



Summary Handout

A Systems Perspective:
Assessment Practice to
Accelerate learning

GELN Learning Map	Prioritizing and Assessing Standards to Accelerate Student Learning
Title	Interview with Ed Roeber — <i>A Systems Perspective: Assessment: Assessment Practice to Accelerate Learning</i>
Recorded/updated	July 30, 2020
Featuring	Ed Roeber, Director of Assessment, MI Assessment Consortium. Interviewed by Kathy Dewsbury-White, president/CEO MAC.
Learning Map Connection	The <i>explain</i> portion of the Learning Map provides perspectives about how to return to school this fall in a meaningful and productive way, using instructionally embedded assessment practices aligned to priority standards. This 15-minute interview features a systems perspective that prioritizes the use of assessment to support achievement and learning.
Question	What are the best types of assessment to use when school starts this fall?
Response	The companion question is “where should we start this fall?” In other words, do we need to assess spring 2020 content that likely did not get introduced? We should assess current grade level prioritized standards and use the formative assessment process and instructionally embedded performance assessments to accelerate learning forward. Knowledge and skills needed will be revealed as we go forward; in this way, we don’t risk exacerbating the lack of students’ opportunity to learn. This means we would not invest precious time this fall on measures that are not designed to support acquisition of content and skills on <i>current year</i> grade level prioritized standards.
Question	If we don’t test kids at the start of the school year, how will we know what they missed last year? How will we know how to help them move forward?
Response	It is not through tests—or a battery of tests—that we discover what students missed. We will come to understand what students missed

	<p>when we engage in teaching and then we respond as needed. This means using the formative assessment process (FAP). By FAP, I mean a planned process that identifies and uses learning targets, makes these clear to students, understands learning progressions, plans to elicit evidence and provides descriptive feedback; then the student and teacher can act to adjust their instructional and learning tactics. By using the formative assessment process as a part of daily practice we catch what's missing and respond very quickly.</p>
Question	What is an instructionally embedded task? How do they differ from screeners or diagnostic assessments?
Response	<p>Screeners tend to be very short and focus on discrete skills. A diagnostic will delve more deeply into discrete skills or lack thereof. Instructionally embedded tasks would be used with current year prioritized standards; if weaknesses are revealed, teachers might at that time to determine that a diagnostic measure is needed. A performance task asks students to create, do, or produce something, making skills quite evident. A performance assessment is meaty and permits demonstration of complex concepts and skills. We evaluate student performance on the task using a scoring tool such as a rubric. Instructionally embedded means we are assessing in the course of classroom instruction (online, face-to-face, or remote). Teachers gain insight about student strengths when they use instructionally embedded assessments.</p>
Question	Is a purchased assessment package sufficient to help us accelerate student learning forward?
Response	<p>Packages often include a screener and an interim benchmark. Typically, these are standardized measures designed to provide predictive information and/or emphasize discrete content lacking that is identified by the vendor for the test. If the assessment is not aligned to standards and doesn't provide instructionally useful information, it isn't helpful. I hope we don't delay engaging with students this fall to support their learning by testing them on last year's content or commercially prioritized standards represented by test items. This process will widen and deepen learning loss for children.</p>
Associated references/resources	<p>Lake, Robin & Olson, Lynn (editors) <i>Learning as We Go: Principles for Effective Assessment During the COVID-19 Pandemic</i>. July 2020. The Evidence Project at CRPE. https://www.crpe.org/publications/learning-we-go-principles-effective-assessment-during-covid-19-pandemic</p>