



PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DEPARTMENT OF TALENTED AND GIFTED EDUCATION

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Assessment Options for Determining Rate and Level and/or Placement

Students should be assessed on their knowledge, skills and concepts in order to determine their current rate and level and/or placement into an appropriate class or course. Many advanced learners are a quick study of skills and information but often lack deeper abstract and conceptual understanding. For example, a 1st grader may have memorized all the multiplication facts but when asked what is multiplication, is not able to answer or a 6th grader has “mastered” the quadratic formula but has no idea how to apply it to solve a real world problem.

The purpose of assessment is to find out what the student has already mastered to avoid repetition and disconnect. A critical distinction to consider is the difference between <boredom>, because the student feels like the material is not relevant, and a student who is truly bored because they have mastered the skills, knowledge and concepts. Many students during their educational careers will say, “This is boring!” It does not necessarily mean the material is too easy but is an indicator that the student simply does not feel connected to the learning. With that said, engaging, authentic, and challenging opportunities should be at the forefront of all learning.

Appropriate and effective assessment should give access to advanced and/or accelerated opportunities. Formative assessments (ongoing and not as formal in nature,) may also be given throughout the school year to determine, evaluate and monitor the most appropriate rate and level. It is important to understand rate and level are never static nor are they a solution. Rate and level changes daily and is complex because we all learn at different times and in different ways throughout our lives. The following examples provide some direction but assessment options are not limited to this list. Please keep in mind some assessments are not diagnostic but screeners.

- District Assessments (formative, interim, summative)
- Work samples and performance tasks
- Primary Literacy Assessment Scores
- Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA)
- State test results (SBAC)
- Placement recommendations and specific data from previous teachers
- Teacher observations
- Classroom and curriculum tests
- Portfolios
- Essay questions
- Video recordings
- Performing and visual arts
- Teacher/student conferences or interviews
- Rubrics
- Daily work
- Independent projects
- Grades (subjective)