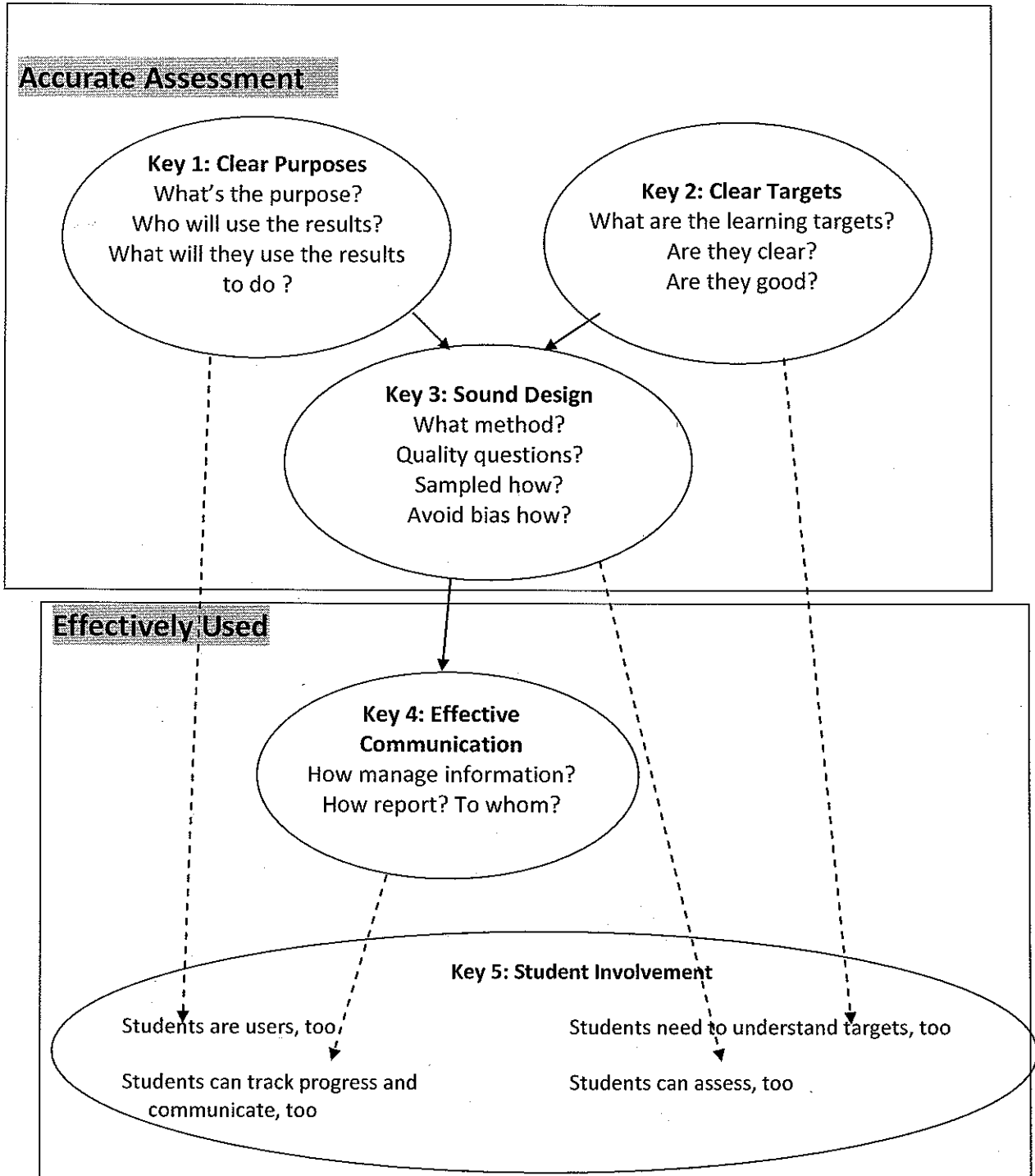


Keys to Quality Classroom Assessment



Questions to Ask of Classroom Assessments

Key 1: Clear Purposes. Does the assessment author have a clear picture of how the assessment results will be used and by whom?

- Is it clear who will use the results and how they will be used? Is the distinction between assessment *for* and *of* learning clear?
- How do the purposes in this assessment fit into a bigger plan that addresses both assessment *for* and *of* learning over time?

Key 2: Clear Targets. Does the assessment author have a clear picture of what she or he is trying to measure?

- Are the student learning targets stated and easy to find?
- Are the student learning targets focused and reasonable in number?
- Are they clear? Would teachers agree on what they mean?
- Are they appropriate? Do they represent the heart of the discipline and are they worth the instructional and assessment time devoted to them? Is there a clear connection to standards?
- Do the stated learning targets reflect a bigger plan to cover all important learning targets over time? Do they reflect a bigger plan across grade levels—previous and next learning—in a continuous progress curriculum?

Key 3: Sound Assessment Design. Has the assessment developer translated the learning targets into high quality assessments that will yield accurate results?

Choosing the Best Assessment Method

Has the assessment method been chosen consciously to fit the learning targets to be assessed and the purpose for the assessment?

- What types of learning targets are being assessed?
- What are the assessment methods used?
- Are the assessment methods best for the learning targets being assessed? (*Best* is a balance between *most accurate* and *practical*.)

Finding and Devising Quality Tasks and Questions

- Are the assessment questions or exercises written well?
- In the case of performance assessment, is the scoring guide (rubric) clear and does it cover the most important aspects of what makes a quality rubric?

Sampling

Does the assessment gather enough information for the user to make a generalization about level of student learning on the target? If not, is this assessment part of a bigger plan to gather sufficient information across time and/or assessments?

Avoiding Potential Sources of Bias and Distortion

Do you notice anything in the assessment or the way the assessment is carried out that might not allow a student to be able to demonstrate adequately what he or she knows and can do? This includes having unclear targets or unclear purposes, selecting an inappropriate assessment method, having problems with tasks and rubrics, and inadequate sampling. It also includes problems with context factors and students.

Key 4: Effective Communication. Has the assessment developer planned for managing information from the assessment adequately and reporting it in ways that will meet the needs of users?

- Has communication been planned as part of the assessment process?
- Do teachers record assessment information accurately over time and combine it appropriately for reporting?
- Will the users of the results understand them and find them useful?

Key 5: Student Involvement. Are students involved in the assessment process?

- Would student-involvement components be useful in this case? If so, are they present? This can include making learning targets clear to students; giving descriptive feedback to students; involving students in self-assessment, tracking progress, and setting goals; and involving students in communicating about their learning.
- Does the student involvement in this assessment reflect a bigger plan for involving students in their own assessment?