,
 - (Green sticky notes) Addition to the current policy/practice, or
 - (Pink sticky notes) Adjustments to content from current policy/practices.

5

Review the Bottom Line

Read pages 119, 121

Guideline 3: Limit the valued attributes included in grades to individual achievement.

- Grades should be based on achievement (i.e., demonstration of the knowledge and skill components of the standards).
- Have a conversation around the following statement. Does the team agree with this statement or is there disagreement among the group?
 - Effort, participation, attitude, and other behaviors should be reported separately.
- Grades should be based on individual achievement.
 - What new information or ideas need to be added to the topics of discussion with all staff? How do we get more staff involved in this learning and collaborative work? Discuss who needs to be at the table for these future conversations.
 - Academic Dishonesty - after reading and discussing this part of the chapter and reviewing your district/school academic honesty policy, discuss what if anything your school/district needs to do to update their policy? Review as a group the **sample Academic Integrity Policy** mentioned in section 3 (Group B2) above. Make a list of next steps in action planning.
 - Review sample schedules to help design focused learning period schedules. (pp. 111-113)
 - Review problems with bonus questions/Kagen’s Critique of Group Grades (p. 115, and Figure 3.10 pp. 114-119)
 - Look at the “Think About This...” (p. 118) before documenting the tasks and conversations from this chapter.

Four Big Ideas

How does this chapter help emphasize the four “big ideas” woven throughout this book?

As you summarize your thinking and conversation from chapter 3, take time to make team notes around the four big ideas. Add important thoughts/take-aways from this chapter. This will allow you to document key ideas, general notes or things that need to be addressed

What’s the Bottom Line?

(From page 119)

What should be in grades?

Grades should include individual achievement only based on the published learning goals for the school/district.”

What should not be in grades?

- Mark penalties or bonuses.
- Effort, attitude, behavior, attendance, punctuality, tardiness, and group work, unless they are specifically stated in the standards for a grade or course. These should be assessed and reported separately (see also Chapter 10).

Additional Resources:

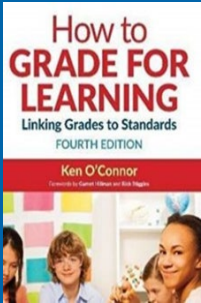
- “Three Key Questions on Measuring Learning,” by Jay McTighe. Educational Leadership, February 2018, pp 14-20.
- Learning Moment: Do you have a favorite report card format? If yes, describe.
- PodCast TG2: The Impact of Grades with Jeff Friedman Season 2 Episode 4
- Sample schedules to help with focused learning period schedule (p. 111-113)

Four Big Ideas

These four questions are the basis for all of the work as you learn more about how to effectively “Grade FOR Learning.”

- a. Purpose of grades: a communication tool about student academic achievement.
- b. Ensure grades are:
- c. Accurate
- d. Consistent
- e. Meaningful, and
- f. Support learning
- g. There is no “right” grade, just justifiable grades
- h. Students are self-directed learners, not grade point accumulators.

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Pages 122 – 149

How to Grade for Learning: Linking Grades to Standards

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“The standards movement...precipitated a renewed interest in what might be the most favorable course of action to prepare students to meet the expected standards,...What emerged was an almost unified belief that formative assessment practices were the most effective and efficient way to increase student achievement.,”

– Schimmer (2026, p.10)

“You must learn to fail intelligently...one fails forward towards success.”

Thomas Alva Edison, as quoted in Fullan (2005, p. 22)

“Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail better”

Stan Wawrinka, professional tennis player

Guideline 4: Sample Student Performance—do not include all scores in grades

- a. Do not include assessments used for formative purposes in grades---provide feedback using words, rubrics, or checklists, *not* scores.
- b. Include information primarily from a variety of summative assessments in grades.

1

Getting Started

This guideline is ultimately about making it clear that school is not just about the accumulation of points that become grades; it is about learning---a process that required student to understand that it is alright to make risk-free mistakes early in the learning because those early attempts will not “count.”

2

Activating Prior Knowledge and Chapter

Read pages 123–125

Using a **Venn diagram**, have participants write down everything they know or think they know about formative and summative assessment. As they read this chapter have them add to their thinking in a different color pen.

- What are the characteristics of both assessment types?
- What are characteristics that are specific to each assessment type?
- What surprises you about the information in the diagram?

Extended Learning Opportunity: Read the **MAC Learning Point: What do we mean by formative assessment?**

- Engage in a Sentence Symphony activity where each person takes an in-kind turn and reads the one sentence within the article that impacted them the most. Repeats are fine.
- When finished, ask for any reflections on what people shared.
- Return to the Venn diagram from the previous activity and add any additional information team may have gained by the reading.

3

Figure 4.2

Read pages 125-127

Take a minute to review 4.2 independently. Read the quote on page 127 in the first paragraph that begins, “I believe that everything...”

- Independently write Ken a response to that quote. Think about the following:
 - What are your beliefs concerning his statement?
 - How might your colleagues respond?
 - What obstacles can you predict if this belief was the norm in your building/district?
 - What changes would have to take place in teacher practice if this became the norm in your building/district?
 - How would students react?
 - Parents?
- Share your thinking with your group. Chart your teams’ ideas concerning challenges and possibilities.

4

Formative Assessment and Grading

Read pages 127-129.

Read the Educator Contribution by Hugh O'Donnell on page 127-128. Read the 7 Reasons for Not including Formative Assessment in Grades on page 129.

- How might each of these 7 reasons impact student learning?
- What other reasons might you suggest?

Watch the video clip **“Feedback on learning”** by Dylan Wiliam

- Have a dialogue around his thoughts.

5

Feedback

Read pages 129-137.

There is a lot in this section to stop and engage in dialogue around...here are a few ideas to extend thinking and engage in sharing:

After reading the “Think About This” on page 131:

- Watch the short YouTube video **“Effective feedback animation.”**
- Discuss its’ implications

At the bottom of page 134, prior to beginning the **“Role of Coaching”** section:

- Read the MAC **Learning Point: What is formative feedback? Why is feedback from the teacher important?**

After reading ***the Educator Contribution*** on pages 136-137:

- Watch the Teaching Channel video **“Making Feedback Meaningful** (may require a subscription).
- Complete the **“Here’s What; So What; Now What”** handout while viewing.
- Read the OFAST Article, **“6 Insights into Feedback”** and see what these ideas add to your group’s thinking and use of feedback

6

Role of Homework

Read pages 137-146.

Read the sections concerning The Role of Mistakes and Homework (pp 137-142).

- Dialogue around the implication generated by the work of Sackstein and Hamilton concerning homework.
- Introduce Figure 4.1 into the conversation. Are educators being purposeful when assigning homework? How can we become more intentional?

