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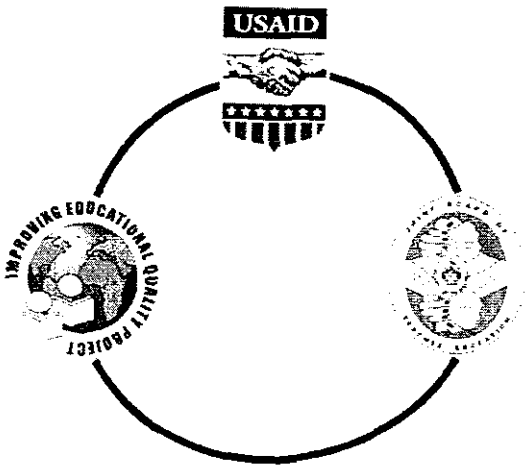
An Assessment Manual for Lecturers in Jamaican Teachers' Colleges:

A Companion Document to the Curriculum Guides for Language Arts, Mathematics, Science & Social Studies



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INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MANUAL

In the anthology of case studies, *Pathways to Quality 2002*, the Jamaica report records that "the call for curriculum revision in Jamaican Primary schools was formally documented in 1996 when the results of an island wide curriculum study was shared with stakeholders" (p.83). The study recommended changes to include, among others, improvements in teacher assessment competencies (p.85). Subsequent reforms in the assessment policies and processes in the Jamaican primary system took place concurrently with the revision of the National Curriculum, placing much emphasis on alternative assessment procedures/ strategies.

In response to the revised primary curriculum, the Improving Educational Quality (IEQII)/Jamaica Project, funded by the United States Agency For International Development (USAID), initiated the revision of the Joint Board of Teacher Education (JBTE) primary program offered by Jamaican teachers colleges in identified areas, viz: Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. Throughout the revision process, attempts were made to reduce the emphasis on an examination-oriented program and transform it into one which reflects the teaching and assessment strategies espoused by the national primary curriculum.

As a strategy for strengthening of the project and to reinforce the staff development achieved through the series of workshops for teacher-educators, this assessment manual was developed. The decision to focus on this area was influenced largely by the baseline study undertaken at the start of the project in which teacher-educators identified the need for support in this area and by feedback that the consultants received in the follow-up site visits. The need for such a manual is not surprising as college lecturers are recruited by colleges as subject specialists and, therefore, not all will have had formal training in assessment.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Individuals who provided valuable inputs and insights on the manual include Joy duPlessis (IEQ consultant), Lorna Fraser (JBTE Project Co-ordinator). Donna Chin Fatt (Assessment consultant), Bernetta Porter (Student Assessment Unit –Ministry of Education Youth and Culture), Ceva McPherson-Kerr, Clement Lambert, Marceline Collins-Figueroa and Villeitha Davis-Morrison (Institute of Education, UWI) and lecturers from Bethlehem Moravian College, College of Agriculture, Science and Education, The Mico College, Moneague Teachers' College, Sam Sharpe Teachers' College and St. Joseph's Teachers' College.

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1 A NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The new *Revised Primary Curriculum* for grades 1-6 is in the process of implementation in schools throughout the country. It is expected that all schools in the country will be using the new curriculum by 2004. The Revised Primary Curriculum has made some dramatic shifts in terms of teaching methodology, assessment, content arrangement, purposes and focus. With a focus on developing literacy and numeracy skills through integrated units that use the aesthetics as a vehicle for learning, the curriculum is expected to pose challenges for primary teachers. Although extensive training of in-service primary teachers has and is taking place, pre-service training has only begun to address the needs of the revised primary curriculum in its program. As part of the developments in teacher education that will cater for the changes in primary education, the JBTE Primary Program is being revised. With the assistance of the Improving Educational Quality II Project, courses in Science, Mathematics, Language Arts, and Social Studies have been revised to include a greater emphasis on learner-centered and activity oriented teaching and learning, integration, numeracy, literacy and continuous assessment.

Major changes in the area of assessment of student progress and achievements have taken place worldwide. The assessment policies and practices of the primary phase of education in Jamaica have responded to these global developments by revising assessment for primary schools. Primary teachers will be taking on a greater responsibility for assessing students at the classroom level. At the same time tests and exams have shifted in their focus from summative instruments to formative and diagnostic tools. In keeping with the developments in the primary phase, it is expected that the revised curriculum for the colleges will cater to the preparation of primary teachers for these new roles and responsibilities. In order to support colleges in developing and implementing the

revised college curriculum, IEQ was asked to assist in the area of classroom assessment at colleges.

During the period August 28 – September 1,2000 A team made up of Lorna Fraser, IEQ11/Jamaica, Project Coordinator, Joy du Plessis, IEQ11/Jamaica Classroom Assessment Advisor and Rose Thomas, IEQ11/Jamaica Project Manager visited the six colleges that train teachers in the Primary Program in order to assess the needs of college lecturers in assessment techniques.

Methodology

At each college, the team asked lecturers to complete a one page survey which focused on the assessment techniques used in college classrooms, their beliefs about assessment policies, fairness, professional development in the area of assessment and constraints to successful implementation of a variety of classroom assessment techniques. The survey also asked college lecturers to suggest areas for professional development in assessment. The surveys were collected at the colleges during each visit.

In addition to the survey, at each college the team interviewed small groups of college lecturers to get a more in depth look at the issues that college lecturers face in the area of assessment as well as an understanding of the kinds of assessment methods college lecturers use in the present teaching. The total number of college lecturers who participated in the survey and discussions was eighty-six. (See Appendix A for a copy of the College Assessment Survey.)

The team also interviewed small groups of student-teachers at each college. They were asked about issues regarding assessment practices and policies, whether they felt prepared to assess students in the field, how and what they have learned about classroom assessment strategies as well as their own participation in assessment at the college level. The estimated number of student-teachers participating in the discussions was 175. At each site, principals or other administrators were involved. This

chapter presents the major findings of the study and lists recommendations

Findings

1. There is a general concern about the negative influence external exams have on teaching and learning.

One of the most pressing assessment concerns among the student-teachers and college lecturers we talked to was the influence exam pressure has on teaching and learning. This was perhaps the single most powerful factor in the implementation of classroom assessment. Although most student-teachers and college lecturers recognise the learning potential of exams and their standardising function across colleges, most feel that the ubiquitous exams are a deterrent to learning. There is also an implicit acknowledgement of the inappropriateness of the exam as a major instrument in the measurement of student-teacher competency.

Student-teachers described a number of aspects of the exam-heavy system they believed were deterrents to learning. They often felt reluctant to do assignments that they did not feel were directly related to exam content because they thought it would be a "waste of time". They felt that college lecturers often rushed through material in class in order to "cover the syllabus" before the end of the year. In some cases, this meant forfeiting the opportunity to participate in practical exercises designed to foster deep understanding. More commonly, student-teachers mentioned "swatting" or memorising for exams to have the knowledge slip from their minds only hours after the exam paper was handed in.

When asked whether they thought the exams were fair, the majority of student-teachers indicated that they were. When probed further, however, most indicated that exam anxiety, illness, social or family problems experienced prior to exams, prevented many of the student-teachers from performing at their peak. In addition, student-teachers reported that exam questions often don't

give them a chance to express what they know and the occasional appearance of new or unknown content on exams can throw off a student-teacher's mark considerably.

Many student-teachers expressed a belief in "real world" assessments of their knowledge and skills. They suggested performance- based and authentic assessment tasks such as those assigned as course work as more appropriate indicators of what they know and can do.

Student-teachers' and college lecturers' attitudes towards course work are strongly influenced by exam pressure, according to the participants in the needs assessment. College lecturers report that the pressure to teach to the test was overwhelming; particularly in those courses with high exam weightings (e.g. 60%). Many college lecturers see the value in including course work beyond those tasks prescribed in the curriculum but feel pressured not to assign additional tasks for assessment purposes. College lecturers expressed feelings of restriction and frustration at not being able to involve student-teachers in authentic learning tasks that could potentially be assessed. Pressure to "cover the syllabus" prevented many teachers from including relevant assessed tasks in their courses. One college lecturer expressed her sentiments this way: *"Teachers feel they have to stifle their creativity and those of their students because of the demands of the external exams."*

Another college lecturer described how there was little time in the exam driven curriculum for reflection. She felt that whenever classroom tasks were assigned, they were done with the "external assessment tools hanging over our heads". In other words, the college lecturer is usually weighing out whether to provide authentic learning experiences that require lengthy involvement of student-teachers or to take the short cut and provide direct instruction of the content.

A third college lecturer expressed this sentiment about the influence of exams on course work: "*More performance assessment is needed and less focus on written course work pieces. Since exams form the basis for the final assessment, some students feel that performance*

assessment is a waste of time. The exam means of assessment needs to be revisited."

Many college lecturers indicated that if they did not provide tasks beyond those outlined in the courses, student-teachers struggling with the content would have no route to success. By providing student- teachers with alternative course assignments, college lecturers felt they were providing more opportunities for their student-teachers to learn.

Student-teachers struggled with the same dilemma. A few of them expressed the opinion that some of the course work is meaningless because it does not contribute to the preparation for the exams. Other student- teachers felt that the course work offered them some measure of control over the assessment. In course work, student-teachers had the sense that they could spend unlimited amount of time and energy on it if they chose, whereas exams were framed within a finite time and content area, some of which were likely to be unknown by the student-teachers. Student-teachers also noted that course work allowed them more chances to succeed than exams.

Student-teachers and college lecturers both described the weighting of course work in relation to exams as problematic. The majority of college lecturers and student-teachers favored a higher percentage of course work accounting for student grades. In courses where the weighting was 60%/40% (exams/course work), they generally suggested a reversal, and a few suggested 30%/70%.

While the overwhelming majority of both students and teachers found the exam pressure problematic, only a few college lecturers and student-teachers suggested elimination of the exams from the program. One college lecturer, calling for the elimination of exams, expressed this perspective:

> *More autonomy should be allowed for lecturers to assess students, i.e., the JBTE final common exam should be discontinued and more college-based assessment be employed. JBTE could assume a role of examining quality of assessment as well as professional development for lecturers. Different*

lecturers have different philosophies and backgrounds, and a common exam interferes with how and what a lecturer does in a course.

It is clear that a major shift away from an emphasis on exam-oriented assessment, toward more authentic and classroom-based assessment, is vital toward improving teaching and learning.

2. There is a widely shared perception that the college lecturers are overworked.

In addition to exam fervor experienced by the faculty and student-teachers, most college lecturers felt that their workloads prevented them from effectively implementing a variety of classroom assessment techniques. The refrain repeatedly heard during the team's discussions with college lecturers was " we don't have the time." With course loads of 18 hours/week, class sizes ranging from 50-450, and an average student load for a semester at roughly 110[1], college lecturers feel overburdened. Most college lecturers also reported teaching more than one subject in more than one cohort (i.e., years one, two, three and four at Mico). Most college lecturers reported having the additional responsibility of supervising practice teachers in the field while classes are ongoing at the college. College lecturers feel that the heavy workloads influence their performance. One college lecturer commented: *"When there are more students to teach, there should be considerations about the number of hours the lecturer gets. Too many students and too many hours will affect the performance."*

Some courses were also described by college lecturers as overloaded with content. Many felt that the primary science course, in particular, contained too much matter to be taught in the allotted time. This assertion was backed up by student-teachers who indicated that science content was often not completely covered in a course prior to exams. Some student-teachers indicated that lecturers

[1] Figures are only rough estimates as they were reported by college lecturers from memory.

reverted to direct instruction after initially involving them in lab work and other such interactive activities. It was felt that practical activities reduced the time available for completing courses.

3. College lecturers expressed a need for training in a variety of student-teacher assessment techniques.

College lecturers were asked to tick all the assessments in the list that they have used in the past year. Eighty-six college lecturers teaching at the six colleges in primary education programs participated in the survey. Table 1.1 is a summary of the usage of assessment techniques over the past year.

The most commonly used assessment techniques were practical tests, role-plays, research reports and speech/drama/debates. College lecturers discussed the use of rubrics but in most cases, the team was unable to see rubrics used in the development of assessment tasks. The use of rubrics seemed to take on a wide range of uses and forms through focus group discussion. Some referred to rubrics as rating scales while others differentiated between holistic and analytic rubrics. Only one college lecturer reported asking for student input in developing rubric criteria.

It is informative to note that some of the assessments listed in Table 1.1 are interpreted diversely by college lecturers. Even though an item was checked as having been used in the past year, follow up discussions in focus groups with college lecturers indicated very few of them used a systematic procedure for gathering feedback from student-teachers about individual lessons. For example, student assessment of college lecturer lessons was used by 31 of the college lecturers in the past year. Student-teachers in the focus group interviews, however, indicated little or no participation in lesson evaluation that provide direct feedback to the instructor.

While college lecturers exhibit a wide range of knowledge of assessment, the need for further strengthening in the area of assessment techniques was

recognised by many of them. They also acknowledged that they could benefit from sharing ideas among themselves. No college had in place professional development programs aimed specifically at assessment although some of the colleges had opportunities for professional exchange through seminars and report-back sessions by faculty who have attended workshops.

TABLE 1.1: *Assessment techniques used by College lecturers*

Technique	Number of Teachers Using Technique	Percentage
Open ended story problems	10	11.6
Paired learners	10	11.6
Invented dialogue	11	12.8
Concept maps	14	16.3
Flow charts	15	17.4
Checklists	20	23.3
Pretests	23	26.7
Journals	29	33.7
Models	31	36.0
Interviews	31	36.0
Student assessment of college lecturer	31	36.0
Student assessment of course	32	37.2
Student self assessment	36	41.9
Peer assessment	39	45.3
Case Studies	36	41.9
Portfolios	37	43.0
Speech/debate/drama	42	48.9
Research report	56	67.5
Role plays	56	65.1
Practical tests	60	69.8

4. Student-teacher participation in assessment is limited to course evaluations, some input on criteria development for assessment tasks, and informal discussions.

There is evidence of some student-teacher participation in assessments of courses at the end of the semester and year but results indicated fewer opportunities for student participation in self-assessment, peer assessment, and in the construction of criteria for grading assessments. Only one college lecturer indicated that student-teachers were asked to participate in developing assessments or determining an assessment scheme for the course.

Two colleges have developed a system whereby students evaluate courses at the end of the semester. Information from the evaluations goes to college lecturers to inform future developments in the course. Student-teachers were critical of this approach to lesson evaluation since evaluation results tended to benefit the next group of student-teachers who will be enrolled in the course. Further, student-teachers did not have confidence in the effectiveness of the course evaluations because they were often asked to complete the assessment forms at the end of long examination sessions when they had little interest in completing the forms.

