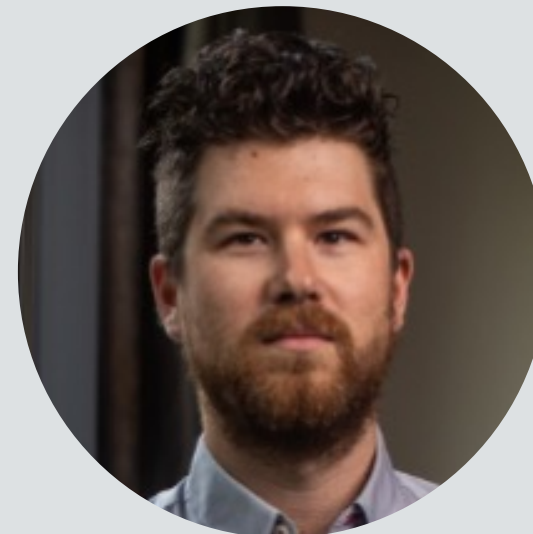




WRITING MASTERCLASS



Daisy Christodoulou



Dr Nathaniel Swain

Fri 3 Mar 2023

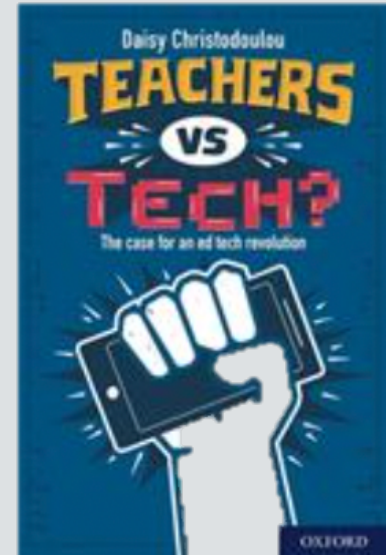
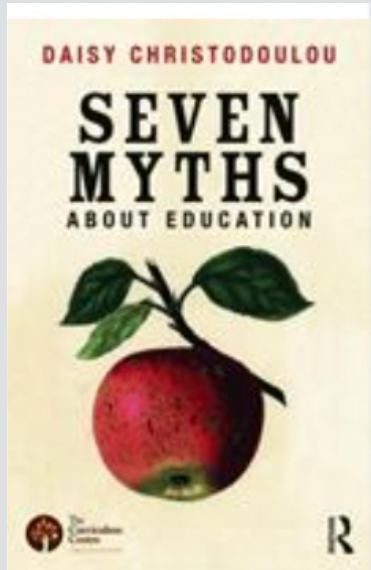


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Daisy Christodoulou

Fri 3 Mar 2023




Daisy Christodoulou
Director of Education
No More Marking



Comparative Judgement for Schools

Assessing Writing in Australia



Daisy Christodoulou
Director of Education, No More Marking

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Writing hub

Creating effective assessments

Getting the balance right between
formative & summative assessment



The place to boost writing skills!

How would you measure progress towards a marathon?



Sensible ideas

- Get a plan
- Start with shorter runs and build distance
- Spend time in the gym
- Yoga / Pilates
- Think about nutrition, sleep, equipment
- Monitor improvements on all of these activities

Less sensible ideas

- Run a marathon in every training session
- Record times
- If you are getting faster, that shows you are making progress

What is a complex skill?

- **Complex skills are the end goal.**
- **They can be broken down into small steps.**
- **Formative assessment measures the small steps.**
- **Summative assessment measures the end goals.**
- **The small steps really matter, and they often look different to the end goal.**
- **When we forget about the small steps, bad things happen!**
- **In the words of Lorraine Hammond, “sight words are a goal, not a strategy.”**



Formative & summative assessment

Formative assessment

- Aim is to provide helpful next steps.
- Assessment for learning
- Set learning goals
- Break down complex skills and isolate the parts so you can see which bits a pupil is strong or weak at
- Don't use grades!
- Use frequently

Summative assessment

- Aim is to provide an accurate shared meaning
- Assessment of learning
- Set performance goals
- Measure the complex skill itself – this is the end goal
- Use grades – which are essentially methods of communicating shared meanings
- Don't do too frequently



So how does this work in practice?