Figure 4.1

#13

Purposes of Homework

PREPARATION - introduces material to be presented in future lessons. These assignments aim to help students learn new material when it is covered in class.

PRACTICE - to reinforce learning and help students master specific skills.

EXTENSION - asks students to apply skills they already have in new situations.

INTEGRATION - requires students to apply many different skills to a large task, such as book reports, projects, creative writing.

Four Big Ideas

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4. Students are self-directed learners, not grade point accumulators.

What’s the Bottom Line?

In this chapter O’Connor contends that no scores from work assigned for the purpose of use within the formative assessment process should be included in final report card grades.

- What does this mean for your school/district in terms of grading policies?
- What might be some benefits and challenges of implementing this guideline?

Additional Resources

- “Courageous Conversation: Formative Assessment and Grading: Is education really all about the grade?” by Andrew Miller. *Edutopia*, December 15, 2011.
- “Should Formative Assessment Be Graded?” by Liana Heitin. *Education Week*, November 9, 2015.
- *Hacking Homework*, by Starr Sackstein and Connie Hamilton. x10 Publications, 2016.

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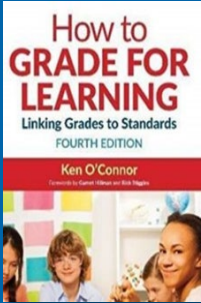
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STUDY GUIDE

CHAPTER 5: Emphasizing More Recent Evidence

MAC Reads 2020



Pages 150–168

How to Grade for Learning: Linking Grades to Standards

(4th ed.), By Ken O'Connor

“We say we want them all to learn; we don’t say we want them all to learn fast. or the first time. If some students have to work harder and take longer before they demonstrate proficiency, so be it. In the final analysis, if they demonstrate proficiency, we give them the grade that reflects that.”

Guideline 5: Grade in Pencil—keep records so they can be updated easily.

- Use the most consistent level of achievement with special considerations for the more recent information.
- Provide several assessment opportunities (varying in method and number). (p. 150)

1

Getting Started

Facilitator: write the following quotes on chart paper so everyone will be able to see

“What matters is how much learning occurs, not when it occurs.” (p. 151)

“We also should **honor individual differences by recognizing that students learn at different rates and do not always perform at their level on their first attempt, in a set time, or one method of assessment.**” (p. 151)

“My driver’s license doesn’t have stamped on it “Passed on the second attempt.” It looks the same as everybody who passed the first time.” –O’Connor; (p. 150)

“If students demonstrate achievement at any time that, in effect, renders past assessment information inaccurate, then you must drop the former assessment from the record and replace it with the new. To do otherwise is to misrepresent that achievement.” –Stiggins (2001, p. 431)

“Learning is a process that moves from limited to greater understanding over time, and this should be acknowledged when we summarize achievement.” (p. 163)

2

Turn & Talk

Read quotes above

Open the session by having partners “pair up” and do a “turn and talk” around the quotes listed in section 1. These quotes will provide a context for the group conversation around the purpose of this guideline.

- First, have the partners share their thoughts about these statements and discuss how these ideas connect to current actions within their educational system(s). (2 minutes)
- Next, have two sets of partners “square up” and continue the conversation. (2 minutes)
- Ask everyone to return to their original seats. Have an open dialogue as a group about these statements. (5 minutes) Make note of common themes that come up in the conversations.

3

Review & Reflect on Grading Plans

Read pages 154-156

Review and Reflect on Grading Plans in Figure 5.1 and have a conversation around the following reflection questions. (Facilitator or volunteer should document the comments from group conversation.)

- What problems do you see with these grading plans?
- What suggested changes would you make to each plan to align it with guideline 5?

Next have everyone silently read the Educator Contribution on pages 155-156.

- Go around the circle (group) and have each person share one key idea or statement they took away from the content of the “Educator Contribution” reading.
- Follow up with an open conversation about how these ideas align with or are in conflict with your current district/building grading practices.
- Make a **T-Chart** to note the ideas in the corresponding column. (See T-Chart handout in MAC Reads 2020 Resource folder for chapter 5.)

Next have a discussion and document the “now what” ideas or next steps that need to be added to a summary document for later use in action planning.

4

Jigsaw Reading/Sharing the Learning

Read pages 158-160.

After reading, each team will report out to the group the Most Important Point” (MIP) based on their assigned reading.

- The facilitator/scribe will document, on chart paper, the Most Important Points noted from each group's reading.

Group 1: Provide Several Assessment Opportunities & Practical Considerations (P. 156-157)

Group 2: Educator Contribution: Thoughts on relearning and reassessing for full credit (P. 158-160)

Group 3: Educator Contribution: Emphasizing More Recent Evidence (P. 160-162)

Group 4: Three reasons to reassess and what should happen before formal re-assessment opportunities p. 163-165

Group 5: Recognizing and dealing with opposition to reassessment p. 165-166

Facilitator Note: See the important point below. Bring these points up if it does not come up in the group conversation.

- Point out concern that R/R (i.e., redos/retakes) can sometimes send the wrong message. We need to ensure that we are not communicating the R/R options as something to improve grade, rather we need to ensure our communication and purpose around R/R is about documenting learning. We can't lose the focus that learning is the end goal!
- Keep these MIP notes to use later when recommending changes to your school/district's grading guidelines.
- As you work to advance your journey to develop common communication around Grading FOR Learning and developing "reassessment protocols/policies", complete the following activity to help facilitate ideas that need to be completed as a part of this process.

5

Reassessment Protocols/Policies

Read pages 164-166.

Discuss what considerations your team would recommend occur before reassessment opportunities were made available to students.

- Brainstorm ideas: Provide sticky notes for each person.
- Have individuals note ideas of what recommendations should be considered before reassessment opportunities occur.
- After writing notes on the sticky notes, place them on a board.
- Again, use the affinity mapping process to silently group notes in like columns by common themes.

6

Final Activity

Read pages 166-168.

Read "The Bottom Line" on p. 166 and the "A Reflection on the Guide" on page p. 168.

- Do a quick "whip-around" sharing out any final comments regarding the content found in Guideline 5.

- Make sure to keep team notes from Guideline 5. This information will be used to develop an action plan for potential revisions to your school's grading policies/procedures.

“My driver’s license doesn’t have stamped on it “Passed on the second attempt.” It looks the same as everybody who passed the first time.” p. 150

– Ken O’Connor, reflecting on having failed his driving test once

Four Big Ideas

As you summarize your thinking and conversation from chapter 5, take time to make team notes around the four big ideas. Add important thoughts/take-aways from this chapter. This will allow you to document key ideas, general notes or things that need to be addressed. This will be a place to record important key points and specialized notes that can be used as a planning tool for your team as you move forward with this work.

What’s the Bottom Line?