Administrators in one college reported using the evaluations as a check on course implementation. Neither student-teachers nor college lecturers reported systematic assessment of lessons or mid course reviews by students. Ongoing discussions among student-teachers and college lecturers and other indicators of student performance were the main modes of gathering information on student reactions to lessons.

Student self-assessment was used very infrequently. Student-teachers indicated that in some unusual cases they were asked to give themselves a grade and justify it Only a small minority of college lecturers asked student-teachers to self-grade. Subjects where self-grading was evident included Arts and Crafts and Social Studies.

Peer assessment was commonly mentioned for subjects such as Mathematics and Language Arts, but seemed limited in scope to marking essays and compositions and mathematical problems. It was also common for student-teachers to assess each other when giving oral presentations in language arts and during microteaching. Few college lecturers, and no student-teachers were able to explain in depth how the marks contributed to a student's overall grade. It was suggested that much of the peer assessment is not for purposes of assigning marks and does not contribute to another student's course work.

In general, assessment practices were found to limit student participation and self-directed learning. One college lecturer echoes other college lecturers' sentiments:

> *Assessment practices of college lecturers can be improved if students are given more opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning. Too much emphasis is placed on prescribed examinations and so students are not allowed enough time for self-directed learning. If they are allowed more time to explore, experiment and discover through the trial and error method, they would achieve more and assessment would be more meaningful. Many times students have ideas and not given the time to express them, as college lecturers feel constrained to complete the prescribed syllabus in preparation for prescribed examinations and so the student ideas and opinions are hardly recognised or used.*

5. Opportunities for teaching about assessment by reflection on the assessment methods used in teaching in the subject areas are lost because teaching about assessment is limited to methods courses.

Most college lecturers in subject content areas said they did not discuss assessment with their student-teachers beyond explaining criteria for a particular topic, and the weighting of course work and exam work. Although

some college lecturers said there is not enough time to do this reflection-on-practice with student-teachers, most said it would be useful for student-teachers. Most college lecturers agreed that modeling good assessment practice by college lecturers is helpful to student-teachers but they did not make their assessment practices and theories explicit to their students.

6. Feedback

In general, students described college lecturers as supportive, committed and knowledgeable teachers. There were concerns, however, that some college lecturers did not provide sufficient or appropriate feedback to them about their work. General comments on student work were usually positive but most students expressed a need for more explicit comments both written and oral.

The students valued constructive and specific comments directing improvement. Students indicated that they received insufficient and sometimes inappropriate feedback from college lecturers. Timeliness of receiving exam results was an issue for many student-teachers.

7. Transparency of Assessments

Eighteen point six percent (18.6%) of college lecturers reported using assessment schemes for their courses and many indicated that they informed students of the criteria for assessing student work prior to its completion. In addition, 30.2% of college lecturers reported using rubrics. Student-teachers also reported that for some of their course assignments they knew what the criteria were for grading a particular piece. Often student-teachers were made aware of the criteria through discussions with the teacher prior to the work on the task. Informing student-teachers in writing of the criteria for assignments was less common.

When asked whether they were aware of how a particular assignment, piece of course work or other task

was going to be graded prior to starting out on the tasks, most students said they were made aware of what the teachers' expectations were prior to commencing a project or assignment. A concern was raised by a number of students that the expectations or criteria for performance on particular tasks were not always explicit. They expressed a need for more explicit, written criteria for their work.

Many student-teachers were aware of the grading system used by the JBTE. Few student-teachers knew the written policy of the JBTE, obtaining most of their knowledge through college lecturers.

8. Assessment as a neglected area of practice.

Some college lecturers showed an extensive knowledge of assessment practices and theories; and the majority felt confident in their abilities to implement assessment (see Statement 7, Appendix A). Many college lecturers, however, exhibited a willingness to admit that assessment is a neglected area of practice and that there should be greater emphasis on it.

One college lecturer stated: *"Training is necessary. We are an exam-oriented society and we rely too much on exams. We do not know enough about alternative types of assessment."* Other comments from college lecturers include: "*Training in assessment techniques is needed. Educate college lecturers in alternative assessment methods."*

From the discussions the team had with college lecturers and student-teachers, there was the sense that much of the assessment process at the colleges is implicit and informal. Even though teachers felt seriously constrained to carry out classroom assessments beyond the requirements of the curriculum, many expressed the need to be more confident in what the assessments say about student-teachers' performance and knowledge. One college lecturer, commenting after our visit said, "Looking at the checklist reminds me that we need to be more accountable."

Many college lecturers revealed that they had minimal training in the area of assessment. Many were unaware of major developments in assessment practices and theories. College lecturers felt they did not have adequate access to resources on assessment. Many complained of lack of reference materials in the library, lack of in-service training in the topic and limited access to computers to gather information online. They did, however, acknowledge their peers as resources for information on assessment theory and practice.

9. There is minimal assessment of student-teachers' prior knowledge and experience.

Many of the student-teachers in the primary program have extensive experience as classroom teachers prior to coming to the college. Mico students are actually practicing teachers (pre-trained) while attending the night courses. Apart from oral question and answers, writing samples and the assumption that entry requirements act as a gatekeeper ensuring a certain level of competency, little assessment of students' prior knowledge and experience is carried out.

College lecturers spoke of the need to do this but felt inhibited by time and course content. Assessments designed to assess the prior knowledge of student-teachers that could be easily administered and analysed could provide useful information on course design and content.

10. Most college lecturers showed interest in carrying out research but no one reported being engaged in it.

No college lecturer we spoke with was then engaged in research although most of them indicated that they had research ideas in mind and were interested in carrying it

out. Most college lecturers indicated that there was no time for this aspect of their profession.

Recommendations

The recommendations described below are meant to be informative rather than authoritative. Suggestions presented here are based on our interviews, surveys, discussions, reviews of literature, and knowledge of a variety of contexts internationally. Much of what is described in the recommendations come from college lecturer and student-teacher inputs.

1. A more detailed analysis of the JBTE examination program for primary teacher training colleges should be carried out.

Serious consideration should be given to developing the examination program to be more consistent with the goals of the Primary Teacher Training Colleges. Much of the input from college lecturers regarding classroom assessment practices was directly related to the subject examinations. The influence of the exams on student-teacher learning, and college lecturer teaching is profound. Without a shift in the examinations' orientation and emphasis, however, training and development in classroom assessment will be seriously hampered. There is evidence that college lecturers are at present implementing a wide range of assessment methods that would be considered consistent with the Revised Primary Curriculum. Many of them are eager to progress further professionally in this area.

An examination system that is supportive of goals and approaches of teacher training institutions has the potential to play a powerful role in educational change. Changes in classroom assessment must be concurrent with shifts in the examinations' orientation, approaches and methods. As Resnick and Resnick (1992) state:

> *...if we put many multiple choice tests into the testing system, we must expect children to practice answering*

multiple-choice questions.... In contrast if we put debates, discussions, essays and problem solving into the testing system, children will spend time practicing those activities[2].

2. Support in reducing structural constraints to implementing effective classroom assessment.

Creative ways must be found to reduce some of the structural constraints to effective classroom assessment. Reducing class size, reducing the number of students a college lecturer teaches in a term and limiting the number of preparations a teacher has per term as well as the number of cohorts in which college lecturer teaches (affecting practice teaching supervision) could all contribute to improved assessment practices.

The colleges should explore creative timetabling that includes modular teaching, blocking, selection from a menu of courses, and reorganisation of cohorts. An examination of class contact time could also reveal appropriate ways to reduce student/teacher contact time and increase student directed learning without sacrificing quality. This may involve developing new methods of student collaboration, supporting students in dealing with self-directed learning, and developing meaningful and creative out-of-class assignments.

3. Support in reducing professional constraints to implementing effective classroom assessment.

In addition we recommend professional support in the following areas:

- Training in all areas of continuous assessment
- Increased access to resources on assessment

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[2] Resnick, L. B. and Resnick, D. P. (1992). Assessing the Thinking Curriculum: New Tools for Educational Reform. In B. R. Gifford & M. C. O'Connor (eds.), *Changing Assessments: Alternative Views of Aptitude, Achievement and Instruction*. Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

- The development of a Jamaican Teachers College Assessment guide.

We also suggest additional training in:

- Assessment theory and global trends
- Ways of assessing the prior knowledge and experience of the student-teachers
- How to use these assessments
- Increasing student-teacher participation in assessment
- Authentic and performance assessment
- Scoring and providing feedback
- Teaching assessment methods for the primary grades

Many college lecturers could benefit from training in these areas. Training could take a number of forms including college-based seminars, inter- and cross-college workshops as well as national and international seminars. Presenters could come from the colleges, schools, universities, ministries, both from Jamaica and abroad.

Through Internet access, college teachers would be able to access a wealth of information on assessment theory and practices. A number of studies are published online in addition to classroom techniques posted on school district, university and government web sites. Online journals in assessment and evaluation also are available on the Internet. Other resources on assessment such as books, videos and journals should be purchased for staff reference libraries.

Working with adults requires specialised techniques that differ (sometimes only slightly) from classroom assessment at the primary and secondary level. In addition, techniques for assessment used in North America, Europe and elsewhere may not be appropriate for the Jamaican context. Therefore, a college lecturers' guide to assessment should be developed for use by college lecturers.

4. Development of college level assessment policies.

Policies developed at the college level would provide college lecturers and student-teachers with guidelines for classroom implementation of assessment. The policies would not conflict with the JBTE assessment policy but would help support the policy at the local college level. The policy may suggest an orientation for assessment practices as well as specific guidelines on number and types of assessments, ways to assess integrated assignments, non-grade and graded assignments, making up assignments due to absences, etc.

An assessment panel composed of college lecturers, administrators, student-teachers and local primary teachers could develop the policy with input from all stakeholders. Including student-teachers in the development of a policy will not only allow their perspectives to be represented but will also provide an additional opportunity for professional growth for student-teachers. Primary teachers may add a dimension of relevance to assessment at the primary level.

5. Find ways that are appropriate to the Jamaican context to increase student participation in assessment.

An area of assessment practice that is particularly needed in terms of support is that of student participation in assessment. Primary teacher training colleges are responsible for developing the professional practices of student-teachers that are consistent with the goals and aims of the grades in which they will teach. The use of self-reports in the primary grades is an important element of the new assessment strategies.

As adult learners, many of whom have a wealth of experience in classrooms, the process of self-assessment is ongoing if only at a level slightly above the subconscious. By making self-assessment more explicit and systematic, student-teachers become deeply engaged in the assessment process. Concern over inflated or

deflated grades given by students is part of the process of dealing with student input. Valid strategies for including student assessment in grades should be developed where appropriate.

As student-teachers, they should be actively engaged in ongoing dialogue about assessment. Including them in developing assessment criteria and assessing peers and courses gives them opportunities to learn by doing rather than to be passive receivers of knowledge about assessment. By not including them in assessment practices and policy development, important opportunities for professional development of the student-teachers are missed.

Finally, student-teacher participation in assessment should be seen as a component of a participatory and democratic curriculum. How that participation plays out varies from one context to another. It is important that teacher-training colleges find ways of increasing student participation that are appropriate for Jamaica.

6. Foster professional development through research and professional exchange at the college, national and international level.

Jamaica has a talented pool of primary college lecturers with strong interests in professional development. The development of a Jamaican knowledge base on teaching and learning would be an important aspect of sustainable professional development for college lecturers, and Jamaica in general. Action research, case studies, longitudinal studies of cohorts and other forms of research could be carried out at the college and national level by college lecturers who had access to resources, appropriate technical support and professional workloads that include research time.

As tertiary institutions with the responsibility of training primary teachers for the country, college lecturers have a vital role to play in knowledge production. The potential to enhance curriculum content, teaching methodology and a

greater understanding of the educational issues in Jamaica through research at the college level is immense.

Opportunities for professional exchange through participation in college-based, national and international seminars, workshops and conferences should be promoted. In the context of scarce resources, pooling methods could be developed to allow college lecturers to compete for grants to carry out research and attend international conferences. Funding sources could include college budgets, college lecturer contributions, nongovernmental organisations and businesses. Selection committees composed of colleges, the JBTE and Ministry representatives could review proposals anonymously by an approved selection process.

Concluding Remarks

The needs assessment carried out in this activity was meant to find areas of strengths and weaknesses in the classroom assessment of student-teachers, It was not meant to be an exhaustive study of the assessment of student-teachers. The aim was to find out how best to support the development of assessment at the college. We hope that the information provided here will be useful to those involved in teacher education and education in general.

2 THEORIES AND TRENDS IN ASSESSMENT

Classroom assessment is arguably one of the least understood aspects of teaching and learning. The lack of understanding about assessment is exacerbated in exam-oriented societies where teachers have little first hand experience of meaningful classroom assessment and limited training in it. Teacher-directed assessment at the classroom level is often akin to a neglected stepchild; very few of us have paid any attention to it.

Recent critiques of testing, along with developments in cognitive psychology and learning theory, have had a major impact on classroom assessment. Continuous assessment, a term applied to ongoing classroom assessment using alternatives to testing, has emerged as an important aspect of the educational portfolio. Continuous assessment in the hands of well-trained teachers is seen by many as making an important contribution to improved teaching and learning. An undermining of some of the assumptions of traditional test theory by researchers in the last two decades (Resnick and Resnick, 1992; Shepard, 1997; Wiggins, 1989), coupled with research on alternative assessments (and other factors such as globalisation and democratic education) has resulted in a global trend of increased continuous assessment implementation at all levels of schooling. While very few countries or educational systems have eliminated exams and testing, the influence of the classroom teachers' assessment practices on ascertaining student knowledge, skills and attitudes has increased.

How can we understand this shift in responsibility for assessment to the classroom teacher, particularly in countries where exams have dominated? As classroom assessment has expanded, what have we learned? What are some of the strategies for assessing students and how do we score them? As college lecturers, how can we develop professionally in this area? This manual attempts to answer some of these questions.

What do we know about traditional and alternative assessments? Before attempting to answer this question, it is important to define *traditional and alternative assessments*. Generally, the term traditional assessment applies to most exams, paper and pencil tests, quizzes and other selected response assessments. These usually include multiple-choice questions, true and false items, short answer questions, and fill-in-the blank statements. Essay questions are sometimes used in traditional assessments but are considered constructed response assessments. They are traditional because they were the first types of assessments used for schooling and are the most common type of assessments used today.

Some educators use the term "alternative assessment" sparingly. The use of the term 'alternative' is often seen as marginalising the word it is describing. For some, alternative assessments mean that those assessments are inferior.