- **What assessment methods can we use to put this into practice?**
- **What about rubrics?**



Accurate shared meaning?

Can compare two fractions to identify which is larger

Which is bigger: $3/7$ or $5/7$?

90% get this right

Which is bigger: $3/4$ or $4/5$?

75% get this right

Which is bigger: $5/7$ or $5/9$?

15% get this right

Qtd in Wiliam, Principled Assessment Design, SSAT 2014



What about writing?

If vague rubrics are a problem with maths, what about writing rubrics?

Can use vocabulary with originality and flair?



Helpful next steps?

‘I remember talking to a middle school student who was looking at the feedback his teacher had given him on a science assignment. The teacher had written,

“You need to be more systematic in planning your scientific inquiries.” I asked the student what that meant to him, and he said,

“I don’t know. If I knew how to be more systematic, I would have been more systematic the first time.”

This kind of feedback is accurate—it is describing what needs to happen—but it is not helpful because the learner does not know how to use the feedback to improve. It is rather like telling an unsuccessful comedian to be funnier—accurate, but not particularly helpful, advice.’

Dylan Wiliam, Embedded Formative Assessment



Assessing without descriptors

Formative assessment

- Improve rubrics by backing them up with specific **multiple-choice questions**
- Improve rubrics by designing **specific whole-class feedback**

Summative assessment

- Improve rubrics by using **Comparative Judgement**
- Report **scaled scores**



Multiple-choice questions

Multiple-choice questions

What is the capital of Moldova?

1. Baku
2. Tbilisi
3. Chisinau
4. Astana
5. Yerevan

**Unambiguously
wrong... but still
plausible!**

What is the capital of Moldova?

1. Paris
2. London
3. Chisinau
4. New York
5. Mexico City

**Unambiguously
wrong... but not
plausible!**

Create unambiguously wrong but plausible distractors!



Whole-class feedback

Feedback from judging

Task: Narrative writing

What were the common misconceptions? Were there any mistakes made by lots of pupils? How could these inform the next lesson?

- Some persistent problems with tense, particularly near the end. Most of the descriptions started in the past tense, but some of them switched into the present tense, seemingly for dramatic effect. Jack's description is a good example of this:
 - *The boy played with the bucket and spade. The girl dug a hole in the sand with her hands. Suddenly a wave knocks them off their feet!*
- Could **display this next lesson with those two sentences highlighted, ask pupils to correct it and then see if they can spot a similar error in their own work.**
- Quite a few of the stories focused heavily on describing everything that could be seen in a way that became quite repetitive and missed the opportunity to describe how the beach looked and / or the feelings of the tourists. **Repeat section from a few lessons ago on using adjectives to build suspense.**

Which pupils struggled in other ways?

- Jason wrote a story instead of a description – **repeat activity on purpose from a few lessons ago which included comparison of narrative and description – direct question on this in class to Jason.**
- Jill used quite a few slang words and phrases – **remind her about this, ask whole class what phrases they could use instead of 'don't even go there' and 'well chuffed'.**

Which pupils produced excellent work that could be shared with the class in the next lesson?

- Jane's description used the 'zoom' technique we have practiced in class really well – she zoomed in on a small child who was so engrossed in trying to catch a fish that he fell into the sea! – **share this.**
- James used the 'five senses' structure we have worked on in class, and gave some really original descriptions of the taste of the salt in the sea air blending with the salt on the fish and chips. **Share this on the visualiser.**

Whole-class feedback

Task: Narrative writing

What were the common misconceptions? Were there any mistakes made by lots of pupils? How could these inform the next lesson?

- Some persistent problems with tense, particularly near the end. Most of the stories started in the past tense, but when pupils got to the part where they described the alien landing, they switched into present for dramatic effect. Jack's story is a good example of this:
 - *The spaceship buzzed around the sky and then landed. Two aliens get out and threaten the locals!*
- Could **display this next lesson with those two sentences highlighted, ask pupils to correct it and then see if they can spot a similar error in their own work.**
- Lots of pupils used the word extraordinary to describe the alien landing, but lots misspelt it as 'extrordinary' – could **do quick activity on 'extra' as a prefix.**
- Quite a few of the stories focused heavily on action in a repetitive way and missed the opportunity to describe how the aliens looked and / or the feelings of the locals.
Repeat section from a few lessons ago on using adjectives to build suspense.