From page 166

Teachers should focus on reteaching and reassessing proficiency on learning goals as a normal classroom practice. However, when appropriate, students should be given a second (or more) chance to demonstrate what they know, understand, and can do on varied methods of assessment.

Grades should be determined by the student’s most consistent level of achievement, with emphasis on more recent evidence. This means that final grades almost never be determined by simply averaging the grades from several grading periods (e.g., adding the grades from Terms 1 through 3 and then dividing by 3). More recent information almost always provides a more accurate picture of student achievement.

The practical implication of this guidance is that teachers need to keep their records, on paper or a computer-in ways that can easily be changed or updated. ‘Grade in pencil’ may not always be literal advice, but it needs to be the mindset that teachers have about recording grades.

Four Big Ideas

These four questions are the basis for all of the work as you learn more about how to effectively “Grade FOR Learning.”

1. Purpose of grades:
a communication tool about student academic achievement.
2. Ensure grades are:
 - a. Accurate
 - b. Consistent
 - c. Meaningful, and
 - d. Support learning
3. There is no “right” grade, just justifiable grades
4. Students are self-directed learners, not grade point accumulators.

Additional Resources:

- **MAC Learning Moment:** How does more descriptive feedback and fewer summative marks promote learner progress and self-agency?
- **MAC Learning Moment Video:** You say that marks and grades are accurate and meaningful only when they are based on quality assessment and carefully recorded results. What implications does that have for teachers and school leaders? Watch the video to hear what a local expert has to say.

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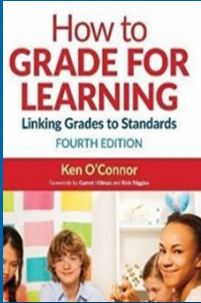
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STUDY GUIDE

CHAPTER 6: Determining Grades

MAC Reads 2020



Pages 169–196

How to Grade for Learning: Linking Grades to Standards

(4th ed.), By Ken O'Connor

“Data should inform, not determine, decisions.”

Consultant, The Hay Group, International Management Consultants

“Students never fail to turn in an assessment or drop out of school because they kept forgetting their pencil.”

–Hill and Nave (2009, p. 106)

Guideline 6: Determine, don't just calculate, grades.

- a. Crunch numbers carefully—if at all.
- b. Think “body of evidence” and professional judgement.

1

Getting Started

This guideline supports learning and encourages student success by having teachers question the widely accepted but seriously flawed practice of simply averaging marks to arrive at final grades.

2

Key Elements

Pre-reading activity

There are 5 Key Elements related to this guideline:

1. Recognize that averaging should have no place in the determination of grades and that grades should be determined by the use of logic rules.
2. Understand the limitations of the mean and, for any required number-crunching, examine the appropriateness of each of the measures of central tendency.
3. Consider whether and, if necessary, how various components included in grades should be weighted.

4. (Re)consider the use of zeros.
5. Consider how to include level/rubric scores in grades.

Place each of the Key Elements on large chart paper. Divide the team into five smaller groups or pairs.

- Have each group spend 2-4 minutes at each element poster brainstorming ideas, concerns, possibilities and challenges related to that element.
- Write their thinking on the chart paper.
- As you read the chapter, come back to the charts and provide additional information related to the ideas, concerns, possibilities and challenges.

3

Key Element: Read & Review

Read pages 172-193 (in groups)

Using the same groupings (or asking participants to pick the element they are most intrigued by) have each of the five groups further examine one of the 5 elements and read the corresponding pages from the chapter.

Group 1: Key Element 2 — Read Pages 172-176

Group 2: Key Element 3 — Read Pages 176-177

Group 3: Key Element 4 — Read Pages 177-186

Group 4: Key Element 5 — Read Pages 186-191

Group 5: Key Element 1 — Read Pages 191-193

As you read the chapter, come back to the charts and provide additional information related to the ideas, concerns, possibilities and challenges.

Four Big Ideas

As you summarize your thinking and conversation from chapter 6, take time to make team notes around the four big ideas. Add important thoughts/take-aways from this chapter. This will allow you to document key ideas, general notes or things that need to be addressed. This will be a place to record important key points and specialized notes that can be used as a planning tool for your team as you move forward with this work.

What's the Bottom Line?

The practical implication of this guideline is that teachers need to use common sense and professional judgement when determining grades. Depending on mechanical, numerical calculation won't cut it.

If Guidelines 2 and 5 are applied consistently, Guideline 6 is almost not needed.

- What are your thoughts about these two statements?
- What more might need to be done in your school/district to ensure the consistent application of guidelines 2 and 5?

Additional Resources

- "It's Time to Stop Averaging Grades," by Rick Wormeli. AMLE Journal (previously published in Middle Ground Magazine, Oct. 2012).
- Grading: Why You Should Trust Your Judgment," by Thomas Guskey and Lee Ann Jung. Educational Leadership, April 2016, Vol. 73 No. 7. ASCD
- *On Your Mark*, by Thomas Guskey. Solution Tree Press, 2015.

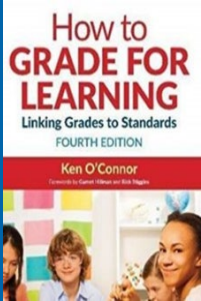
Four Big Ideas

These four questions are the basis for all of the work as you learn more about how to effectively "Grade FOR Learning."

1. Purpose of grades: a communication tool about student academic achievement.
2. Ensure grades are:
 - a. Accurate
 - b. Consistent
 - c. Meaningful, and
 - d. Support learning
3. There is no "right" grade, just justifiable grades
4. Students are self-directed learners, not grade point accumulators.

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Notes:



Pages 197–208

How to Grade for Learning: Linking Grades to Standards

(4th ed.), By Ken O'Connor

“An assessment-literate professional educator knows how to gather dependable evidence of student learning using high-quality assessments and how to use the assessment process and its results either to promote students learning or to certify it, depending on the context.”

—Stiggins (2017, p. 64)

Guideline 7: Use accurate assessment(s), and properly record evidence of achievement.

- a. Meet standards for accurate assessment: clear targets, clear purpose, and should design (which requires that assessments be well written, use appropriate target-method-match, use appropriate sampling, and avoid bias and distortion).
- b. Record and maintain evidence of achievement (e.g., tracking sheets, spreadsheets, gradebooks-hard copy and electronic-portfolios-hard copy and electronic, etc.) (p. 197)

1

Getting Started

Guideline 7 requires accurate assessment: “Marks and grades are accurate and meaningful when—and only when—they are based on quality assessment.” (p. 198)

2

Components of Accurate Assessments

Read page 198.

Reflect on the components of accurate assessments: 1) Clear purpose(s), 2) Clear and appropriate targets, and 3) Sound design.

3

First Turn/Last Turn

Read pages 198-205 (in groups)

Divide members into eight groups. Use protocol (First Turn/Last Turn) to share information and then document the learnings from each group's assigned reading.