A framework of assessment approaches and methods developed by McTighe and Ferrar (1998), groups assessments into two major categories: those with a selected response format and those with a constructed response format. Constructed-response format assessments are further broken down into brief constructed-response items and performance-based items. Many brief constructed response assessments (fill in the blank, short answers and labeling diagrams) would be termed traditional assessments.

It is beyond the scope of this manual to include a detailed analysis of the functions of national examinations and traditional assessment methods.[3] Rather, the focus here will be on the critiques of examinations and traditional assessment as they apply to teaching and learning in the classroom.

Some critiques of examinations focus on their emphasis of wrong answers. In traditional assessments the amount of wrong answers in an exam are juxtaposed against correct answers. When classroom assessment

[3] For an analysis of examinations, their purposes and influence see Snyder's 1997 study of primary school examinations in Uganda.

uses traditional assessment tools, feedback to students is often centred on wrong answers. And the right answers are barely acknowledged. When going over multiple choice tests, teachers often look at and discuss the wrong answers rather than focusing on what students *do* know.

Additionally, traditional assessments such as tests, quizzes, short answers, true and false are mostly summative in nature. They often don't provide the teacher or the student with feedback that is meant to inform instruction. Although there is an argument that students learn when preparing for tests, the summative nature of the assessments prevents them from revisiting the topics in a meaningful way. What little diagnostic value traditional assessments have is lost when they are used summatively.

High stakes testing has important consequences for what goes on in the classroom, society and among the test takers themselves. So profound are the social consequences of testing that some researchers argue for including the consequences of testing in measures of validity (Shepard, 1997). Among the consequences of examinations on classroom learning are: reduced time for practice and reflection because of test preparation (which can include *teaching to the test),* an emphasis on learning tasks that simulate test questions rather than on more authentic learning experiences, an orientation toward knowledge as something that is acquired rather than constructed, and a focus on external motivators to learning (passing or getting good grades).

Most teachers are aware of the pressures to "cover a syllabus" before examinations. Believing they are helping students to learn, teachers provide students with opportunities to practice answering possible test questions. Most teachers feel the students understand a concept if they get it right on the test. Shepard (1997b, p. 12), however, found that if the questions were asked in slightly different ways the students often did not perform as well. Students, through classroom preparation for tests (teachers teaching to the test) were only able to get the right answer if the questions were sufficiently close enough to the practiced items. When the test items were

configured differently but aimed at gathering information about students' knowledge of the same concept, the students often performed worse. In other words, the students were unable to express their knowledge of a concept in different ways. They were only able to express their knowledge in the way they had practiced. According to Shepard, students were unable to exhibit "robust understandings" of the concepts. The test formats allowed students "to pretend to know."

When emphasis is placed on grades from tests, quizzes etc., the students and teachers gear their learning toward getting grades rather than gaining knowledge and skills. According to Berenson and Carter (1995) "Grades are the currency teachers use to pay students to learn", and getting a grade appears to be the objective for learning (p. 1).

When exams, tests and quizzes and other summative assessments are the major components of their evaluation, students learn that learning is cramming and that getting answers right is more important than developing habits of mind. Additionally, Resnick and Resnick (1992) argue:

> *You get what you assess.... If we put many multiple choice tests into the testing system, we must expect children to practice answering multiple-choice questions—as required by so many of today's workbooks in every school subject. In contrast, if we put debates, discussions, essays, and problem solving into the testing system, children will spend time practicing those activities (p.59).*

Rather than being put into the testing system, debates, discussions, etc., might more appropriately be put into practice in classrooms and teachers' assessments of student performance will be valued.

Yet with all of the problems posed by traditional assessments and external exams in particular, their influence on schooling and society are profound. They serve as gatekeepers, sorting devices and measures of accountability providing the passing students with proof of their capability. Or as Snyder (1997) states, *"...defining success and failure of individuals, act as gatekeepers to*

future opportunities and provide credibility to the systems that engage them" (p. v).

Incompetent teachers, favoritism and unequal opportunities to learn, are leveled by a common exam. Students with good teachers may do better on exams but even students with poor teachers can pass exams if they are motivated, self-directed learners. Exams provide a measure of equal opportunity for all.

Even though test item construction has been refined through years of testing and great effort has been put into developing questions that assess higher cognitive levels, many critiques still argue that they have not gone far enough. In most exams, the issue of high stakes remains.

Passing or failing a single exam or more commonly, a series of exams in a period of two weeks puts extreme pressure on individuals to perform well. Failing an exam might mean repeating a year of course work, or worse, elimination from the system. Opportunities for further education and career paths can be altered dramatically by examination results. The stakes are high because failure has strong implications for the future.

This is not an in depth analysis of the influences of exams on schooling. It is only to point out that the development of alternative assessment techniques for the classroom while desirable, is taking place within a system that relies on exams to carry the load of ensuring that student-teachers meet the national requirements of what a good teacher is. Indeed, Snyder (1997) in his study of the Primary Leaving Examination in Uganda states that in comparison to national exams, "...interventions like improved school management, better instructional strategies, new syllabi, installation of continuous assessment schemes, and technical adjustments to exam content or processes are sideshows to educational reform" (p. v).

Schooling, Snyder reminds us, is a complex process. Changes in classroom practice offer the hope of an improved education system, but we would do well to keep in mind the pervasive effects of testing and examinations in particular.

3 WHY EXPAND ON OUR ASSESSMENT PRACTICES?

Expanding classroom assessment beyond selected response assessments allows students to be engaged in a wider variety of learning experiences. As discussed in the preceding section, traditional assessments tend to narrow the curriculum to learning tasks that emphasise recall, accumulation of knowledge and a unidirectional flow of information (from the teacher to the student). Lecture methods, drill and kill, teacher talk, note taking and memorising are the predominant mode of instruction when meaningful assessments (tests and exams) emphasise recall.

Students with good recall abilities do not necessarily make good problem-solvers. Critical thinking, problem solving abilities and good communication skills are valued highly in modern school curricula and indeed, in societies around the globe. The preparation of teachers with these skills is recognised as coming out of a thinking curriculum. The thinking curriculum is one in which students are active participants in their own learning, reflecting on their learning and engaging in dialogue with the world. Traditional selected response assessments are antithetical to the thinking curriculum.

Expanded assessment practices work in favor of finding out what students know, not just what they don't know. Education is a complex task and the assumption that knowledge can be broken into bits sufficiently to make it teachable, comprehensible and assessable no longer holds. Grundy (1987) states:

> *The notion that atomistic pieces of learning can be identified and measured is an assumption that trivializes the teaching-learning act. Education consists of more than a list of separate pieces of knowledge or behaviours which can be identified and measured (p.37).*

Assessment tasks must therefore reflect the complexity of the teaching and learning act. Indeed, good assessment is integrated with learning tasks and can often be complex. Learning tasks that are authentic are real instances of performances or other activities as opposed to proxies of the learning objectives. In authentic tasks, the student performs real world tasks rather than an approximation of the task. In an authentic assessment, students would write a letter rather than answering multiple-choice items about the form and content of the letter writing. Authentic assessment tasks promote learning for deep understanding. Expanding assessment beyond traditional methods has also been found to increase student motivation and participation. A study in Haitian classrooms by Chery, et al. (1999) found that open-ended assessment questions rather than one-word answers promoted reflection and increased dialogue among students.

A lot has been learned about effective classroom assessment in the past twenty years. Developments in theory and practice have contributed to a major shift in the way assessments are viewed and implemented. Meaningful assessments based in real world activities that are directly related to the objectives of learning form the basis of the alternatives to traditional assessment. A summary in some of the developments in assessment is in Table 3.1

TABLE 3.1: *Shifts in Assessment*

FROM	TO
• Paper and pencil tests, exams	• Authentic and performance
• Aims at monitoring achievement	• Aims at improved student learning
• Summative in nature	• Formative in nature
• High stakes	• Low stakes
• Separated from learning tasks	• Integrated with learning tasks
• Focus on wrong answers	• Focus on getting it right
• Sorting and selecting	• Informs teaching

Assessment Strategies for the College Classroom

This section describes some strategies that could be used in assessing student-teachers. The strategies or methods described here are of three types. The first are strategies that help college lecturers assess the knowledge, skills and attitudes of student-teachers prior to the introduction of a topic or a subject. The second set of strategies emphasise assessing higher order thinking skills. Lastly are examples of assessment that focus on gathering student-teacher feedback on instruction. These techniques are easily administered, provide the college lecturer with valuable information about his/her instruction, and include student-teachers in reflecting on the assessment methods being used.

Assessments that Focus on Students' Prior Knowledge

Many college lecturers often extol the benefits of finding out where their learners are cognitively and what they can do, before starting a lesson. Few college lecturers do it themselves, however. Teachers often feel constrained by time and content when trying to "cover" the curriculum. Adding an assessment at the beginning of a unit or topic feels like a luxury to most college lecturers. Many simply hold oral discussions with students to find a springboard for introducing a topic or subject. As a result of the limited and somewhat unsystematic methods of gathering information, many college lecturers begin their lessons with assumptions about student knowledge that is sometimes quite inaccurate. Making false assumptions about students' knowledge and competencies can lead to wasted time. When students do not have the prerequisite knowledge or skills for what is taught and the teacher assumes the opposite, students may feel frustrated and confused, and may be unable to keep apace with the lessons. Re-teaching is often the consequence.

Assessing prior knowledge in a systematic way can include lengthy and elaborate written, practical and performance tests or it could be short, easily administered tasks designed to gather relevant information from students in a short period of time. The strategies described here are easy to administer and score, and provide useful information that can feed back into the college lecturers' lessons.

It is important to keep in mind that assessing students' prior knowledge is not usually an opportunity for grading. Marks can be given for the purposes of indicating where a student is in relation to stated criteria and making comparisons at a later date. One of the main purposes of assessing prior knowledge in the classroom is to inform instruction. Teachers need to be prepared to have the feedback from the assessments influence how, what and when they will teach.

It is not always necessary to include all of the students in an assessment of prior knowledge. In some cases taking a random sample of 20% of the students may serve the purpose of finding out what students know prior to teaching a subject or topic. This is especially true when assessing practical skills that may require a lengthy administration and preparation such as a science practical test.

Many of the assessment methods used to determine the level of student-teacher prior knowledge can also be used at the end of a topic in a more summative type of assessment. A comparison between the starting and ending assessments can provide valuable insights on student growth.

The following strategies require some categorisation of the data in order to make the exercise more useful to the teacher. Simple sorting procedures and more elaborate rubrics may be used.

1. Concept Maps

Concept maps, sometimes called word webs, are diagrams of words or concepts that show relationships between and among concepts. Phrases are written on connecting lines between the concepts which are inside circles. Concept maps help organise knowledge through a visual representation of the relationships among ideas.

Concept maps are often useful when done at the start of a unit or topic to gain an understanding of what student-teachers already know. At the end of teaching and learning in that topic students are given a second opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of the concept(s) by drawing a second concept map. The student-teacher compares the two concept maps. Based on predetermined criteria set out in a rubric, a grade can be assigned, if necessary.

Student-teachers can also be asked to compare their own "before and after" concept maps. After some time for reflection, students can discuss the progress they made as evidenced by the maps. This could be followed by having students analyse their own learning by writing a short narrative. Student-teachers can also ask students to tell how they learned what they did. In this way, student-teachers are able to think about thinking. This metacognition improves thinking about learning by student-teachers, and helps them understand his or her own learning process.

Concept maps can be used in any subject but it requires that student-teachers know how to make them. By first demonstrating to the students and then practicing with familiar topics, student-teachers soon learn the skill. Because concept maps are graphic representations of knowledge the task may disadvantage students who have difficulty expressing themselves visually and spatially. Care should be taken not to use the technique too frequently.

2. Background Knowledge Probe[4]

Background knowledge probes are short, simple questionnaires prepared by the college lecturer and administered prior to the start of a unit or new topic of instruction. The probes are directed at finding out specific information about student-teachers' prior knowledge. The feedback can be used to help determine the starting point for instruction and where the prior knowledge and experiences of student can be woven into the lessons. The probes can be in the form of a questionnaire, short answer questions, multiple-choice questions, or making lists. For example in an introductory art class, you might ask the students to list and draw the elements of drawing.

3. Profiles of Admirable Individuals[5]

In teacher education, the first image that comes to mind for this activity is to ask student-teachers to describe their favorite teacher. Community members, friends, colleagues, national and international figures can all be the focus of such a task if it is relevant to the attitudes you want to know about. Reading the profiles helps the teacher get a sense for the values of the student as it relates to a topic or subject. The teacher can list those characteristics the students most admire.

The purpose of this exercise is to give student-teachers the opportunity to articulate their beliefs and values. They must describe the characteristics of the individual they are writing about and tell why those characteristics are admirable. If attitudinal development is part of the course, the college lecturer can use the profiles as a springboard for teaching about the relevant attitudes.

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[4] Adapted from Angelo and Cross (1993).
[5] Adapted from Angelo and Cross (1993).

4. Responding to Cases

Another method of assessing student-teachers' values and attitudes is by having them respond to cases or case studies. In this technique the college lecturer develops a scenario in which attitudes and values play a central role in responding to the case. For example, student-teachers may be asked to write a short essay describing what they would do in the following context:

> *You have just started the school year with your new class of 60 Grade Four learners. The principal has just informed you that one of the students in your class is HIV positive. Although you are aware of the deadly nature of the virus, you know that with proper considerations for safety the student poses no major threat to the other students in the class.*
>
> *Would you tell the other students in the class of the HIV positive student? Why or why not? Would you let it be known to the whole school that the student is HIV positive? Would the student receive special attention from you? Why or why not?*

5. Practical Skills Test

It is not unusual for college lecturers in almost any context in the world to wish for their incoming student-teachers to possess more skills than they have. Having more skilled student-teachers usually equates with getting more accomplished in the course. Writing, mathematics and science skills are often the weakest areas of incoming student-teachers.

Pretests of skills can provide specific information about student-teachers' entry-level skills and the results of the pretests can be used to inform teaching. Well-designed pretests of practical skills can help verify what might be known intuitively about student-teachers. In addition, they can help to identify the level of the problem (gaps in student-teachers' knowledge and skills) and what areas

specifically need to be addressed. In science, for example, college lecturers may suspect that student-teachers are very unskilled in using basic science equipment because of their lack of exposure to equipment at secondary school. A practical test of skills in measuring might be set up at the beginning of the year to test skills in this area. Using a thermometer, measuring cylinder, voltmeter, balances, etc., might be part of the test. Analysing the results of the tests would indicate to college lecturers the student-teachers' weak areas. Preparing instruction to address those weak areas would be the next step in using the results of the tests.

