

# Effective Online Assessment

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# The agenda for today...

- What is assessment? Why assess?
- What are the key characteristics of effective assessment?
- What are some commonly used assessment strategies?
- Why online? Is there a difference?
- What are the pros and cons of online assessment?
- What are some of the workable strategies?
- What are the features of Vista that can support online assessment?



# Definition of Assessment

A systematic basis for making inferences about the learning and development of students ... the process of defining, selecting, designing, collecting and interpreting information to promote learning in students

the evaluation or estimation of the nature, quality, or ability of someone or something :  
the assessment of educational needs

all activities that teachers and learners undertake to get information that is used diagnostically to alter teaching and learning



# Why assess?

A necessary evil...

Assessment should be used to give feedback and get feedback.

It's often forgotten that the results of an assessment tell us something about our teaching as well as about the students' learning.



# Assessment Formats

## Diagnostic Assessments

Prior to learning

Identify learner strengths & weaknesses

## Formative Assessments

During learning

Guide an individual student's progress

Improve the curriculum

## Summative Assessments

After learning

For high-stakes evaluation, grading, & certification



# Key Characteristics

- Outcomes focused
- Ongoing (Formative vs Summative)
- Focuses on higher order cognitive skills
- Authentic
- Metrics (Normative vs Criterion)
- Variety/Diverse methodologies
- Others...?



# Common Strategies

Assessment can include:

- Individual Assignments
- Group Projects
- Quizzes / Tests / Exams
- Surveys, Non-graded Quizzes
- Discussion
- Teacher Observation



# Why online?

Natural outcome of increasing use of ICT

Meeting student expectations for more flexibility

A means of diversifying assessment tasks

Broaden the range of skills assessed

Generate efficiencies of scale that ease workload

Discussion:

Is online assessment improving the assessment of student learning?



# Online Assessment: Pros

- Central Repository
- Saves Time for scoring and evaluating tests
- Instantaneous Feedback
- Instantaneous Scoring Results
- Convenient Delivery
- Automatic Statistics & Tracking
- Quicker Assessment of students' progress and deficiencies
- Faster, Easier Detection of Plagiarism?



# Online Assessment: Cons

- Initial Implementation may be challenging
- Faculty & Staff Need Time to Learn New Tools
- Software Upgrades May Require New Training
- Unplanned or Unexplained Technical Problems
- Significant Up-Front Development Time
- Lower barriers to Cheating or Plagiarism
- More Difficult Detection of Cheating
- More Variation / Inconsistency in Student Environments



# WebCT Assessment Tools

## Assignment Tool

Controls submission dates & times

Repository for file attachments

## Quiz & Survey Tool

Question Bank allows 5 types of Q's:

Multiple Choice / Matching / Calculated /

Short Answer / Paragraph

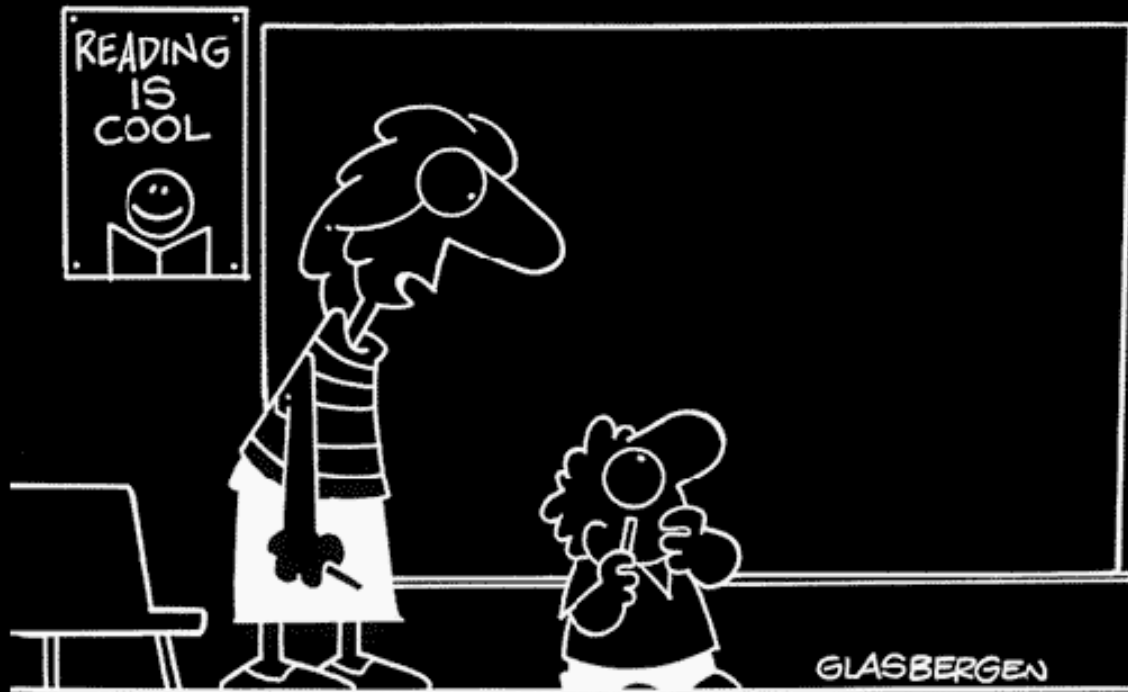
## Discussion Tool

Public, group, & anonymous discussion



# and a final thought...

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**"There aren't any icons to click. It's a chalk board."**