Group 1: Stating a Clear Purpose (p. 198-199)

Group 2: Setting Clear and Appropriate Targets (p. 199)

Group 3: Sound Design/Well-Written (p. 200)

Group 4: Matching Method with Target (p. 200; chart p. 201)

Group 5: Selecting Appropriate Samples for the Learning Domain (p. 200-201)

Group 6: Controlling Bias & Distortion (p. 202)

Group 7: Time (p. 202-204)

Group 8: Keeping Records (p. 205)

Reminder: It is important that each group document the knowledge, key points, and essential understandings as a part of the jigsaw activity. This information will be used in Activity 3.

Activity: After the jigsaw reading and sharing of ideas, reflect on the following:

- What evidence do we have that we are addressing each of these components in the assessments we are creating and/or are using?
- What are we doing right? What do we need to celebrate?
- What changes do we need to make? What areas do we need to learn more about?

4

Connections to 5 Keys to Quality Classroom Assessment

Facilitator Led- page 199

Each participant will make notes in their book, on p. 199.

Individuals should make notes of the corresponding Guidelines that match each of the 5 Keys to Quality Classroom Assessment. The facilitator will guide the participants in writing the specific guideline(s) listed below next to each of the 5 Keys in their book. (p. 199)

Key 1: Guideline #4

Key 2: Guideline #1 and #2

Key 3: Guideline #7

Key 4: Requires Guidelines #3, #5, #6

Key 5: Guideline #8

As a follow-up, have a group conversation around any noticing/wonderings, or aha's they made as it relates to the content in the chart and/or the corresponding connections to the Guidelines of this book.

Share out ideas as a group.

5 Summary Documents

Each team will create a summary document of the Specific Key assigned to them. Teams will use information gained from everything read so far from the introduction through chapter 7. The summary will serve as a means to synthesize the information from each of the chapters into documents that can facilitate the learning of others, strengthen overall understanding of the entire team, and will guide future work.

- Divide the participants into four equal groups.
- Task: each group will create either:
 - A written summary document based on the specific key assigned to their group.
 - A presentation that summarizes of the specific key assigned to their group.
- Format each presentation or summary in a way that can be used to share with the rest of the building/district staff, at a later date.

Reminder: include connections to ideas learned from the previous chapters around the specific assigned key and corresponding Guideline(s).

Group 1: Key 1: Guideline #4

Group 2: Key 2: Guideline #1 and #2

Group 3: Key 3: Guideline #7

Group 4: Key 4: Requires Guidelines #3, #5, #6

DO NOT assign Key 5: Guideline #8 (This Guideline has not yet been read).

6 Closing Activity

To finish today's session:

- Have a conversation around the content in the "What's the Bottom Line" (p. 205). Discuss what needs to be addressed. Talk about how the team can help move this work forward.

Four Big Ideas

As you summarize your thinking and conversation from chapter 7, take time to make team notes around the four big ideas. Add important thoughts/take-aways from this chapter. This will allow you to document key ideas, general notes or things that need to be addressed. These notes can be used as a planning tool as your team as you move forward with this work.

What's the Bottom Line?

“Accurate assessment and written electronic record-keeping are essential if grades are to reflect student achievement. The following are the practical implications of Guidelines 7.

- Teachers need to be aware of and apply each standard of accurate assessment.
- Schools/Districts should have assessment policies that affirm a commitment to quality assessment.
- Teachers need to keep records on paper or on the computer - not in their heads.” (p. 205)

Additional Resources:

- Learning Point: Start with a purpose when choosing an assessment
- Learning Point: What are learning targets?
- Learning Point: What are learning progressions
- Learning Point: What constitutes a high quality, comprehensive, balanced assessment system?
- Learning Point: Reliability and validity: How do these concepts influence accurate student assessment?

Four Big Ideas

These four questions are the basis for all of the work as you learn more about how to effectively “Grade FOR Learning.”

- a. Purpose of grades:
 - a. a communication tool about student academic achievement.
- b. Ensure grades are:
 - a. Accurate
 - b. Consistent
 - c. Meaningful, and
 - d. Support learning
- c. There is no “right” grade, just justifiable grades
- d. Students are self-directed learners, not grade point accumulators.

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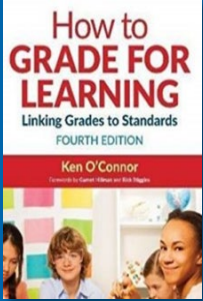
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STUDY GUIDE

CHAPTER 8: Involving Students in Grading & Assessment

MAC Reads 2020



Pages 209–236

How to Grade for Learning: Linking Grades to Standards

(4th ed.), By Ken O'Connor

“We must constantly remind ourselves that the ultimate purpose of education is to have students become self-evaluation. If students graduate from our schools still dependent on others to tell them when they are adequate, good, or excellent, then we have missed the whole point of what education is about.”

– Costa and Kallik (1992, p. 280)

Guideline 8: Discuss and involve students in assessment, including grading, throughout the teaching/learning process.

1. Ensure (age appropriately) that students understand how their achievement will be assessed and how their grades will be determined.
2. Involve students in the assessment process, through self-assessment, reflection, and goal setting; and in communicating about their achievement and progress.

1

Getting Started

This guideline requires that the assessment plan and how grades will be determined are discussed age appropriately with students throughout the learning process in each class.

2

Developing assessment capable, visible learners

Using handouts 1, 2, 3 in <http://bit.ly/MAC-Reads-Resources2020>

- Read the first part of the article **Handout 1: “Developing Assessment Capable Learners.”**
 - Have participants brainstorm ways teachers can engage students in each of the 6 Characteristics of Assessment Capable Learners
- Read the second part of the article **Handout 2:** or watch the one-hour webinar by Nancy Frey & Douglas Fisher: Developing Assessment Capable Visible Learners. at the following url: <https://video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?fr=yhs-itm-001&hsimp=yhs->

[001&hspart=itm&p=developing+assessment+capable+learners#id=3&vid=a5d5c7dace79566cbb8a386e61d0abdf&action=click](#)

- Stop after each characteristic and add ideas to the pre-brainstorm activity.
- Read **Handout 3: Learning Point—*What is learner agency?*** As you read, complete the **Triangle-Square-Circle Reflection**.
- Discuss as a group.

3

Four Approaches to Improving Student Understanding

Read pages 209-212.

Dialogue around the 4 approaches teachers can utilize to improve student understanding on page 211.

- How might this impact learning in the classroom?
- How would the strategies discussed in the Developing Assessment Capable Visible Learners activity align with and support these approaches?
- Discuss the content in the chart “Curriculum Standards” and “Reporting Standards.”

4

The Role of Learning Targets

Read handout 4; then read pages 213-220.