Practical skills pretests usually take a lot of time to set up and administer. Taking a random sample of about 20% of the student-teachers to participate in the tests might be sufficient for the purposes of generalising to the whole cohort. If time permits, an assessment of all incoming student-teachers could be carried out and matched with performance at the end of the semester or course to get an indication of growth in those skills.

Assessing higher cognitive levels

As described in an earlier section, one of the weaknesses of exams, tests and other selected response assessments is that they often are unable to adequately assess students' thinking at higher cognitive levels. One of the aims of college lecturers is not only to present information to student-teachers but to engage them in thinking. The assessment strategies described in this section ask students to think beyond the level of recall.

1. Portfolio Assessment

Art and design fields have long used portfolios to record products and performance over time. Portfolios contain a selection of student work collected over time. Many of the pieces in the portfolio enter with a mark. That is, the portfolio may include some or all of a students' graded work. Exhibiting or showcasing their work for other students, teachers or the community allows student-

teachers to synthesise knowledge in order to discuss their work with others. For student-teachers, portfolios can be compared with tool kits. Materials, teaching aids and information from reports and essays developed as part of course work become part of the kits that student-teachers take with them to the field.

The use of portfolio assessment in Vermont, USA beginning in the early 1990's was implemented on a voluntary basis according to a district's choice. Ninety-five percent of school districts chose to trial the assessment method. Research on the effectiveness of portfolio assessment revealed that while the portfolios made significant contributions to classroom improvements, the standards of assessment for pieces of the portfolio and the portfolio in general varied widely from teacher to teacher. It is still unclear whether the use of portfolios had an effect on student achievement.

2. Projects

Projects are long-term tasks in which students have the opportunity to carry out an in-depth study of a particular topic, usually of their choice. Projects may be composed of a variety of activities and tasks focused on finding out answers to one broad question or set of questions. They also foster knowledge, creation and learning the organising concepts and skills of a particular field.

Projects are time intensive. Teachers must be willing and skilled at giving guidance. Student-teachers often need help formulating and narrowing a question or topic, accessing information, synthesizing information, integrating book knowledge with personal experience, opinion or relating the book knowledge to a particular (e.g., Jamaican) context. Parts of the project may be assessed separately and an overall grade given to the whole. Displays and exhibits of projects provide opportunities for students to vocalise their understandings.

3. Analytic Memo

In an analytic memo, student-teachers are asked to be in a position in which they have to communicate information to others. Student-teachers simulate memo or letter writing to a client, community member, parent, principal or other stakeholder. In writing the memo, the student-teacher has to analyse the topic under consideration and communicate that to others who may not be as familiar with the topic. The student is required to write in concise and clear language of the topic. The role of the student-teacher in writing the memo can vary with the context.

Some examples of analytical memo writing are:

- As a principal, inform parents of new assessment policy at school and their role in it.
- As a school board member, notify community of the nature of upcoming readiness tests and their role in assisting children prepare for going to school.
- As a waste management consultant, advise the mayor on a recycling program.
- As a language specialist, send a memo to other teachers in the school to advise them on ways to improve student writing in their subject.

Often the analytic memo requires the student to analyse a situation and inform someone about a situation in order to assist the person making a decision. The communication of the information takes on a greater role in this type of assessment as opposed to a short constructed answer to a question.

4. Invented Dialogues

In an invented dialogue, students are asked to develop a conversation between two people or things. It is helpful to focus the dialogue on a particular topic. Students write the dialogue and later it can be presented orally. The process helps students synthesize knowledge of people,

events, historical contexts and processes of things. Examples would include:

- A conversation between a tourist and a health worker about HIV/AIDs
- A discussion between the moon and the sea about tides

5. Making Models

Models are physical representations of concepts, processes, events or systems. They are usually constructed in three dimensions. The process of model creation involves synthesis of prior knowledge, analysis and creativity. Models can be made of recycled or throw away materials. Some examples of models include timelines, sentence structure and statistical concepts.

6. Human Tableau/Role Play/Dramatisation/Mime

Most good teachers use drama to depict historical events, controversial contemporary issues or future scenarios involving people. Human tableaus, role-plays and mimes are all types of dramatisation that are sometimes powerful vehicles for self-expression and learning. In addition to playing human roles, the "characters" in these drama types may represent inanimate objects and processes. By having students dramatise erosion, for example, they must discuss and analyse the process in order to assign roles and script their parts. A human tableau of the water cycle might require students to come dressed up as clouds, rivers, plants, rain, etc. In preparing for the presentation, students have to analyse and make appropriate decisions on the actors' scripts, actions, background and costumes.

Discussions following the dramas are important to ensure that analogies made in the presentation are clear and accurate. It is also an opportunity to see how the analogies do not apply. Criteria for assessing a role-play

would include aspects of communication, creativity, accuracy of content and depth of analysis.

7. Journals

We often think of journal writing as the domain of language teaching. Journals can be very powerful tools for synthesis and reflection for all subjects and levels. In subjects other than languages, and even in languages, journal writing, is not meant to focus on the language used in the writing, it is the process of writing and what is revealed in the process that is also very useful. The process also contributes to improved writing skills.

Assessing journals can be time consuming and difficult. Their purpose is to provide practice in communicating their understanding through the written word. For most journal writing, feedback from the teacher is usually more important than assigning marks for accuracy and neatness. When it is appropriate to assess particular entries, it may be helpful to create model answers and a rating scale or rubric to be applied to student work. Some journal entries may be given marks on predetermined criteria

8. Interviews

Interviewing student-teachers to find out what they know is time-consuming for almost all teachers. This is why it is not a favoured assessment method. The value in the method is, however, very high. Student-teachers can be interviewed individually, in pairs or in small focus groups by the college lecturer. For many student-teachers the opportunity to have a direct dialogue with the teacher in a context other than in the class setting provides unique opportunities for self-expression. Using equipment, resource materials and other regalia from class can help focus the discussion. By talking to student-teachers one on one, or in small groups, a college lecturer can gain insights that may never be revealed in other assessment situations.

In primary schools, this technique is actually used extensively by some teachers. It is most often carried out by a teacher having a student-teacher come up to the teacher's desk or to a corner of the room while other student-teachers are carrying out individual silent tasks at their seats. Spacing the interviews out over time prevents the teacher from being overburdened.

Assessing to gain feedback on instruction

As reflective practitioners engaged in improving teaching, college lecturers should constantly be aware of the effectiveness of their instructional methods and approaches. One way of gauging our instructional effectiveness as college lecturers is to gather feedback from student-teachers on their reactions to the lessons. This process is often done at the end of a semester or the end of the year, and is used in some institutions to monitor teacher performance. In some instances college lecturers use the student evaluations to inform course changes. The examples described here, however, are directed more toward gathering student-teacher reactions to instruction in an ongoing process. These examples are oriented to engaging student-teachers in a dialogue with the college lecturer about instruction. In addition to improving instruction this process has the added advantage of demonstrating for the student-teacher part of the process of reflective teaching. The student-teachers see the college lecturer change her practice based on student input. The following are some examples adapted from T. Angelo, and K. P. Cross, (1993).

1. Focused Listing

In focused listing, student are asked to write a list of terms or phrases related to a particular focal point of a lesson. For example, after watching a video on the use of manipulative objects in primary mathematics you could ask the student-teachers to write down a list of concepts or phrases that come to mind in relation to the word 'manipulative'. Student write for 1-5 minutes and the

papers are collected. The teacher then sorts the papers into two or three general categories (based on a teacher developed master list) – lists which show understanding, lists which lack some of the relevant points, and lists which lack the main points.

This technique is relatively easy to administer. In a few minutes, a teacher can get a sense from the lists if students are identifying relevant words or phrases related to the focal point. If many students are unable to list words that connect to the focal point then this indicates to the teacher to approach the topic from another perspective. It is helpful for the students in that they are asked to recall and discriminate concepts from a lesson.

Focused listing works particularly well with large classes because it only takes a few minutes to administer and can be sorted quickly by the teacher. Changing the instruction if the feedback shows a lack of understanding can be the hard part of this exercise.

2. Muddiest Point

In this activity, students are asked to describe in a word or phrase what was the most confusing aspect of a particular lesson. The "muddiest point" is the one that is least clear. After a demonstration, lecture, discussion or other lesson activity, the teacher hands out a slip of paper to the student. Students are given a few minutes to write down one or two things they thought were unclear about the lesson. Students submit the slips to the teacher and the teacher makes a list of the muddiest points indicating the muddiest points that occurred most frequently. During the next class the teacher can start by presenting the list of muddy points to the students and focus on getting clarity around those points in the follow-up lesson.

3. Feedback Forms

Feedback forms are short questionnaires with focused questions asking for student-teacher reactions to lessons. Five point Likert scales can be used for easy scoring.

Open-ended as well as focused questions can also be asked. It is important that students know their answers are anonymous. This method of self-evaluation can be carried out 2-3 times in a semester.

Gathering feedback from student-teachers in a systematic way does not have to be time intensive. Short, concise and focused instruments can yield important information about the effectiveness of instruction. Some important guidelines for designing and using assessments to get feedback on instruction are listed below.

1. Don't ask for feedback if you can't handle the response.
2. Be prepared to change your plans for instruction after analysing the assessments.
3. Share results with student-teachers.
4. Foster honest feedback by ensuring anonymity.
5. Make sure questions are short.

4 Policies and Practices Which Impact on the Training of Primary Teachers

The Joint Board of Teacher Education: Assessment and Evaluation

In the Joint Board's search to provide quality teacher education, assessment strategies and procedures play a key role. However, care must be taken at all times that the balance and/or interplay between instruction and assessment creates a dynamic that allows the student-teacher to explore, experiment, acquire and create new knowledge, skills and attitudes in meaningful way.

The process of assessment, and in particular the nature of examinations, must consider the nature of teaching and teacher development – a complex on-going activity influenced by a disparate number of variables, not the least of which are the learner and the teacher. "Given the importance of assessment of student-teacher performance in university teaching and in student-teachers' lives and careers, instructors are responsible for taking adequate steps to ensure that assessment of student-teachers is valid, open, fair and congruent with course objectives". (JBTE Regulations, 4th Draft, (2003), p. 28).

The nature of teacher education makes it imperative that we face the challenges of performance-based assessment that is on-going and consists of the interplay between formative and summative supervision and evaluation. It follows also that standards must be agreed upon and set for those qualities, skills and knowledge that the student-teacher should display.

The emphasis on learning as a holistic experience, one that is meaningful and related to life and its applications supports the call for a variety of assessment techniques that should integrate a number of subject and skill areas. The Examination/Accreditation Committee should, be proactive in setting standards and monitoring course delivery more so than being reactive to final grades

and sit-down examinations. The process should be so self-evaluative that External Assessment is an outflow rather than an imposition on the system.

The Joint Board's assessment policy is concerned with the well-being of its student and, therefore, must take into account the various factors which may disallow student-teachers' performance to their maximum potential. In this regard, college administrators must ensure that the matrix of assessment tasks across subjects and courses is organised to ensure reasonable demands on students.

Assessment must be a process of student/teacher interactions in which students' involvement is valued. Students should be active partners in the assessment process and should participate through self and peer assessment. Assessment procedures and grading standards should be communicated to students. Colleges must shoulder the responsibility to provide meaningful ways of assessment under a variety of teaching/learning situations that reflect both the school and the teacher training programmes. Assessment must be valid, fair, with no hidden criteria and should be congruent with programme and course objectives.

Assessment Structure

Assessment Tasks

(i) Normally courses will be evaluated by both course work and terminal examinations. In some instances, however, a course may be evaluated wholly through course work assignments. Course work, which is a requirement of all courses in all programmes offered under the Joint Board regulations, should facilitate, *inter alia*, the assessment of competences and skills not assessable in the terminal examinations.

(ii) Assessment may be conducted through tasks such as essays and objective type questions, oral and practical examinations. It may include strategies such as open book examinations, authentic/performance tasks, portfolios, case studies, action research etc. Within each

subject, a range of assessment strategies should be encouraged as appropriate to particular courses.

Assessment Reforms in the Primary Schools

The Mission Statement of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture states:

> *To provide a system which secures quality education for all persons in Jamaica and achieve effective integration of all educational and cultural resources in order to optimize individual and national development.*

Embodied in this statement are two significant messages. One is the determination to ensure that Jamaicans are empowered to contribute to nation building. The other is that education is the vehicle through which this empowerment is to be achieved.

In addition to the mission statement there is also a vision statement for the child leaving primary school. This vision says:

> *The child completing primary school should be functionally literate and numerate, demonstrating a positive self-concept and a willingness to take responsibility for his own learning. He/she should be culturally, aesthetically and spiritually aware, and be guided by a commitment to social and moral principles.*

This vision again demonstrates the critical role of education in enabling the development of a people with positive social values and attitudes who are able to cope with the challenges and the changing needs of the global society. In an effort to facilitate and propel this thrust towards human development, the Ministry is always searching for innovative ways to educate the nation's children. This quest has resulted in the implementation of a number of reforms, both at the primary and secondary levels of the system. This discussion, however, will focus only on reforms implemented at the primary grades. The

following are the major reforms that are now entrenched in the system.

I. The National Assessment Programme (NAP)

II. The appointment of a School-Based Assessment Coordinator in Primary Schools.

III. The implementation of the Revised Primary Curriculum (RPC)

Prior to the introduction of these reforms the Student Assessment Unit of the Ministry formerly known as the Examinations Branch, focused mainly on the administration of examinations at the secondary level and on the Common Entrance at the primary. With the exception of panel inspection, there was no formal structured assessment which could provide reliable information about student-teachers' performance at key stages in the system.

I. The National Assessment Programme (NAP)

The National Assessment Programme (NAP) is designed to assess the impact of curriculum delivery at grades one, three, four and six. The tests developed by this programme were pilot tested in 1988 but placement of student-teachers using the results of the grade six test was first done in 1999. Teachers are prepared through the programme to develop and use different types of assessment procedures and to keep records of pupils' performance.

(1) Grade One

Grade one marks the beginning of the child's formal education. Every effort is being made to ensure that a good foundation, which will facilitate future learning, is laid.

The **Grade One Readiness Inventory (GRI)** is developed to assess the students' level of readiness to access formal education. The GRI, which is administered during the second and third weeks in September, assists the teacher to determine the strengths and weaknesses of his/her student-teachers soon

after they enter school, so that from the very beginning, instruction can be planned to address their needs. The data obtained from the administration of the GRI is collated and analysed by the Student Assessment Unit (SAU). Educators can use this data to monitor, modify and improve educational offerings at this grade level.

