WHAT IS TESTING FOR?

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Nowadays the process of teaching includes using such method as testing. Nonstandardized tests evaluate students' progress in mastering specific information. Many teachers usually make or select these tests, so they're also known as teachers' tests [1, p.243].

Scientists called psychometricians make standardized tests. Educators select and give them. Standardized tests fall into five groups:

**Learning-ability tests** consist of a standard set of tasks or questions. They measure skills students have learned both in and out of school. Although they're sometimes called intelligence tests, these tests don't show how smart your students are. They merely assess students’ ability to solve problems typical in schoolwork. Such tests also are called intelligence, or IQ, tests. Disagreement exists over what influences intelligence, how to measure it, and even how to define it. One theory holds that seven distinct intelligences exist. These include linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligence, musical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal (the capacity for self-understanding) [2, p. 270].

Learning ability tests are an unavoidable part of education. The results of such tests are less than perfect in measuring ability or predicting success, however. In designing an intelligence test, for example, psychologists try to use questions on subjects familiar to all test takers. But this cannot be done perfectly. As a result, every intelligence test measure experience to some degree [1, p.388-389].

**Aptitude and interest tests** reveal specific abilities, interests and preferences. Some of these tests measure clerical, mechanical, or verbal attitude. Others point to talents in perception and reasoning.

**Achievement tests** gauge how much students have learned about a particular subject. Schools use achievement tests more than any other kind of test. Some of these tests are designed specifically to pinpoint problems students have in learning. Other achievement tests report results in detail, reflecting how each student displayed each skill and met each objective. This gives teachers a clear picture of each student’s strengths and weaknesses. Such a test shows not only that a student is struggling in language arts, but precisely where the problem lies. These detailed results also highlight difficulties the entire class shares, alerting teachers that they need to revise particular lessons [1, p.393].

**Competency tests** measure the knowledge and ability in specific areas. They show whether the student have climbed to a higher level of understanding and skill in a particular subject. They also reveal whether the person know basic facts or have mastered basic skills.

**Personality tests**examine the psychological makeup and characteristics. They attempt to identify some of many attitudes, likes, and dislikes that contribute to somebody’s personality [2, p.394-397].

In making or selecting tests, the teacher must decide which kinds of questions to use and how to present the test. For instance, in **objective tests**, students select or supply specific, short answer. Common ones are: alternate-response (such as true-false questions), multiple-choice, fill-in, short answer, and matching.

On **essay tests**, students express answers in their own words. There are two kinds of essay questions: 1. Extended-response question give the freedom to express insight and to show how much students know. 2. Restricted-response questions limit the answers in some way, such as length, topics to be covered, or time available.

Sometimes, **oral tests** are the best way to measure skills. They assess students’ ability to express and organize ideas, to speak clearly, to converse in another language, and to understand what they hear.

Some course goals require producing a certain result, or product. The teacher may evaluate students’ progress with a **performance test**, which shows how good their skills are. Performance test are typical in speech, drama, social adjustment, reciting, and game learning [2, p.278-281].

There are some items used in any test. Alternative-response questions are often called “hole-in-ones” because we are given a choice of two answers, one of which is right. Multiple-choice is the objective item teachers use most. Depending on the teacher’s goals and the subject, basic multiple-choice items usually consist of an incomplete statement or a question, followed by three or more possible choices. A matching item on a test usually has two lists of facts or principles. A student must match each entry in the first list with a word, symbol, phrase, or sentence in the second list. Answers may be marked with numbers or letters. Fill-in items require supplying words, names, numbers, dates, or symbols missing from an incomplete statement. A blank space usually is provided within or next to the item. Such items measure the ability to understand concepts and real facts. Like fill-ins, short-answer items require to recall information to supply an answer. The only difference between them is that a short-answer item is a question, while a fill-in is an incomplete statement. To answer an open-book item, students must search to find the answer using reference materials – books or notes. It can be used as homework assignments.

Literature

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2. Karnes, M. The preschool/primary gifted child / M. Karnes, L. Jonson // Journal for education of the gifted. – 1991. – no. 14(3). – P. 267-283.