Before reading pages 213-220:

- Read **Handout 4: “Knowing Your Learning Target”** by Susan Brookhart
- Discuss, using a discussion protocol.

After Reading Pages 213-220

- Review Figure 8.2 and ask the group to share their thoughts.
 - How might this type of planning for instruction make assessment and grading easier?
 - Develop and adopt a Student Grading Bill of Rights for your school/district.

5

Using Feedback

Use handouts 5 & 6; then read pages 220-234.

Prior to Reading pages 220-234

- Divide team into two groups.
 - Have group A read **Handout 5: Learning Point, *What is self-assessment?***
 - Have group B read the **Handout 6: Learning Point, *What is feedback from peers?***
- As they independently read, have everyone write down 3-4 key ideas from the articles.
- Have all the A team meet in a large group to synthesize their 3-4 key points; same for Group B

- Partner up one A with one B and have them share with each other the 3-4 key points.
- Together review the two **OFAST Resources in Handout Packet 7**. How might they be utilized?

Read pages 220-234. After reading:

- Review the Guiding Questions on Page 220
 - Where am I going/
 - Where am I now?
 - How can I close the gap?
- Discuss how these questions should guide teaching, learning and assessment in our schools/classrooms?

Four Educator Contributions

- Break into 4 groups
- Assign each group one of the four Educator Contributions on Pages 221-230.
 - Dr, Lorna Earl
 - John Kerr
 - Matt Townsley
 - Denine Leberge
- Discuss

Four Big Ideas

As you summarize your thinking and conversation from chapter 8, take time to make team notes around the four big ideas. Add important thoughts/take-aways from this chapter. This will allow you to document key ideas, general notes or things that need to be addressed. This will be a place to record important key points and specialized notes that can be used as a planning tool for your team as you move forward with this work.

What's the Bottom Line?

It is imperative that students begin to understand that assessment is something that is done with them not to them. Teachers can encourage this thinking by involving students in the assessment and grading process through self-assessment, reflection, and goal setting.

- Survey your student population. How are they feeling about assessment and grading?
- How can you begin to encourage teachers to engage in these student involving activities?

Additional Resources:

Articles

- "Assessment Through the Students Eyes," by Rick Stiggins. *Educational Leadership*, May 2007, Vol. 64, No. 8. pp. 22-26 Rick Stiggins
- "Seven Keys to Effective Feedback," by Grant Wiggins. *Educational Leadership*, Sept 2012 Vol .70 No. 1. pp. 10-16
- "Feedback that Fits" by Susan Brookhart. *Educational Leadership*, Dec 2007/Jan 2008, Vol. 65 No. 4. pp. 54-59

Books

- *Developing Assessment Capable Visible Learners*, by John Hattie, Douglas Fisher, and Nancy Frey. Corwin 2016.

Four Big Ideas

These four questions are the basis for all of the work as you learn more about how to effectively "Grade FOR Learning."

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4. Students are self-directed learners, not grade point accumulators.

- *How to Give Effective Feedback to Your Students, Second Edition*, by Susan Brookhart. ASCD 2017
- *Learning Targets: Helping Students Aim for Understanding in Today's Lesson*, by Connie Moss and Susan Brookhart. ASCD 2012

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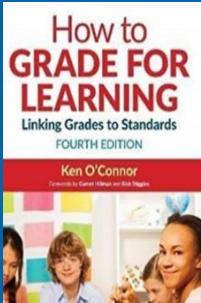
Notes:



STUDY GUIDE

CHAPTER 9: Grading Issues

MAC Reads 2020



Pages 237 – 254

How to Grade for Learning: Linking Grades to Standards

(4th ed.), By Ken O'Connor

“Are our education policies designed for the convenience of adults or for the education of our children?”

– Daniel Pink and Azzam (2014, p. 15)

Grading Issues: Grading Exceptional Students

Grading exceptional students is one of the most difficult issues for teachers to navigate. It is really important to pay attention to **Guideline 1: Basing Grades on Standards**; and **Guideline 2: Using Performance Standards**, as you discuss ways as to grade exceptional students.

1

Getting Started

This chapter examines other grading issues that were not directly addressed in the other grading guidelines. These items include issues such as: “grading exceptional students, legal issues related to grading, competency-based learning/grading, and a number of external factors that impact grading - computer grading programs, grade point averages (GPAs), college grading and admission, and athletic eligibility.” (p. 237)

2

Pre-Reading Task and Summary Assignment

Read pages 237-245

For the pre-reading activity, ask members to pre-read pages 237-245 and bring back 5 ideas/points (written down) that resonated with them.

These ideas will be shared aloud with the team during the face to face meeting.

- During the meeting, the facilitator will document the items shared and will try and group similar ideas together.
- These ideas can serve as key points to guide future action planning.

3

External Influences on Grading Practices

Read bottom paragraph of page 245

Facilitator or volunteer will read aloud the bottom paragraph, External Influences on Grading Practices (p. 245)

Jigsaw Activity: Read and document grading Issues that the team needs to keep in mind for future action planning.

The following items are things that we must consider but they can't drive everything we do as we work to create thoughtful grading policies and practices.

- As you read, document 3 to 4 key points that are important to note based on your specific reading section. These points will be shared with the rest of the group.
 - Computer Grading Programs (p. 246-247)
 - Grade Point Averages (p. 247-248)
 - College Grading and Admission (p. 249-253)
 - Athletic Eligibility (p. 253-254)
- After the reading and the documenting of ideas are completed, bring everyone back in a circle for a conversation around these key ideas.

4

First Turn/Last Turn

Assign roles of facilitator and scribe for this activity.

The facilitator will begin by selecting one person from each of the four teams to create a “fishbowl” situation. Each person selected, from the various teams, will sit in the middle of the circle, while all other members will form a larger circle around the newly formed inner circle.

- The facilitator will ask one person to share out one of the items they noted. The facilitator will explain that the person sharing will name the key point but they cannot add any commentary to the stated point.
- Next, members in the outside circle will be asked to comment on the identified item with no cross talk. Everyone in the outside circle can offer a comment, but again with no cross talk.
- Then, after everyone in the outside circle has commented on the identified item, the initial group who named the item shares their thinking about the item shared. Therefore, the team member who noted the item gets the last turn in this round of the conversation.
- Continue the same process, adding items generated from the team, for as many rounds as possible. Rotate who is selected from each team to be in the inside circle, as well as ensure that least one/two items have been shared from each team.
- At the end gather the ideas noted from each team to use for future action planning.

5

External Influences on Grading Practices Summary

Read pages 59-64.

If time permits, have each person create a bumper-sticker (12 words or less) summarizing the key point(s) from the chapter on grading issues.

Special Note: By doing this summary activity, it will provide the facilitator with concrete ideas as to where the team is in their thoughts and feelings. This information will help the facilitator plan forward.