The GRI consist of four subtests, namely: Visual Motor Coordination, Visual Perception, Auditory Perception, Number and Letter knowledge. The focus of each sub-test is outlined below:

- **Visual Motor Coordination** is designed to find out how well the child is able to perform activities that require him/her to coordinate his/her eyes with other body parts, especially the hands.
- **Visual Perception** focuses on discrimination, visual memory and figure ground.
- **Auditory Perception** is designed to assess auditory memory, association and listening comprehension.
- **Number and Letter Knowledge** aims at assessing the child's ability to recognise numerals one to nine and some specific letters of the alphabet.

(2) Grade Three

By the end of grade three the child has completed fifty percent (50%) of his /her journey through the primary school years. The Grade Three Diagnostic Test is designed to assess how much the child has achieved in creative writing, Mathematics and Language Arts, up to this point. The results of the assessment can be used to inform instruction at the grade four level, so that remediation can take place before the child leaves school. The data from these

assessments are analysed by the SAU. Data is available by which to make sound educational decision at both the school and the national levels.

(3) Grade Four

Internationally, it is at grade four that children are assessed to determine their level of literacy. Jamaica has adopted this international stance and so a Grade Four Literacy Test is administrated in May of each year. The policy is that a child who does not attain mastery on any of the three subtests is deemed to be at risk of leaving the primary school illiterate, and is not promoted to the next grade.

Those children considered to be 'at risk' are encouraged to attend an intensive summer programme for a duration of three weeks. The objective of this programme is to help children to overcome the difficulties they have in reading and writing. The children who have recovered sufficiently as a result of this programme are promoted; those who have not achieved an adequate performance level remain at grade four. It is expected that they will be exposed to further treatment in what is known as competency shelters.

(4) Grade Six

The Grade Six Achievement Test (GSAT) which is administered during the final Thursday and Friday in March of each year has the most far reaching effect on the system. In 1998, the GSAT replaced the common Entrance Examination (CEE), which was used for over forty years to select students for secondary cycle education.

The CEE was based on what theorists believed to be the body of knowledge that children at eleven plus years should know. On

the other hand, GSAT assesses students' performance in four core subjects in the primary curriculum, i.e., Science, Social Studies, Language Arts and Mathematics.

II. The School-Based Assessment Coordinators (SBAC)

The appointment of a School-based Assessment Coordinator (SBAC) in each primary institution is another significant reform. Dr. Anthony Nitko, renowned professor in classroom assessment at the University of Pittsburgh and former consultant to the Ministry of Education lauds the innovation and describes it as novel.

The role of the SBAC includes:

- Conducting in-school training of his/her colleagues in assessment strategies and other related topics.
- Assisting the principal in implementing a continuous assessment programme in the school.
- Monitoring the administration of the national assessment programme.

The work of the SBAC was further supported by the appointment of an Education Officer who is expected to make regular visits to the schools. The officer monitors the work of the SBAC, conducts seminars and assists in the development and implementation of a programme of continuous assessments in the schools. The support of the officer helps to build the confidence of the SBAC which in turn motivates them to implement changes in the schools.

III. Implementation of the Revised Primary Curriculum (RPC)

The Ministry of Education Youth and Culture is now in the process of implementing the Revised Primary Curriculum in all primary school across the island. This process is expected to be complete by the 2003-2004 academic year. The philosophy which underpins this Revised Primary

Curriculum is *"...that children will be able to make connections between what they learn in all subjects, and between school and the world outside."*

Although there are a few indifferent persons, the majority of stakeholders has embraced the programme and believes that it is having a positive impact on the system. Some teachers describe the programme as the vehicle to revolutionise the teaching/learning process.

Although the Ministry can be proud of the implementation of a number of reforms, much more work needs to be done. The RPC demands a shift in assessment practices from an emphasis on the traditional testing to the use of alternative assessment procedures. In order to make this shift, teachers must be assisted. This requires intensive training and close monitoring.

It is in recognition of this need that the Ministry is currently implementing the Primary Education Support Project (PESP). The educational component of the PESP is to consolidate and continue the work started under the NAP. Through the educational component a structured programme of continuous assessment is implemented in all primary schools. Additionally, it is necessary to provide training for teachers at both pre-service and in-service levels.

5 Using a Variety of Assessment Procedures

In every classroom, college lecturers make decisions about their students' performance on a daily basis. For each decision, whether it's about an individual or the class as a whole, some evidence, that is, sampling performance needs to be considered before determining a course of action. The process of gathering evidence about performance and subsequent decision-making are necessary ongoing aspects of classroom life.

Understanding Assessment

Assessment, testing, measurement and *evaluation* are not synonymous terms and should not be used interchangeably. In the classroom, *assessment* involves collecting, synthesising and interpreting information about a student's performance (Airasian, 1994). It is the process of gathering information that is used for making decisions about educational policies, about the quality of teaching, or about how well a student has learned what was taught (Nitko, 1996). Assessment includes a full range of information that helps the tutor to sample and/or describe the performance of students, monitor their progress, understand different aspects of their development, and make informed decisions about their programme. There are a variety of assessment procedures and strategies available to tutors that have been recommended by each of the revised courses. Indeed, in addition to administering tests and exams, final course grades result from recommended assessment procedures that include, among others, projects, debates, kits, portfolios, presentations, checklists, research, models, and microteaching.

One of the many types of information-gathering techniques available to the tutor is *testing*. Testing, a form of assessment characterised by its formal and systematic procedure, has traditionally been the most frequently used assessment strategy for many of the college courses.

Tests have been the most commonly used example of *measurement* as it has provided a most expedient way of quantifying or assigning a number to student performance. Since the revised courses have recommended the use of alternative assessment procedures, it is necessary for college tutors to develop competencies in the efficient use of these assessments. Such competencies include developing skills in identifying the assessment strategies most compatible with instructional objectives, stating the criteria for each assessment used, allocating scores, marks or grades to the criteria depending on the weighting attributed to each, and finally, if a rating scale is used, describing details of the standard and/or behaviour for each rating.

Once assessment information has been collected through any of the variety of assessment procedures available to tutors, evaluation is possible. *Evaluation* involves informed decision-making and implies that judgments about students, their performance, instruction and courses can be made.

Principles for Assessment Practices

According to the Principles for Fair Student Assessment Practices for Education in Canada (1993), "assessments depend on professional judgment" (p. 1). According to the document (pp. 3 – 8), in order to make such professional judgments, there are certain issues that need to be considered. They are summarised as follows:

1. *Developing and Choosing Methods for Assessment*

ASSESSMENT METHODS SHOULD BE APPROPRIATE AND COMPATIBLE WITH THE PURPOSE AND CONTEXT OF THE ASSESSMENT.

- Assessment methods should be developed or chosen so that inferences drawn about the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviour possessed by each student are valid and not open to misinterpretation.
- Assessment methods should be clearly related to the goals and objectives of instruction, and be compatible with the instructional approaches used.

- When developing or choosing assessment methods, consideration should be given to the consequences of the decisions to be made in light of the obtained information.
- More than one assessment method should be used to ensure comprehensive and consistent indications of student performance.
- Assessment methods should be suited to the backgrounds and prior experiences of students.
- Content and language that would generally be viewed as sensitive, gender biased, or offensive should be avoided.
- Assessment instruments translated into a second language or transferred from another context, or location should be accompanied by evidence that inferences based on these instruments are valid for the intended purpose.

2. *Collecting Assessment Information*

STUDENTS SHOULD BE PROVIDED WITH A SUFFICIENT OPPORTUNITY TO DEMONSTRATE THE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ATTITUDES, OR BEHAVIOURS BEING ASSESSED.

- Students should be told why assessment information is being collected and how this information will be used.
- An assessment procedure should be used under conditions suitable to its purpose and form.
- In assessments involving observations, checklists, or rating scales, the number of characteristics to be assessed at one time should be small enough and concretely described so that the observations can be made accurately.
- The directions provided to students should be clear, complete, and appropriate for the ability, age and grade level of the students.
- When collecting assessment information, interactions with students should be appropriate and consistent.
- A written policy should guide decisions about the use of alternate procedures for collecting assessment information from students with special needs and students whose proficiency in the language of instruction is inadequate for them to respond in the anticipated manner.

3. *Judging and Scoring Student Performance*

PROCEDURES FOR JUDGING OR SCORING STUDENT PERFORMANCE SHOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR THE ASSESSMENT METHOD USED AND BE CONSISTENTLY APPLIED AND MONITORED.

- Before an assessment method is used, a procedure for scoring should be prepared to guide the process of judging the quality of a performance or product, the appropriateness of an attitude or behaviour, or the correctness if an answer.
- Before an assessment method is used, students should be told how their responses or the information they provide will be judged or scored.
- Care should be taken to ensure that results are not influenced by factors that are not relevant to the purpose of assessment.
- Comments formed as part of scoring should be based on the responses made by the students and presented in a way that students can understand and use them.
- Any changes made during scoring should be based upon a demonstrated problem with the initial scoring procedures. The modified procedure should then be used to rescore all previously scored responses.
- An appeal process should be described to students at the beginning of each school year or course of instruction that they may use to appeal a result.

4. *Summarising and Interpreting Results*

PROCEDURES FOR SUMMARISING AND INTERPRETING ASSESSMENT RESULTS SHOULD YIELD ACCURATE AND INFORMATIVE REPRESENTATIONS OF A STUDENT'S PERFORMANCE IN RELATION TO THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF INSTRUCTION FOR THE REPORTING PERIOD.

- Procedures for summarising and interpreting results for a reporting period should be guided by a written policy.
- The way in which summary comments and grades are formulated and interpreted should be explained to students.
- The individual results used and the process followed in deriving summary comments and grades should be

described in sufficient detail so that the meaning of summary comment or grade is clear.

- Combining disparate kinds of results into a single summary should be done cautiously. To the extent possible, achievement, effort, participation, and other behaviours should be graded separately.
- Summary comments and grades should be based on more than one assessment result so as to ensure adequate sampling of broadly defined learning outcomes.
- The results used to produce summary comments and grades should be combined in a way that ensures that each result receives its intended emphasis or weight.
- The basis for interpretation should be carefully described and justified.
- Interpretations of assessment results should take account of the backgrounds and learning experiences of the students.
- Interpretations of assessment results should be made with due regard for limitations in the assessment methods used, problems encountered in collecting the information and judging or scoring it, and limitations in the basis used for interpretation.

Considerations When Developing Assessment Tasks (IEQ II Jamaica, 2001)

Before assessment tasks are identified and assigned to students, there are several factors to be considered including the following:

1. What do you want students to know, understand and be able to do?
   - What objectives will the assessment cover?
   - Will the assessment include goals or general objectives (e.g., attitudes)?
   - Will the assessment provide opportunities for students to show what they have learned that goes beyond the course/curriculum objectives?

2. How are they going to show what they know, understand and can do?
   - What type of assessment tasks will they carry out?
   - What are the steps involved?
   - Will it be a learning task?
   - Is it appropriate to the objectives?
   - Is it authentic? Should it be?
   - Is it feasible?
   - Does it take too long for students to complete?
   - Does it require materials that are not available?
   - Will it take too much time for marking?

3. What criteria will you use to assess the quality of the assessment task?
   - Will the students be involved in criteria development?
   - Which scoring tool is most appropriate?
   - Will you use student self assessment?
   - Will you ask students to assess each other (peer assessment)?

4. How will you inform students of the tasks and the criteria for quality performance?
   - Handouts
   - Discussions
   - Posted on class bulletin board
   - Other

5. How will you provide feedback to students on their assessment tasks?
   - When should students expect to get feedback?
   - What kind of feedback will you (and other students) provide?
   - Will it be instructive? Helpful? Provide suggestions?
   - Will the feedback be oral, written, etc.?
   - Will students have opportunities to improve on their performance or product after the feedback?

6. How does the assessment task fit into the course assessment scheme?
   - How does the mark fit in with others in the course?

- How is it weighted compared with the other assessment tasks?
- What kind of formula or calculations will you use to get the final grade?
- Is the formula accurate, fair?
- Are students aware of this formula?

7. How will you use the assessment task to improve your own teaching?
   - How will you analyse student assessment in terms of your own teaching?
   - Will you list and tally common mistakes?
   - Will you chart student performance?
   - Will you re-teach some things based on the assessment?
   - How will the re-teaching be different from the first time around?

Assessment Tasks, Criteria for Scoring and Grading Tools

The field of educational assessment is large and complex. This chapter has only skimmed the surface by presenting ways for college tutors to expand on their classroom assessment practices. As teachers and college lecturers, the area of classroom assessment has often been neglected because of constraints of time, workload and large classes. The importance of assessment in the teaching learning process, however, is gaining a wider acknowledgement from educators and other stakeholders. It often appears that some of the work of assessment is highly technical and rule bound. What is perhaps more important to consider is the role creativity plays in developing and implementing good, sound, appropriate and efficient classroom assessment. College lecturers are encouraged to experiment with new assessment techniques and develop some on their own. Here are a few suggestions for trying new assessment techniques:

1. Use professional judgment and intuition.
2. Don't let it be a burden.
3. Try the technique out on yourself first.

4. Allow ample time for assessment and feedback.
5. Provide feedback to students about it.
6. Discuss it with your colleagues.

Some Indicative Tasks for the Assessment of the Revised Subjects

The assessment tasks which follow are examples of alternative assessments from the revised primary courses in Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. While college tutors are free to use the examples of assessment tasks as they appear, they are encouraged to modify them where necessary in order to facilitate individual creativity and individual/group learning styles and needs. While innovative ideas are encouraged, tutors are reminded of the importance of fairness, specificity, clarity, appropriateness and consistency in the selection of assessment procedures. Assessment tasks must be clearly stated for students. The criteria for scoring and rating scales must be clear, specific, and relevant to the objectives in each unit.

LANGUAGE ART

Unit 2: *Early Literacy*

Assessment Task: *Microteaching*

Objectives 1 & 2 (p. 11)

- Examine factors that promote early literacy development.
- Examine and assess readiness and emergent literacy activities and behaviours.

Task: *Microteaching Exercise: Reading Comprehension*
In this microteaching exercise your focus is on reading comprehension. You can choose between the K-W-L., which is a framework for constructing meaning, and the D-R-T-A, which is a comprehension monitoring strategy. It is important that you select text material carefully. The K-W-L. is used with expository text, while the D-R-T-A can be used with either expository or narrative (with some adjustment). Refer to previous unit(s) on reading comprehension skills and approaches for teaching reading.

Task Instruction: Select a group of students from a grade of your choice. Plan a lesson, which you will teach to the group, then evaluate. Your lesson should last for no more than 60 minutes, and integrate as many curriculum areas as possible. (This is in keeping with the Revised Primary Curriculum). Pay careful attention to the following areas as you plan, teach, and evaluate the lesson.

