Purposes of assessment

Why do we assess our students? What are the purposes?

• Assessment *of* learning / summative
• Assessment *for* learning / formative
• Assessment *as* learning / formative
Purposes of assessment

Assessment of learning / summative

- **Purpose:** to measure and show competency; for managerial / accountability towards society / employers / keep up standards in academic world / show grade-level, degrees

- **It’s about:** selection, grading, certification, progression, professional recognition, maintaining standards

- **When:** at the end of a task, unit, program. Interim and final exams. Grades mark transitions in a course and bring closure to it.

- **Role teacher:** use evidence of student learning to make judgments on student achievement against goals and standards; give grades (accurate, fair, based on valid evidence; important because of the impact)

- **It needs:** justification for a particular assessment at a particular moment; justification for what you assess, how and how you decide about the grades
Assessment *for learning / formative*

- **Purpose:** educational, diagnostic; helping students to learn and improve; helping students to achieve the learning goals
- **It’s about:** feedback, diagnosis, motivation, guidance, learning support (doesn’t need a mark)
- **When:** whenever useful; during teaching process
- **Role teacher:** diagnose problems and learning needs; provide feedback; clarify intended outcomes and standards; advice how to improve; enhance motivation
- **It needs:** tools to diagnose; clear expectation what has to be learned and standards; interaction; differentiated teaching strategies fitting the needs
Purposes of assessment

Assessment as learning / formative

- **Purpose:** learning to learn, learning students to monitor their own learning process, to learn metacognitive skills
- **It’s about:** self and peer assessment, reflection, students setting own goals, stimulating responsibly for learning
- **When:** during teaching process
- **Role teacher:** model and teach skills for self assessment; provide guidance for monitoring learning processes and to deal with uncertainty; help them setting goals and develop criteria for good practice
- **It needs:** models of good practice and quality work; interaction; safe learning environment and support system
Purposes of assessment

*What makes an assessment “summative” is not the design of the test or assignment but the way it is used.*

Assessment focuses on gathering information about student achievement to make instructional decisions. Grading is an end-point judgment about student achievement. (Tomlinson & McTighe, 2006)

Resource and quick overview:
PP-links: Assessment of, for and as Learning. Rethinking Classroom Assessment with Purpose in Mind.

Short videos: Assessment For Learning vs. Assessment Of Learning; What is Assessment?