Four Big Ideas

As you summarize your thinking and conversation from chapter 9, take time to make team notes around the four big ideas. Add important thoughts/take-aways from this chapter. This will allow you to document key ideas, general notes or things that need to be addressed. This will be a place to record important key points and specialized notes that can be used as a planning tool for your team as you move forward with this work.

Additional Resources:

- The Communication Challenge Of Standards-Based Reporting, by Thomas R. Gusky. Phi Delta Kappan Dec. 2004.
<https://tguskey.com/wp-content/uploads/Grading-9-The-Communication-Challenge-of-Standards-Based-Reporting.pdf>

Four Big Ideas

These four questions are the basis for all of the work as you learn more about how to effectively “Grade FOR Learning.”

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 - d. Support learning
3. There is no “right” grade, just justifiable grades
4. Students are self-directed learners, not grade point accumulators.

The Study Guide and all associated resources are available at all times at:
bit.ly/MAC-Reads-Resources2020

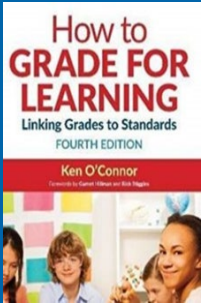
Notes:



STUDY GUIDE

CHAPTER 10: Communicating Student Achievement

MAC Reads 2020



Pages 255 – 284

How to Grade for Learning: Linking Grades to Standards

(4th ed.), By Ken O'Connor

“Effective communication about assessment results means that the information we share helps (all) users make sound decisions that improve learning.”

– Stiggins (2017, p. 82)

Guideline 1: Communicating Student Achievement

The key to an effective communication system is being clear about the purpose of the system and each of its parts.

1

Getting Started

This chapter supports the idea that having an effective communication system in place means we use several methods to form a coherent and informative system that meets the needs of all stakeholders.

2

Pre-Reading Activity

Bring in copies of the current school/district report cards. Break the group into three subgroups based on their levels: Elementary, Middle School, and High School.

- Using the handout **T-Chart Report Cards**, have each group dialogue and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each levels report cards.
 - What is working?
 - What is not?
- Add into the conversation the “Think About This” (Quote by Buck in the blue box on page 257.)

3

Report Cards

Read pages 255-269.

Elementary and Middle School concentrate on pages 258-264

- Review the suggestions, examples and educator contribution and discuss what changes your school/district might want to make to your report cards.
- Are there any characteristics on these examples that might work for your school/district?

High School concentrate on pages 265-268

- Review the suggestions, examples and discuss what changes your school/district might want to make to your report cards.
- Are there any characteristics on these examples that might work for your school/district?

SEL Strengths

- Both Groups review should the SEL Strengths in the blue box on page 269.
- How might these standards be potentially represented on your reports cards?

4

Parent Portals/Online Gradebooks and Informal Communications

Read pages 269-271 (including Educator Contribution).

Read the Educator Contribution by Arthur Chiravalli, and then review his **Letter to Students and Parents on Feedback and Grades** (in MAC Reads 2020 Resources folder).

- Dialogue the process Arthur has designed and implemented in his classroom.
- How might this fit with your own reporting practices?

Watch the **Essential Grading Practice** presentation video of Arthur discussing his grading and reporting practice in more detail.

5

Parent/Teacher/Student Conferencing

Read pages 271-276

After reading pages 271-276, engage in one or all of these activities:

- Figure 10.8-- Dialogue how this continuum may fit into your conferencing practice.
- Figure 10.9—How might the practice of having parent's review pieces of student work prior to conference impact your practice and increase parent and student involvement.
- Educator Contribution and Example in Appendix G—Student involved conferencing has many benefits for students, parents and teachers. Spend some time examining those benefits and determine how they may impact the reporting and communicating system within your school/district.

6

Portfolios

Read pages 276-281

As a group, review the Educator Contribution. Discuss the various elements and characteristics of using portfolios the author Ian Landy presents in this piece.

- How might the use of portfolios help “round out” the reporting and communicating system within your school/district?
- What policies might need to be implemented to make portfolios a viable communication tool?
- What professional learning might teachers need to engage in to make this method a viable option?

Four Big Ideas

Complete the chapter, pages 281-284.

As you summarize your thinking and conversation from chapter 10, take time to make team notes around the four big ideas. Add important thoughts/take-aways from this chapter. This will allow you to document key ideas, general notes or things that need to be addressed. This will be a place to record important key points and specialized notes that can be used as a planning tool for your team as you move forward with this work.

What’s the Bottom Line?

Grade are merely symbols; to provide real information, they should be seen as only a part—probably a small part—of our communication system.

- How can a revised achievement reporting system help make this statement a reality?
- What might your school/district need to do to make this happen?

Additional Resources:

- *Get Set, Go: Creating a Successful Grading and Reporting System*, by Thomas Guskey. Solution Tree Press 2020

Four Big Ideas

These four questions are the basis for all of the work as you learn more about how to effectively “Grade FOR Learning.”

1. Purpose of grades: a communication tool about student academic achievement.
2. Ensure grades are:
 - a. Accurate
 - b. Consistent
 - c. Meaningful, and
 - d. Support learning
3. There is no “right” grade, just justifiable grades
4. Students are self-directed learners, not grade point accumulators.

Notes:

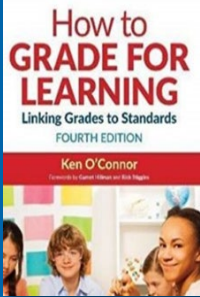
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STUDY GUIDE

CHAPTER 11: Implementing Changes in Grading & Reporting

MAC Reads 2020



Pages 285 – 303

How to Grade for Learning: Linking Grades to Standards

(4th ed.), By Ken O'Connor

“None of this is easy, or guaranteed.

It is system change, it is messy,

It is flawed and vulnerable.

But it is worth the effort, if you can get it right.”

– Gerry Varty, Facebook post, April 5, 2017

Goal of this Chapter

This chapter provides multiple educator contributions which share wisdom, skills, and processes to help lead this change within your local context.

1

Getting Started

“Traditional grading and reporting has been the way it was for most adults, especially for those who were successful in the traditional system (as most teachers were), so suggesting that there is a need to change a familiar system that has high stakes for many students and parents “ain’t easy. In fact, it is usually extremely difficult, and it needs informed and capable leadership and a clear plan for how to get to the desired system—that is, standards-based grading (and reporting). (p. 285)

2

Contributions from Educators

Recommended reading BEFORE leading this book study

Chapter 11 includes eight educator contributions that highlight the work that these educational leaders have already done to lead the work of Grading FOR Learning. The ideas shared, in this chapter, will help you frame the work and can provide additional ideas to support your thinking around discussions and activities you may want to do as a part of a book study with the key people within your educational community. If you have read this chapter before leading this work, you

could use the knowledge and ideas from these leaders to help you purposefully backwards design the activities and processes you could use within your local context.