Planning the lesson
Indicate the following:

Grade level
Date
Topic
Time
Objectives (should be specific to the needs of the class)
Materials (should be appropriately selected)

Procedure:

- introductory activities
- developmental activities
- culminating activities (should be able to indicate the degree to which the lesson objectives have been met)

Teaching the lesson

Introduction (should tap prior knowledge and stimulate interest)
Development
Culmination
Use of questioning
Student engagement in the lesson

Evaluating the lesson

Strengths of the lesson
Concerns about the lesson
Ways of improving the lesson

TIPS FOR THE TUTOR:

1. Additional information may be provided in each of the areas above (e.g. materials & objectives, procedure, overall presentation, etc.) Such information will include more details about the criteria which will guide the student-teachers more adequately in preparing for assessment.
2. Tutors may provide student-teachers with a description of the level of performance anticipated within each range of the rating scale. So, for example, the kind of performance to be considered as good as distinct from performance considered to be average.
3. A checklist or observation instrument could also be useful in providing student-teachers with the criteria for their performance and subsequent assessment.

Criteria for Assessment: Rating Scale

	Poor 0-3	Average 4-7	Good 8-10	Remarks
Lesson Plan				
Materials + Objectives				
Procedure				
Overall Presentation				
Teaching				
Introduction				
Development				
Culmination				
Use of questioning				
Student engagement				
Lesson Evaluation				
Strengths of lesson				
Concerns about lesson				
Ways of improving lesson (recommendation)				

Total__/110____
% Score____
Letter Grade____

Unit 1: *The Reading Process*

Assessment Task: *Reflective Writing*

Objective 1 (p. 3)

- Explain the process of reading and the factors that influence the development of reading competencies.

Task instruction: Write your reflections on your early reading experiences and the role these experiences played in your reading development. Include in your reflections how those experiences have influenced your beliefs about reading.

Your ideas should be coherent, cohesive, and clearly developed; and careful attention should be paid to language use, and presentation.

Use the following points/questions as a guide.

1. Recount your most vivid memory of reading
2. Explain why these memories stand out in your mind
3. Recall the age at which you learnt to read, and how you learnt to read
4. Describe your most interesting memory of reading
5. Describe the effect it had on you (4 above)
6. Describe the best teacher you've had and his/her methods of teaching reading
7. Describe any unpleasant reading experience you have had, and describe the effect it has had on your interest in reading
8. As you write your reflections include:
    - How your experiences have shaped your beliefs about reading
    - How your course lectures, discussions, and readings have helped to expand and refine your knowledge and beliefs about reading
    - How all these experiences will help to prepare you for your role as a teacher of reading.

Criteria for Assessment

	Poor 0-3	Average 4-7	Good 8-10	Remarks
Content /60				
Recollections of reading experiences				
Analysis of the value of early reading experiences				
Connections between early experiences and personal beliefs about reading				
Connections between early reading experiences and interest in reading				
Identify ways that experiences and course content combine to expand knowledge and beliefs about reading				
Analyse personal and professional growth				
Organisation /30				
Sequencing of ideas				
Development of ideas				
Cohesiveness				
Use of English /50				
Mechanics				
Spelling				
Grammar				
Punctuation				
Communicating ideas				

Total /140
% Score
Letter Grade

Unit 5: *Establishing the Reading/Literacy Environment Centre*

Assessment Task: *Language Arts Resource Booklet*

Objectives 2 & 3

- Identify the elements of a literacy rich environment.
- Organise a classroom to reflect an environment conducive to literacy.

Task instruction

Prepare a Language Arts Resource Booklet that contains a variety of resource materials that can enhance the teaching and learning of language arts in the primary school. The materials should be pedagogically sound, relevant, and interesting. The booklet should be organised for easy reference, neatly presented, and durable. It should contain the following:

— Title Page
— Table of Content
— Introduction
— Summary notes on each unit (1-2 pages)
— Response to reading materials given (short notes or diagrams)
— Literacy strategies/ techniques for all areas of language arts (list the strategies/techniques and write the steps involved)
— At least two articles relevant to the teaching of language arts in the Jamaican context
— Floor plan for literacy/learning centre which shows corners for each area of language arts, conference corner, publishing area, and author's chair
— Nursery rhymes, jingles, counting songs, ring games
— Checklist of items found in literacy environment at the primary level. Items should enhance all areas of the language arts (at least four items to support learning in each language arts area)

Criteria for Assessment

	Poor 0-3	Average 4-7	Good 8-10	Remarks
Content /110				
Introduction				
Summary notes				
Response to reading				
Literacy strategies/ techniques				
Approaches to second language teaching				
Journal Articles				
Floor plan of literacy resource centre				
Nursery Rhymes etc.				
Check list of items for literacy environment				
Presentation /40				
Neatness, and location features				
Organisation of the material Appropriateness , Durability				
Creativity /20				
Innovativeness & style				
Insightful evaluation and selection of materials				

Total___/170_____
% Score_____
Letter Grade_____

Unit 7: *Evaluation / Assessment of Literacy Development*

Assessment Task: *Anecdotal Notes*

Objective 2

- Examine the elements of the various modes of assessment/evaluation and practise using them

Anecdotal Notes

Anecdotal notes, when used as an assessment procedure, refer to those recorded comments/descriptions that teachers make while observing students in various classroom situations.

Anecdotal notes refers to the notes that teachers make while observing students in various classroom situations. These notes capture the growth of a student through the eyes of the teacher. This creates, for the teacher, a more complete picture of the whole child and how he/ she is developing. This helps the teacher to make informed decisions about the student's instructional needs. Anecdotal notes should be used by the teacher to place emphasis on the child's achievements rather than deficiencies. The notes focus on process rather than product and should reflect a positive note throughout the observation periods of a child's performance.

Task Instruction

Record anecdotal notes for one student you have observed on at least four different occasions, each lasting for about ten minutes. Your notes should reflect the students reading and writing abilities, as well as the strategies that he/she uses to accomplish these literacy tasks. Try to observe the student reading and writing during teacher's instruction, as well as while he/she is working independently.

Record the student's behaviour during each period of observation using the observation guide below. Your notes should be clearly written and insightful. Date should reveal patterns of behaviour where they exist, as well as achievements and difficulties. You should also indicate the date and time of observation, and tell whether the student worked independently or under the class teacher's instruction. Your notes should attempt to provide an

accurate description and representation of the student's performance and efforts. The assignment should include your recommendations for instruction.

Observational Guide

- Word recognition ability (in isolation, in context)
- Fluency in reading
- Choice of books
- Purpose for reading / writing
- Level of engagement in reading / writing task
- What aspects of reading / writing does the child attend to
- Reading miscues student makes while reading
- Insightful and interesting things students say
- Changes students make in writing
- Hypothesis students try out in reading and writing
- Recommendations for instruction

Criteria for Assessment

	Poor 0-3	Average 4-7	Good 8-10	Remarks
Observation /20				
Frequency				
Duration				
Anecdotal notes /50				
Usefulness/				
Informative				
Recognition of patterns of behaviour				
Identification of achievements/ difficulties				
Accuracy of information/ representation of students' efforts				
Presentation /30				
Tone (how positive)				
Clarity				
Use of language				
Recommendations /20				
Pupil Performance				

Total ___/120_____
% Score_____
Letter Grade_____

Instruction

Running Records

Running records of students' oral reading is an observational task that teachers use to assess a student's strengths and needs in reading programs. It tells us if a particular text is suited to the students' needs, if students are self-monitoring as they read, as well as the word recognition strategies they employ in identifying unknown words.

Producing the Running Record follows a standard set of conventions so that any teacher familiar with Running Records would be able to reconstruct exactly what their child did during reading.

Task instruction

Complete running records for two Grade Two students as they engage in reading. Carefully select an appropriate reading passage of about 100 words, which the students will read orally. The passage should be meaningful and suited to the students' interest and needs. Prepare running record sheets on which you will record each of the students' reading performance. Evaluate each student's reading performance in terms of self- monitoring strategies and word recognition strategies.

Criteria for assessment

	Poor 0-3	Average 4-7	Good 8-10	Remarks
Selection of Reading Passage /50				
Appropriateness				
Interesting				
Challenging				
Relevant				
Adequate in length				
Running Record /40				
Appearance				
Usefulness				
Informative				
Specific				
Evaluation /40				
Analysis of miscues				
Identification of word recognition strategies				
Discussion of word recognition strategy				
Recommendation for instruction				

Total /130____
% Score____
Letter Grade_____

MATHEMATICS

Type of Assessment: *Portfolio – Best Work or Effort*

Unit: *Content: Unit I - Sets & Numeration Concepts*

Objectives:

- State what makes another system into a system
- State the operation(s) symbols and rules governing the operation(s) of a given system(s).
- Use the terms face value, true value, place value, digits, numbers and numeral symbols appropriately.

Description of Task

You are required to prepare a portfolio of your best work reflecting your understanding of the mathematical concepts listed below. For each of these topics you are to choose a piece which you think reflects your understanding of that area.

1. History of number systems. This should include at least four (4) systems and a time line showing the relationship between the development of each system.
2. A personal number system. You should describe your system by indicating the type of system, the numerals/symbols used in your system, as well as include examples of algorithms and basic operations in your system.
3. Investigation of at least five (5) Number Patterns.
4. Five examples of how mathematics is used in everyday life.
5. Five questions requiring a problem-solving approach, demonstrating at least four different types of problems.

Criteria for Assessment & Rubric

Rating Scale: Unacceptable 0 – 2
Satisfactory 3 – 7
Outstanding 8 - 10

Topic	Parts/ Sections/ Items	Rating	Remarks/ Reasons for Selection
History of Number System /40	1. 2. 3. 4.		
Personal Number System /40	Description/Type Numerals/Symbols used Algorithms Basic Operation		
Investigation of Number Patterns /50	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.		
Mathematics in Everyday Life /50	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.		
Problem-solving Approaches /50	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.		
Total	**/23**	**/230**	

Type of Assessment: *Collection of Manipulatives & Other Instructional Aids*

Unit: *Mathematics Education: Unit 4 – Technology in the Math Classroom*

Objective:

- Develop at least 5 completely different pieces of instructional material (including only one chart) to address the teaching of a single topic.

Description of Task:

1. Prepare a beginner's Mathematics Kit for teaching primary students. The kit should include the following manipulatives and other teaching aids:
   - Geoboard
   - Place value chart
   - Counters
   - Abacus
   - Number cards
2. For each piece:
   - Prepare a list of at least three (3) concepts which may be taught using the manipulatives or charts.
   - Describe two child-centered activities, stating the grade level each will be used for and the purpose of each activity.

Criteria for Assessment & Rubric

1. *Physical Manipulative/chart*
   (5 pieces x 10 marks each) = 50 points
   For each piece
   - Neatness 2
   - Accuracy 3
   - Safety 1
   - Hygiene 1
   - Durability 2
   - Appropriateness of material 1

   10

2. List of concepts
   (5 pieces x 3 marks each) = 15 points

3. Activities
   (10 activities x 5 marks each) = 50 points
   For each activity
   - Purpose 1
   - Appropriateness 1
   - Quality of Content 3

Total Score 115 marks

Type of Assessment: *Model Building*

Unit: *Content: Unit 9 – Geometric Ideas – Part 2*

Objective:

- Make and use a clinometer.

Description of Task

1. Create a model of a semi-circular clinometer, which is:
   - sturdy and safe for a primary school student to use to measure angles of elevation and depression
   - accurate and detailed, so as to be easily read by a Grade 5 student.
2. Write a detailed description, for a Grade 5 student, on how to use the instrument.
3. Demonstrate how to use the clinometer in an activity appropriate for a grade 5 student. Your demonstration should include good use of mathematical language.

Criteria for Assessment & Rubric

1. Presentation 5 marks
   - Appearance 3
   - Neatness 2
   - Visual correctness 2
   - Practicality of material used 2
   - Sturdiness/durability
   - Safety

2. Accuracy 15 marks
   - Material 6
   - Semi-circle 2
   - Sighting 2
   - indicator 2
   - Calibration 9
   - Grade appropriateness of scale 3
   - accuracy of scale 3

3. Instruction 5 marks
   - Written instructions 3
   - Oral delivery 2

4. Ability to use instrument 15 marks
   - Dexterity of manipulation 2
   - Alignment 2
   - Taking reading 2
   - Interpretation of reading 4
   - Use of reading 4

5. Extra credit can be earned for innovation 1

Possible Total score 40 marks

Type of Assessment: *Project*

Unit: *Content: Unit 10 – Transformation Geometry*

Objective:

- Use similar figures/scale drawing to model real life situations

Description of Task

At the end of five (5) weeks, in-groups of four, you are expected to produce a model of a car park using the following guidelines:

Description of the Project

a) By the end of week 1 you should have identified an appropriate area on the school compound where a new car park may be constructed. You should explain why you consider that area to be appropriate.

b) By the end of week 2, you should have prepared a proposal for the construction of this car park to present to the school Administration. The proposal must include a draft of the plan (scale drawing) of the car park and the reasons why the location and dimensions of the car park are appropriate.

c) By the end of week 4, present an accurate plan (indicating scale and dimensions) and model of the car park. This plan should be able to be used by the construction engineer.

Assessment of the Project

I. At the end of the fifth week, the following should be handed in:
   i) your proposal
   ii) your accurate plan
   iii) your model

iv) a written report listing and explaining five mathematics concepts used in the construction of your model.

II. No more than two days after the final draft of the project has been turned in; each member of the group should hand in a written personal reflection on the work of the group. This reflection should indicate:

i) the number of group meetings that were necessary.

ii) your level of participation and the level of participation of each member of the group, on scale of 10.

iii) your level of cooperation and the level of cooperation of each member of the group, on a scale of 10.

iv) your insights as to working in a group (indicate what went well and what could have been improved).

Criteria for Assessment & Rubric

1.	Your Proposal	5 marks
	• proper description of location	2
	• reasons for location	3
2.	Your Plan & Model	26 marks
	A) Aesthetics	8 marks
	• Neatness	3
	• Creativity	2
	• Practicality	3
	B) Accuracy	8 marks
	• plumpness of fit	4
	• appropriateness of scale used	2
	• accurate use of scale	2
	C) Content	10 marks
	• parallelism/perpendicularity	3
	• similarity/congruency	2
	• proportionality	3
	• use of instruments	2
3.	Written Personal Reflection	7 marks
	• meeting the deadlines	2
	• communication with other members of the group	3
	• evaluation – group processing	2
4.	Written Report	17 marks
	• concepts explained	10
	• presentation of the paper	2
	• use of mathematical language	3
	• English grammar	2

Total Score **55 marks**

SCIENCE

Course: *Science Content*

Task: *Activity Kit*

Unit 4: *Energy, Forces and Machines*

Objectives:
Student-teachers should:

- Prepare a kit for use with primary school children to investigate a method of heat transmission.
- Use resources available to provide hands-on science activities.