3

Shared Reading Activity

Read pages 286-302 (by group)

The reading selections below should be divided up and assign to individuals or teams to read. Teams will be asked to share the highlights of the content, based on their assigned reading, as a part of this jigsaw reading activity.

- Educator Contribution, Lori Jeschke: **Leading Change** (p. 286-287).
- Educator Contribution, Michael Lees: **Changing Towards Standards-Based Reporting at the International School at Havana** (p. 288-289).
- Educator Contribution, Becca Lundahl, EdD; Professional Learning and Leadership Consultant, Heartland AEA 11, Johnston, Iowa: **How Do We Even Start All of This?** (p. 289-294).
- Educator Contribution, Michelle Kuhns, Director of Learning and Dr. Michelle Remington, Associate Superintendent American Schools of Dubai: **Leadership Dispositions and Considerations in Moving to a Standards-Based System** (p. 295-296).
- Educator Contribution, Derek Oldfield, Assistant Principal, Wirt County High School, West Virginia: **Providing Learning Experiences for Teachers** (p. 297).
- Educator Contribution Garnet Hillman, Instructional Coach, Carusi Middle School, Deerfield, Illinois: **Standards-Based Grading Implementation** (p. 297-299).
- Educator Contribution, Lois McGull, Director of Academics, Balmoral Hall School, Winnipeg, Manitoba: **Changing Assessment and Communication of Student Achievement** (p. 299-301).
- Educator Contribution, Douglas Reeves, Founder Creative Leadership Solutions, Boston Massachusetts, **Dealing with the Fear of Grading for Learning** (p. 301-302).

4

Post-Reading Activity

Have a conversation as a group around the following items. Use the following questions to draw out similarities and differences between the various educator contributions.

- Discuss the following:
 - What were some of the common themes across these contributions?
 - Which of the contribution(s) did you find most useful and why?
 - If we were going to use 3-5 of these “contributions” as an activity with the whole staff, which would you recommend and why?

5

Other Ways of Organizing Learning Goals/Standards

Read pages 59-64.

After reading this section:

- Make a list of key points from this section that need to be documented to guide the action planning work. Be as specific as possible to support the future work.

Four Big Ideas

(from p. 303)

“From these seven contributions and my own twenty-plus years of experience helping schools and districts move to more effective grading and reporting practices, it seems to me that the following are the critical things that must be done for the implementation of change in grading and reporting to be successful.

1. Communicate, communicate, communicate with every method you have available.
2. Ensure that there is clarity and consensus about the purpose, which should be to create a culture of learning.
3. Determine the appropriate balance of pressure (policies/procedures and timelines) and support (studying, reading, talking, and professional development).
4. Plan with the end in mind, but be willing to adjust.
5. Utilize diverse committees/task forces/teams, but be transparent about which decisions will be made by administration and which decisions will be reached by consensus.
6. Be clear about what will change and what will not change.”
7. Be courageous and persistent.”

Four Big Ideas

These four questions are the basis for all of the work as you learn more about how to effectively “Grade FOR Learning.”

1. Purpose of grades:
a communication tool about student academic achievement.
2. Ensure grades are:
 - a. Accurate
 - b. Consistent
 - c. Meaningful, and
 - d. Support learning
3. There is no “right” grade, just justifiable grades
4. Students are self-directed learners, not grade point accumulators.

Additional Resources & Support Materials:

- Learning Point: Grading for Learning Guidelines for Supporting Student Success.
- Learning Point: How Do We Design Assessment Systems for Modern Learning?
- Measuring What Matters (Parts I and II), by Jay McTighe and Grant Wiggins, 2010.
- Teachers Going Gradeless (TG2--an international online community)
- MAC Learning Moment: Ken O'Connor — What issues most often derail implementation of effective grading practices, and how do we avert these issues?
- MAC Learning Moment: Arthur Chiaravalli — How do I bring others on board when starting to use grading practices that they might not be used to?
- MAC: Learning Moment: Arthur Chiaravalli — Practitioner Strategies to Grade Less

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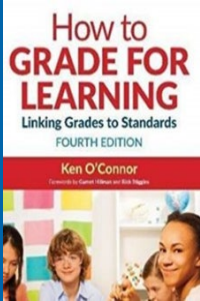
Notes:



STUDY GUIDE

CHAPTER 12: The Way Ahead

MAC Reads 2020



Pages 304 – 314

How to Grade for Learning: Linking Grades to Standards

(4th ed.), By Ken O'Connor

"Grading for learning is....rather like bombing for peace."

– Kohn (2011)

1

The Way Ahead

Read pages 304-305.

Read pages 304 and 305.

Take some time to think and reflect on the quote at the top of page 305.

How will it impact the journey to Grading for Student Learning in your school/district?

2

First Turn, Last Turn

Read pages 305-313.

Read the text silently to yourself.

- As you read, highlight 2-3 items.

After all participants have finished reading, invite one person to share an item he or she highlighted without commenting.

- Group members comment in round-robin fashion about the item. No Crosstalk!
- After everyone has commented, the initial person then shares his or her thinking about the item, and takes the last turn, making the final comments.

Repeat the pattern around the table.

3

What's My Thinking Now?

Refer to page 314.

Read through "What's my thinking now?"

- Activity 1: Answer each question independently, then share with one another.
- Activity 2: Share answers as a group using a school/districtwide perspective and use the Handout in Appendix H (pp329-332) to extend your thinking.

Four Big Ideas

As you summarize your thinking and conversation from chapter 12, take time to make team notes around the four big ideas. Add important thoughts/take-aways from this chapter. This will allow you to document key ideas, general notes or things that need to be addressed. This will be a place to record important key points and specialized notes that can be used as a planning tool for your team as you move forward with this work.

Four Big Ideas

These four questions are the basis for all of the work as you learn more about how to effectively "Grade FOR Learning."