Task Instruction:

1) Assemble a Science Kit, containing apparatus and instructions for activities to:
   i) determine whether materials are conductors or insulators.
   ii) demonstrate one method of heat transmission (conduction, convection, radiation).
2) Present one activity included in the kit to the class.

Organisation:
Students organise themselves into groups and select one method of heat transmission (conduction, convection or radiation).

Guidelines for Students:
Each activity kit should include:

- A collection of materials (including trashables), to be classified as conductors and non-conductors.
- Instructions on how to determine if substances are heat conductors or insulators.
- Safe, durable apparatus for a minimum of two (2) activities to investigate the chosen method of heat transmission.
- Clear, well sequenced instructions for each activity.

Each activity should:

- Be suitable for stated grade level.
- Have title stated as a question.
- Have clear and measurable objectives (3 domains - knowledge, skills and attitudes).
- List materials.
- Have clear, sequenced instructions.
- Address safety precautions.

Group Presentation should:

- Be scientifically accurate.
- Be well organised.
- Demonstrate cooperation between group members.
- Engage and interact with audience.
- Demonstrate good questioning technique.

Scoring Rubric – Science Activity Kit and Class Presentation

Objectives		Possible Score	Sub-total
Activity Kit should:	• Include a collection of materials (including trashables), to be classified as conductors and non-conductors.	3	
	• Include instructions on how to determine if substances are heat conductors or insulators	3	
	• Have safe, durable apparatus for a minimum of two (2) activities to investigate the chosen method of heat transmission.	3	
	• Be attractively presented	3	12
Written Activity #1 should:	• Be suitable for stated grade level	1	
	• Have title stated as a question	1	
	• Have clear and measurable objectives (3 domains - knowledge, skills and attitudes)	3	
	• List materials	1	
	• Have clear, sequenced instructions.	3	
	• Address safety precautions	1	10

Written Activity #2 should:	• Be suitable for stated grade level	1	
	• Have title stated as a question	1	
	• Have clear and measurable objectives (3 domains - knowledge, skills and attitudes)	3	
	• List materials	1	
	• Have clear, sequenced instructions.	3	
	• Address safety precautions.	1	10
Group Presentation should:	• Be scientifically accurate	3	
	• Have enough materials to work with	3	
	• Be well organised	3	
	• Demonstrate cooperation between group members	3	
	• Engage and interact with audience	3	
	• Demonstrate good questioning technique	3	18
TOTAL SCORE			**50**

Course: *Science Education for Primary Teachers*

Task: *Science Activity Centre*

Unit 3: *Methods of Teaching Primary Science*

Objectives:
Student-teachers should:

- Plan and execute strategies and techniques for inquiry-oriented science
- Use resources available to provide hands-on science activities

Task Instruction:
Set up a Science Activity Centre, for a named topic, suitable for a named grade level.

Organisation:
Students organise themselves into groups and select one science theme/topic for the Science Activity Centre.

Guidelines for Students:

1. Centre to have a theme/topic, suitable for a named grade.
2. Plan for centre to be written (outline only) and submitted to tutor for approval before starting construction of Centre.
3. Fact Cards (accurate information/illustrations, relevant to the topic) to be displayed in the centre.
4. Centre to have 2 hands-on activities, each developing named process skills.
5. Materials for activities should be safe and durable.
6. Include illustrated Activity/Instruction Sheet for each activity (appropriate reading level for grade).
7. Include Work Cards for each activity (for recording observations/results and follow-up activity) for appropriate ability level.
8. Centre should be attractively presented and encourage return visitors.
9. Centre should have a register to record students' visits to the Centre and activities completed.
10. Labelled box should be provided to store materials used in the Centre.

Rating Scale for Science Activity Centre

Scoring: Poor =1; Average = 2; Good = 3 (for all criteria except those marked *)

Criteria		***Possible Score***
Science Activity Centre should:	Have a Theme/Topic suitable for grade level	1*
	Have a box for storing materials	1*
	Have a Plan for setting up the Centre	3
	Display Fact Cards – accurate, informative, attractive	3
	Use safe materials	3
	Use durable materials	3
	Be well presented and attractive	3
	Have a register to record students' activities	3
Activity #1 should include:	List of process skills to be developed	3
	Well sequenced instructions for hands-on activity (appropriate reading level)	3
	Illustration(s) to clarify instructions	3
	Work-card to record observations	3
	Follow-up activities	3
Activity #2 should include:	List of process skills to be developed	3
	Well sequenced instructions for hands-on activity (appropriate reading level)	3
	Illustration(s) to clarify instructions	3
	Work-card to record observations	3
	Follow-up activities	3
TOTAL SCORE:		50

Sample Register for Science Activity Centre

Topic:

.....

.....

Put a √ in the column by your name when you complete an activity in the Science Activity Centre.

Names	Activity 1	Activity 2
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

Course: *Science for Primary Teachers*

Task: *Panel Discussion*

Unit 6: *Environment and Health*

Objectives:
Student-teachers should:

- Define environment and list at least 10 things that are part of a person's environment.
- Describe a sustainable environment and critically examine ecological, social, and economic factors that contribute to environmental sustainability.

Task Instruction:
Participate in a Panel Discussion on "Causes and Effects of Noise Pollution"

Organisation
Students organise themselves to form a panel group(s).

Guidelines for Students:

1. *Background*: Montego Bay is considered a noisy city. Numerous complaints have been made to the authorities that noise is having a negative impact on communities. In order for the authorities to respond effectively they need to ascertain the causes and the extent of the effects of noise on the affected communities.

2. You need to do the following:
   a) Research/investigate the impact of noise pollution on the named community.
   b) Present findings in a panel discussion.

Scoring Rubric

Names of Panelists	Criteria for Scoring					
	Content			***Presentation***		
	10 Accuracy	10 Relevance	10 Adequacy	5 Language	5 Persuasiveness	5 Responses to Questions

Course: *Science for Primary Teachers*
Task: *Project*

Unit 6: *Environment and Health*

Objectives:
Students should:

- Describe the physical factors affecting the environment.
- Analyse biotic relationships observed in the habitat.
- Define and use the terms habitat, niche, population, community, ecosystem.

Task Instruction: Conduct a study of organisms in their natural habitat.

Organisation:
Students either work individually or organise themselves into small groups and select one habitat to study (e.g. under a stone, tree, patch of grass etc.).

Guidelines for Students:
Student/group should:

1) Select a habitat and describe its location.
2) Draw a map of the area, identifying position of habitat.
3) Describe the physical features (abiotic factors) affecting the habitat (e.g. temperature, moisture, shade/sun).
4) Observe the habitat at the same time each day, over a 3-4 day period, and use a checklist to record observations of abundance of organisms.
5) Draw diagrams of animals found in habitat.
6) Describe possible reasons why organisms (plants/animals) chose to live in this habitat.
7) Describe the relationships between the organisms.
8) Construct a food web to show feeding relationships between organisms.
9) Describe the influence you had on the habitat.
10) Describe how the study has influenced your attitude to the environment.

Criteria for Assessment of Project	Possible Score (%)
Description of location of habitat	5
Map of area	5
Description of physical features of habitat	5
Checklist - neatly constructed with headings to record observations	5
Details of daily observations of organisms, recorded in checklist	10
Drawings of animals	10
Possible explanations for finding organisms in the habitat	10
Description of possible relationships between organisms in habitat	10
Food web	10
Description of influence of your visits to the habitat	10
Reflection on your study of the habitat and attitude to environment	10
Overall presentation of project	10
TOTAL SCORE:	**100**

SOCIAL STUDIES

Course: *Social Studies Foundation*

Task: *Debate*

Unit: *Unit 3 – The Population of Jamaica: Composition, Structure and Dynamics*

Objective 3.6:
As a result of exposure to this unit students will be able to:

1. Describe the ethnic composition of the population.
2. Discuss the contributions of different ethnic groups of Jamaica.
3. Describe Jamaica's population composition, gender and size.
4. Analyse information on Jamaica's population distribution, employment, population movement and human resources.
5. Assess the impact of population growth on development.
6. Value self and others irrespective of race, gender, social and economic status.

Debate:
Debates are useful means of assessment, they aid in the development of a multiplicity of skills such as:

a. *Research skills.*
b. *Writing skills.*
c. *Delivery of persuasive logical arguments.*
d. *Appropriate use of grammar, jargon and Creole.*

Task: A debate on the relationship between population growth and development of a country.

Description of Task:

1. Moot: be it resolved that "rapid population growth is an asset to the development of a country".
2. Divide class into debating teams, if it is possible to have more than two teams, then the teacher may consider eliminations rounds.

3. The teacher should assist students in the selection of opposing and proposing teams after which students will decide on speakers.
4. Teacher and students should work together in establishing the rules for debate procedure and each team should have a written copy of the rules.

Example: in preparing for the debate the following rules must be taken into consideration:

a) Each team will consist of three members, first, second and third speakers.
b) The first speaker on either team will be allotted ten minutes each, the second speaker five minutes and the third speaker three minutes, teams will be allowed an additional two minutes for rebuttal, making the total time allotted per team to be twenty minutes.
c) Independent judges should be used from the faculty, invited faculty, or a combination of senior students and faculty.
d) No questions will be taken from the floor until the end of the debate.
e) All students must belong to a team. Team members who disturb the debate will automatically lose five points. This penalty could increase depending on the nature of the disturbance.
f) A general discussion of the key issues will take place immediately after the debate, before the winner is announced.

Rating Scale:

Content =	20
Delivery =	15
Language =	10
Organisation =	10
Total =	55 Marks

Criteria For Assessment:

Organisation	Language	Delivery	Content	
Development (5 marks)	Grammar (2 marks)	Persuasiveness (5 marks)	Knowledge of subject (5 marks)	
Sequencing (5 marks)	Coherence (2 marks)	Logic (4 marks)	*Reference* (5 marks)	
	Fluency (2 marks)	Eye contact (2 marks)	Evidence (5 marks)	
	Style (2 marks)	Stance (2 marks)	Explanation of terms (5 marks)	
	Use of Jargon (2 marks)	Tone (2 marks)		
10 marks	10 marks	15 marks	20 marks	55 marks

NB. Weighting allocation will vary according to emphasis, objectives, etc.

Rating Scale

Alternately, a rating scale which is well-defined may be used. An example is shown below.

Range of Marks

	(0-2)	(3-7)	(8-10)
Rating	**Unacceptable**	**Satisfactory**	**Outstanding**
Content	Little knowledge and explanation of terms, no evidence and references, little or no explanation of terms.	Shows reasonable knowledge, uses some references, uses evidence, and explains some terms.	Very good knowledge of subject matter, good consistent use of references and evidences, explains terms appropriately.
Delivery	Arguments not convincing, no real logics to the issues, eye contact seldom or none, inappropriate stance, monotone.	Argument has some persuasion, shows reasonable logic, more eye contact established, appropriate stance and tone evident.	Very convincing arguments, logically organised and presented, eye contact evident throughout, consistence in using appropriate tone and stance.
Language	Poor use of grammar, little coherency and fluency, inappropriate style and special words are seldom used or used ineffectively.	The following are done at least 50% of the time: proper use of grammar, coherent and fluent argument, appropriate style and use of jargon.	The following are done over 80% of the time: Appropriate use of grammar, coherent and fluent argument, appropriate style and use of jargon.

Portfolio

The use of a portfolio is now commonly accepted in our education system as one of the most effective non-traditional assessment tasks. The portfolio seeks to encourage student participation and continuous assessment of student performance. This serves not only to motivate students, but also develop self- worth and consciousness, in selecting and assessing the best examples of their work.

A Portfolio of Maps: Best work portfolio

The best work portfolio comprises a collection of a student's efforts that meet previously set and discussed criteria. Ideally, all samples selected should be rated outstanding under these set conditions. The task requires students to indicate various features on maps provided. Strict guidelines must be followed in completing these tasks in terms of organisation, presentation and the location of features. Please be reminded, as in the case of the first sample shown below, rating scales may be adjusted according to specific needs and objectives. At the end of the portfolio students are required to write at least two pages stating how they have benefited from this exercise. Finally, the best work portfolio can be used on any unit of the syllabus.

NB: Students are reminded that all maps must have the following basic features:

- Border
- Key
- cardinal points
- Scale
- Contour lines (where necessary)
- Shading must be done smoothly and in one direction
- Do not mix common letters with capital letters – use block letters
- Lettering must be done with ink
- Outline of map must be done in ink
- Jamaican maps should have a slight tilt to the east.

- Outline should have correct indentation
- Appropriate colours and symbols

This task seeks to assess:

- Unit 1.4: Earth as a Global Village.
- Unit 2.1: The Caribbean Location, Relief and Geological History.
- Unit 2.2: The Caribbean Climate and Vegetation.
- Unit 2.3: The Caribbean's Physical Resources.
- Unit 2.4: Historical and Sociological Aspects of the Caribbean.
- Unit 3.1: Jamaica's Location, Physical Features and Political Divisions.
- Unit 3.2: Jamaica's Climate and Vegetation.
- Unit 3.4: The Development and use of resources in Jamaica.
- Unit 3.6: The Population of Jamaica.
- Unit 1.4

Objectives:
As a result of exposure to this unit student-teachers will be able to:

I. *On a World map*
   - Locate the major continents of the world.
   - Identify the major countries and main players involved in:
   - Industrial Revolution
   - Transport and Communication advancement
   - World War1 and 2
   - Green peace
   - United Nations
   - Amnesty International
   - World Trade Organisation

Description of Task: On unruled white paper (legal size), use a pencil to trace a map of the world. On this map indicate and label the following:

- major water bodies and continents of the world
- main industrial countries of the world
- main players in the communication and transport revolution
- headquarters of Green Peace, United Nations, Amnesty International and The World Trade Organisation.

II. *On a Caribbean map students should be able to identify and indicate the following.*

- The volcanic chain of islands
- Limestone islands
- Coral islands
- Various climatic and vegetation areas
- Major physical resources
- Settlements of various ethnic groups

Description of Task: *Use a pencil to draw four maps of the Caribbean.*

a. On Map 1, indicate the following:
   - the volcanic chain of islands
   - the limestone islands
   - the coral islands
   - main volcanoes
   - major mountains
   - major plains and valleys

b. On Map 2, indicate the following:
   - the major climatic areas in the Caribbean, e.g., cool mountain regions, hot dry areas and tropical marine areas
   - main vegetations, e.g. Savanna, Mangrove, Rainforest, Cacti

c. On Map 3, indicate the following:
   - the main resources found in the region e.g., oil in Trinidad, bauxite in Jamaica and Guyana, lumber in Belize, major water bodies.

d. On Map 4, indicate the following:
   - French Caribbean
   - British Caribbean
   - Dutch Caribbean
   - Spanish Caribbean
   - Greater Antilles
   - Lesser Antilles
   - Caricom Member countries.