1. Purpose of grades:
a communication tool about student academic achievement.
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Notes:

MAC Reads 2020 Resource Recommendations by Chapter

Note: Chapter Handouts and meeting Protocols are available at [MAC-Reads-Resources2020](https://bit.ly/MAC-Reads-Resources2020)
(<https://bit.ly/MAC-Reads-Resources2020>)

Introduction:

- Read the article [A Case Against Grades](#) by Alfie Kohn.
- Growth vs. Fixed Mindset: T-Chart
- Growth vs. Fixed Mindset: Handout
- Watch Ted Talk by Eduardo Briceño: [When performing gets in the way of improving](#)
- Listen to TG2 Podcast: [The Impact of Grades](#), with Jeff Friedman (Episode 13)

Chapter 1: Basing Grades on Standards

- Learning Point: [What are Learning Targets?](#)
- Learning Point: [What Are Learning Progressions](#)
- MAC: Learning Moment: [How do we achieve grading practices that support high quality teaching and assessment?](#)

Chapter 2: Using Performance Standards

- Learning Point: [Criterion- and norm-referenced score reporting: What is the difference?](#)
- Learning Point: [Models of proficient achievement: Why are they important?](#)
- Grading for Learning: [Guidelines for Supporting Student Success](#)
- [Georgia Performance Standards \(GPS\)](#)

Chapter 3: Grading Individual Achievement

- 3-2-1 Protocol (See “Protocols” folder at bit.ly/MAC-Reads-Resources2020)
- [Hillview Middle School Academic Integrity Policy](#) (p. 11-13)
- “Three Key Questions on Measuring Learning,” by Jay McTighe. Educational Leadership, February 2018, pp 14-20. <http://bit.ly/2V0b4RR>
- Learning Moment: [Do you have a favorite report card format? If yes, describe.](#)
- PodCast TG2: [The Impact of Grades with Jeff Friedman](#) Season 2 Episode 4;
- [Sample schedules to help with focused learning period schedule](#) p. 111-113

All MAC Reads 2020 handouts and meeting materials can be found online:
bit.ly/MAC-Reads-Resources2020

Chapter 4: Sampling Student Performance

- Venn diagram (see Chapter 4 folder at bit.ly/MAC-Reads-Resources2020)
- Learning Point: [What do we mean by formative assessment?](http://bit.ly/LP-FormativeAssessment) (<http://bit.ly/LP-FormativeAssessment>)
- Dylan William video: [Feedback on learning](#)
- YouTube Video: [Effective feedback animation](#)
- MAC Learning Point: [What is formative feedback? Why is feedback from the teacher important?](#)
- [Making Feedback Meaningful](#)
Here's What; So What; Now What" handout (see Chapter 4 folder at bit.ly/MAC-Reads-Resources2020)
- [6 Insights about Feedback](#) (see also Chapter 4 folder at bit.ly/MAC-Reads-Resources2020)
- **NEW:** MAC Learning Moment: [What teacher assessment practices are prioritized in an effective Assessment for Learning model, and how do these practices position students?](#)
- ["Courageous Conversation: Formative Assessment and Grading: Is education really all about the grade?"](#) by Andrew Miller. *Edutopia*, December 15, 2011.
- ["Should Formative Assessment Be Graded?"](#) by Liana Heitin. *Education Week*, November 9, 2015.
- *Hacking Homework*, by Starr Sackstein and Connie Hamilton. x10 Publications, 2016.

Chapter 5: Emphasizing More Recent Evidence

- T-Chart for activity (in MAC Reads 2020 resources folder—Chapter 5)
- MAC Learning Moment: [How does more descriptive feedback and fewer summative marks promote learner progress and self-agency?](#)
- MAC Learning Moment: [You say that marks and grades are accurate and meaningful only when they are based on quality assessment and carefully recorded results. What implications does that have for teachers and school leaders?](#)

Chapter 6: Determining Grades

- ["It's Time to Stop Averaging Grades,"](#) by Rick Wormeli. *AMLE Journal* (previously published in *Middle Ground* magazine, Oct. 2012).

All MAC Reads 2020 handouts and meeting materials can be found online:

bit.ly/MAC-Reads-Resources2020

- [“Grading: Why You Should Trust Your Judgment,”](#) by Thomas Guskey and Lee Ann Jung. *Educational Leadership*, April 2016, Vol. 73 No. 7. ASCD

Chapter 7: Quality Assessment and Keeping Records

- Learning Point: [Start with a Purpose When Choosing an Assessment?](#)
- Learning Point: [What are Learning Targets? \(Also used in Chapter 1\)](#)
- Learning Point: [What Are Learning Progressions \(Also used in Chapter 1\)](#)
- Learning Point: [What Constitutes a High Quality Comprehensive System?](#)
- Learning Point: [Reliability and Validity: How Do These Concepts Influence Accurate Student Assessment?](#)

Chapter 8: Involving Students in Grading and Assessment

- Handout 1: “Characteristics of Assessment Capable Learners” Part 1”
- Handout 2: “Characteristics of Assessment Capable Learners” Part 2”
- Handout 3: Learning Point—What is Learner Agency?
 - Triangle-Circle-Square Reflection
- Webinar by Nancy Frey & Douglas Fisher: [Developing Assessment Capable Visible Learners.](#)
- Handout 4: “Knowing Your Learning Target,” by Susan Brookhart
- [Effective Grading Practice:](#) Event archives and resources from MAC event featuring Ken O’Connor (www.michiganassessmentconsortium.org/event/effective-grading-practice-ken-oconnor-and-arthur-chiaravalli/)
- Handout 5: Learning Point—What is Self-Assessment?
- Handout 6: Learning Point—What is Feedback from Peers?
- Handout Packet 7: OFAST Insights About Self-Assessment; and OFAST Peer Feedback
- **MAC Learning Moment with Jill Willis:** [What is the implied theory of action for teacher assessment capability within an effective Assessment for Learning model?](#)

Chapter 9: Grading Issues

- [“The Communication Challenge Of Standards-Based Reporting,”](#) by Thomas R. Guskey, a professor in the College of Education, University of Kentucky, Lexington. *Phi Delta Kappan*, Dec. 2004.

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Chapter 10: Communicating Student Achievement

- **Handout:** T Chart Report Cards
- [Sample Letter to Students and Parents on Feedback and Grades](https://goo.gl/Kb6iYD) (by Arthur Chiaravalli) (<https://goo.gl/Kb6iYD>)
- [Effective Grading Practice](#): Watch the full presentation video of Arthur Chiaravalli discussing his grading and reporting practice during a MAC event.
- *Get Set, Go: Creating a Successful Grading and Reporting System*, by Thomas Guskey. Solution Tree Press 2020

Chapter 11: Implementing Changes in Grading and Reporting

- **Learning Point:** [Grading for learning: Guidelines for supporting student success](#)
- **Learning Point:** [How do we design assessment systems for modern learning?](#)
- [Measuring What Matters \(Parts I and II\)](#), by Jay McTighe and Grant Wiggins, 2010.
- [Teachers Going Gradeless](#) (TG2—an international online community).
- **MAC Learning Moment:** Ken O'Connor — [What issues most often derail implementation of effective grading practices, and how do we avert these issues?](#)
- **MAC Learning Moment:** Arthur Chiaravalli — [How do I bring others on board when starting to use grading practices that they might not be used to?](#)
- **MAC Learning Moment:** Arthur Chiaravalli — [Practitioner Strategies to Grade Less](#)

Chapter 12: The Way Ahead

- None

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