III. *Jamaica's political, physical and economic features*

Objectives: As a result of exposure to this unit, on maps of Jamaica, students should be able to:
- Locate the main physical features
- Locate political constituency boundaries
- Identify the different climatic regions
- Locate the main resources
- Illustrate the concentration of population
- Locate parish capitals
- Assess parish functions
- Locate ports, forts and harbours
- Examine the relief of the land
- Assess the impact of relief on population

Description of task: Trace four maps of Jamaica on un-ruled letter-size paper and indicate the following features:

a. *On Map 1, indicate the following:* (Give the map an appropriate title)

Mountains	**Rivers**
Blue Mt. Range	Rio Minho
John Crow Mt.	Black river
Cockpit country	Rio Grande
Santa Cruz Mt.	Plantain Garden River
Dry Harbour Mt.	Cabaritta River

Valleys	**Plains**
Queen of Spain Valley	Liguanea Plain
St. Thomas-in-the-Vale	George Plain
Nassau Valley	Vere Plain

b. On Map 2, indicate the following:

- Main tourism areas in Jamaica.
- Sugar production areas
- Bauxite plants and mines
- Manufacturing areas
- Banana growing areas
- Coffee production areas
- Citrus growing areas
- Main financial and insurance sectors

c. On Map 3, indicate the following:

- climatic variation in Jamaica

d. On Map 4, indicate the following:

- main population areas of Jamaica
- distribution of population
- population growth

Criteria for Assessment (of each Map)
Scoring device – rubric, rating scale

a. Map skills

1. scale	3
2. direction	3
3. border	3
4. key	3
Total	12 marks

b. Presentation

1. shading	5
2. lettering	5
3. caption	5
4. outline of map/shape	5
5. inclination/title	5
Total	25 marks

c. Location of features e.g.,

1. Mountain	5
2. Rivers	5
3. Valley	3
4. Plains	3
Total	16 marks

Grand total /53 marks

Percentage score: Score/53 x 100 = Score % = Letter Grade

Rating Scale	Unacceptable	Satisfactory	Very Good	Outstanding	Marks
Map Skills /12	Very little or no evidence of organisational skills.	Two of the organisational skills were done appropriately and accurately.	Three of the organisational skills were done appropriately and accurately.	All the organisational skills were done appropriately and accurately.	
Presentation /25	Very little or no evidence of the criteria for appropriate presentation.	Two of the presentation criteria were done accurately and appropriately.	Three of the presentation criteria were done accurately and appropriately.	All five of the presentation criteria were done accurately and appropriately.	
Features /16	Very little or no evidence of the criteria.	Task was carried out with some degree of accuracy and appropriateness.	Task was carried out with much degree of accuracy and appropriateness.	Task was carried out with consistent high standard in accuracy and appropriateness.	

Task: *Model Making*

The making of models in the teaching of Social Studies is absolutely important. This method not only helps the college student to develop a holistic picture of phenomena and features but it also serves as a model to adopt for their own teaching - beginning with their Year III practicum. Features such as earthquakes, volcanoes, folding and faulting, are difficult to grasp even with the best oral explanations, diagrams and pictures, and good models will prove to be more useful in developing a better understanding of the formation and the activities of these wonders.

Before commencing this task, however, careful guided thought and discussions must take place in order that the most appropriate materials are used in the project. Consideration must be given to durability, use of recycled materials and generally environment friendly materials.

Unit: 1.3

Objective:

As a result of exposure to this unit, the student-teacher will be able to:

- identify and locate specified physical features on earth's surface.
- classify landmasses and water bodies.
- explain the occurrence of earthquakes and volcanoes.
- classify earth's natural resources.
- explain how people use resources to satisfy needs.
- assess the impact of the use of resources on the environment.

Description of Task: Make a model to demonstrate the features of earthquakes and volcanoes demonstrating movement and sound. To this end, students will:

1. develop their own appropriate model to represent earthquake or volcano.

2. use creative ways make a working model to demonstrate the activities of an earthquake or volcano.
3. show *integration in at least three subject areas* by utilising information from these areas.
4. show appropriate use of sound and action.
5. develop a realistic scale to show size and dimension.
6. demonstrate the ability to explain the features and use models to communicate learning.
7. show use of durable, recyclable material.

Criteria for assessment

1. Durability
2. Use of appropriate, recycled and inexpensive material
3. Ability to work
4. Creativity
5. Level of involvement by group members (corporation/peer assessment, self assessment)
6. Model characteristics – e.g., accuracy
7. Size/dimensions – implications for storage

Rating scale

Creativity	5 marks
Material	5 marks
Durability	5 marks
Workability	10 marks
Model characteristic	5 marks
Presentation	10 marks
Group effort	10 marks
Total	50 marks

The Rating Scale used to guide mark allocations might appear as the sample shown below:

Rating Scale	Unacceptable	Satisfactory	Outstanding
Presentation /10	Use of traditional material, not very durable, difficult to withstand travel, difficult to store. (0 – 1 mark)	Fairly durable, can take reasonable travel time, use of some nontraditional materials, not difficult to store. (2 – 3 marks)	Very durable can be transported between school and home with ease, use of mostly non-traditional materials, model stores easily. (4 – 5 marks)
Workability /10	Model unable to carry out simulation. (0 – 3 marks)	Model can carry out some simulation, or works sometimes. (4 – 7 marks)	Model can carry out simulation very well and works consistently. (8 – 10 marks)
Creativity /5	Students show very little knowledge of the model and how it works, no evidence of teamwork, no clear link with audience. (0 – 3 marks)	Students show knowledge of how model works, teamwork is evident with some link with audience. (4 – 7 marks)	Students show excellent knowledge of how the model works and how it should work, very good teamwork, a clear link with audience. (8 – 10 marks)

Rating scales may vary based on specific needs and objectives.

Task: *Field Trip (An integrated approach used across departments/disciplines)*

Dewey, the great American philosopher, in his philosophy on education emphasised the experiential approach to leaning. There is no doubt that educators the world over are still preaching that a child learns best through his or her experience. It becomes the responsibility of teachers to provide each student with meaningful experiences to achieve the stated goals and objectives. The field trip is an efficient way of providing students with fulfilling experiences. The field trip can range from a nature walk around the school to a visit to sites in other countries. The further you move away from the physical plant of the school, the more complex the situation gets. Therefore, your plan for these trips will need to be fully organised.

The field trip can also be integrated. As the primary school curriculum is for the most part integrated, is very important that primary school teachers be exposed to integration as early as possible. An integrated model is recommended using the following steps:

1. A meeting is called inviting all interested heads of departments to discuss their willingness to participate and to decide on the destination and route to be taken. At this meeting, objectives and a focus question are set, and a common theme is decided on.
2. The school administration is informed and the necessary support requested, e.g., transportation, lunch, making contacts with the relevant people, and working out the required student/teacher ratio.
3. Obtain permission from parents or primary caretakers for children to leave school.
4. Tutors will meet with their individual classes to discuss logistics and assignment. Students and teachers should discuss and design questionnaires, interviews and observation schedules.

5. The site or sites or sites to be visited will be contacted and all arrangements are made. Decisions are to be made about the potential content of the visit and interviews with key informants and resource persons.

6. All subject teachers and students are called to a plenary session to make final announcements, get feedback and confirm the final assignment.

7. All subject teachers and students are expected to participate in this field trip. On returning, each class group will make an oral presentation, put up a display and hand in a written account which will be graded by all tutors working together so as to ensure that all discreet area objectives are achieved while all areas are fully integrated.

Below is an assessment task for a field trip. College lecturers are reminded that this is just a guide as differences in circumstances will alter cases. Assessment criteria and tasks may be modified in order to cater for individual needs and objectives. In this case, the task will be graded on an individual as well as a group level. This will facilitate group participation as well as individual creativity.

Description of Task: To visit selected sites; collect and display rock samples; examine cultures in historical sites, rural communities, developing towns, parish capitals; examine tourism products, agricultural areas, and a hydro-electric plant.

Students and tutor need to study a map of the area to be visited in order to ascertain where rock samples and special features associated with rock formations, physical features, caves, corals, towns, communities, tourism activities and agricultural products may be found.

Note: *Important items to take along for such trips:*
Worksheet (clipboard) with focus questions- where observations and content are recorded.
Cameras, (digital, video and still), chisel, hammer, special bags with labels and note pad to record findings.

Objective: Following the field trip, students will be able to:

1. identify environmental problems.
2. conduct a survey to determine level of awareness of location, different physical formations and rock structures, classification and grouping of features.
3. identify different types of rocks and rock formation.
4. explain different physical features associated with rocks.
5. do a mini research on a community visited, based on size, population, language and politics.
6. determine the relationship between relics and people of the community visited.
7. sketch a map showing the geological setting of the area.
8. show how this trip can be used to achieve objectives in other subject areas.

Instructions:
View the structure of surface rocks and identify the processes that create them. Take pictures and sketch a map showing the geological layout of the area visited.

- Collect samples of different rock types, label and store them properly.
- Start filling out the worksheet and recording observations.
- Identify special physical features associated with rocks.
- Assemble in groups, based on the rock type students are working on.
- Work in groups on the worksheet to answer pre-determined questions, e.g., name the physical features associated with the different types of rocks; examine the historical, economic and social value of all sites visited.
- Examine the possibilities for integration in the various subject areas.

Criteria for Assessment to include: (marks may be allocated according to weighting).

Observation and Report

- Completion of Worksheet
- Report of surveys and observations

Group Presentation

- Content
- Delivery
- Variety of methods in delivery
- Use of materials for presentation

Display corner in classroom

- Quality of materials
- Appropriateness of materials
- Presentation

A modified version of this Rating Scale may be more useful.

Rating Scale	Unacceptable	Satisfactory	Outstanding
Observations and Report	Worksheet and observation schedule inadequately completed	Worksheet and observation schedule adequately completed.	Worksheet and observation schedule are fully completed, covering all the main subjects. Written report fully completed and adequately deals with all the salient points.
Group Presentation	Poor participation by group members. Inadequate, little or no use of audio-visual materials. Monotonous presentation with little or no eye contact. Few signs of integrating other subject areas.	Evidence of the participation of group members. Adequate use of audio-visual materials. Fairly good presentation. Good use of eye contact with class. Shows good evidence of integration.	Outstanding participation of group members. Very good use of audio-visual materials. Exciting presentation. Frequent eye contact. Discipline areas are very well integrated.
Display	Little evidence of materials collected on trip. Little or no evidence of a theme in the display corner. Students unable to explain clearly their display.	Reasonable amount of materials collected on trip. There is evidence of a theme. Students adequately explain their display corner.	More than adequate amount of materials were collected. Display theme was clearly evident throughout the display. Students were knowledgeable about and were able to explain their display with cohesiveness.

Appendix A

Survey on Assessment Method
Jamaica Primary Teachers' Colleges
August – September 2000

Please list the subjects you teach: _____

A. Which of the following have you used as an assessment technique at least once in the past year? Tick all those that apply.

Concept maps	Practical tests	Interviews
Flow charts	Invented dialogue	Role plays
Cases or case studies	Peer assessment	Open ended story problems
Check lists	Student self assessment	Speech/ debate/ drama
Portfolios	Research report	Pretests
Models	Journals	Student assessment of teacher educator lesson
Assessment schemes	Student assessment of course	Assessing pairs or groups
Rubrics		

B. Please respond to each of the following statements by circling the word or phrase that is closest to your opinion.

1. The college has an assessment policy.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

2. The college assessment policy is clear.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

3. The national assessment policy for teacher education is clear.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

4. The national assessment policy is fair.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

5. As a teacher educator I expect to have professional development input in the area of assessment from the national level.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

6. As a teacher educator I expect to have professional development input in the area of assessment from the college.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

7. I feel satisfied with my knowledge and abilities to use a variety of assessments in my classes.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

8. The guidelines for coming up with grades or scores from assessment tasks are clear to me.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

9. Classroom assessments are not as effective as exams in determining what a student knows.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

10. Exams should be eliminated from the courses I teach.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

11. Classroom assessments should be eliminated from the courses I teach.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

12. Classroom assessment is too time-intensive for the information it provides.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

C. What constraints, if any, do you feel prevent you from implementing classroom assessment adequately. Order the constraints with 1 being the largest and/or the most important constraint.

— Not enough time to mark the assignments
— Too much time preparing for exams
— Too many students
— Teaching too many courses
— Too little emphasis on classroom assessment and too much emphasis on exams
— Too many assessments required by course
— Too much content to cover in the course
— Students not used to alternative assessments
— Students unwilling to do assignments that will be assessed
— Students unfamiliar with the format of assignments
— Lack of clarity in the syllabus about the prescribed assessments
— Lack of awareness about different types of assessment
— Lack of understanding about the college assessment policy
— Lack of understanding about the national (JBTE) assessment policy
— Others (please describe)

_____

_____

_____

D. What suggestions do you have for improving the assessment practices of teacher educators at the college? Please feil free to use additional paper if needed.

Thanks for your participation in the survey.

Summary of Section C of Classroom Assessment Survey

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The college has an assessment policy.	2.3%	2.3%	17.4%	56.5%	22.1%
2. The college assessment policy is clear.	2.4%	8.2%	18.8%	54.0%	16.5%
3. The national assessment policy for teacher education is clear.	1.2%	2.4%	26.2%	54.8%	15.3%
4. The national assessment policy is fair.	3.8%	8.9%	43.0%	43.0%	1.3%
5. As a teacher educator I expect to have p professional development input in the area of assessment from the national level.	2.4%	1.2%	1.2%	61.4%	34.9%
6. As a teacher educator I expect to have professional development input in the area of assessment from the college.	3.6%	0%	0%	54.8%	41.7%
7. I feel satisfied with my knowledge and abilities to use a variety of assessments in my classes.	0%	10.6%	11.8%	53.0%	24.7%
8. The guidelines for coming up with grades or scores from assessment tasks are clear to me.	1.2%	6.0%	7.1%	64.3%	21.4%
9. Classroom assessments are not as effective as exams in determining what a student knows.	24.4%	58.1%	5.8%	7.0%	5.4%
10. Exams should be eliminated from the courses I teach.	23.5%	62.8%	3.5%	5.9%	3.5%
11. Classroom assessments should be eliminated from the courses I teach.	57.6%	40.0%	0%	0%	2.4%
12. Classroom assessment is too time-intensive for the information it provides.	19.0%	68.4%	6.3%	6.3%	0%

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