Whole-class feedback

Which pupils struggled in other ways?

- Jason wrote a newspaper report instead of a narrative – **repeat activity on purpose from a few lessons ago which included comparison of newspaper report and narrative – direct question on this in class to Jason.**
- Jill used quite a few slang words and phrases – **remind her about this, ask whole class what phrases they could use instead of 'don't even go there' and 'well chuffed'.**

Which pupils produced excellent work that could be shared with the class in the next lesson?

- Jane's story had fantastic simile about how the alien's tentacles looked like strands of spaghetti slithering around a plate – **share this.**
- James structured his piece really well – good mix of narrative and description, and a clear ending as well. **Share the ending on the visualiser.**



Comparative Judgement



Why is judging absolute quality hard?



Working at the expected standard

The pupil can write for a range of purposes and

- creating atmosphere, and integrating detail into the action
- selecting vocabulary and grammatical structures required mostly correctly
- using a range of cohesive devices*, including linking words and paragraphs
- using passive and modal verbs mostly accurately
- using a wide range of clause structures, sentence types and punctuation
- using adverbs, preposition phrases and other devices for detail, qualification and precision
- using inverted commas, commas for listing and other devices for clarity

In a perfect world, our school library would be able to offer everything that's possible and appropriate. But with budget limits throughout the school system, the administration must be sure they're making the best choices of books and magazines, so magazines like "Teen People" and "YM" should not be paid for instead of educational books and publications.

The purpose of school, and school libraries, is learning. Supporters of popular magazines argue that there is something to be learned from any reading material, but I believe some kinds of learning are more important to students' futures than other kinds. If the school library has to choose between teaching teenage girls about the achievements of Harriet Tubman and letting them read about their favorite movie

Normally, we ask: does this piece of writing meet the criteria?

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I've wanted to shoot a crow for
sometime now. I don't know why. I
feel this need. Something inside me tells
me to shoot the crows down. Is it
possible the ~~simple~~ simple tunes I hear
from the birds... or maybe the crows
do they mock me? Roost at that
wingsless, foot there, lets crow?
The crowing. The crowing. Maybe
my paranoia of the crows is linked
to that of the crowds (of other people).
Maybe its the people I want to shoot
but then what is the song-bird singing?
I am protecting something. I do not
want to kill anything. If only your
music had more than just a chorus.
I cannot figure out the lyric. The
scientists and the doctors think they
can and they might know what
they think they know. I know that
I do not know. Who am I and
who are my friends: the song-bird, the
crow, my body, the crowds, the
scientists or the doctors? Do I even
have any. It is too probable that you

In a perfect world, our school library would
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students' futures than other kinds. If the school
library has to choose between teaching teenage
girls about the achievements of Harriet Tubman

Instead, we should ask, is this piece of writing
better than this piece of writing?

Use exemplars to give meaning to rubrics

2b: choose the appropriate register

Cracks of light tore through the leaden clouds from the heavens above. Carnage ensued, men writhing and flailing, their groans carried away by the wind. Blacks and yellows painted the darkened sky as if a canvas; the H.M.S Endurance had sailed straight into hell.

4a: use the range of punctuation taught at key stage 2 correctly (e.g. a semi-colons), and, when necessary, use such punctuation precisely to enhance meaning and avoid ambiguity.

Waves slapped against the galleon of sodden wood before dissipating; paint peeled from the sails above as the wind howled. Puffs of coppery black clouds rolled across the horizon: charging. Small specks of white were scattered on the deck, unsuccessfully trying to quell the strength of the storm as if mice being taunted by an inhuman force.

1c: write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences, selecting the appropriate form and drawing independently on what they have read as models for their own writing (e.g. c) structure

Use exemplars to give meaning to rubrics

1a: write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences, selecting the appropriate form and drawing independently on what they have read as models for their own writing (e.g. a literary language)

Beneath them, a watery grave of emerald green
 Slashed in a swirling pit of sorrow. Merciless waves pursuing
 the ship, begging for help. Creaking and groaning of wood
 filled the ears of passengers down below. All hope, if
 there ever was any, had faded.

1b: write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences, selecting the appropriate form and drawing independently on what they have read as models for their own writing (e.g. b) characterisation

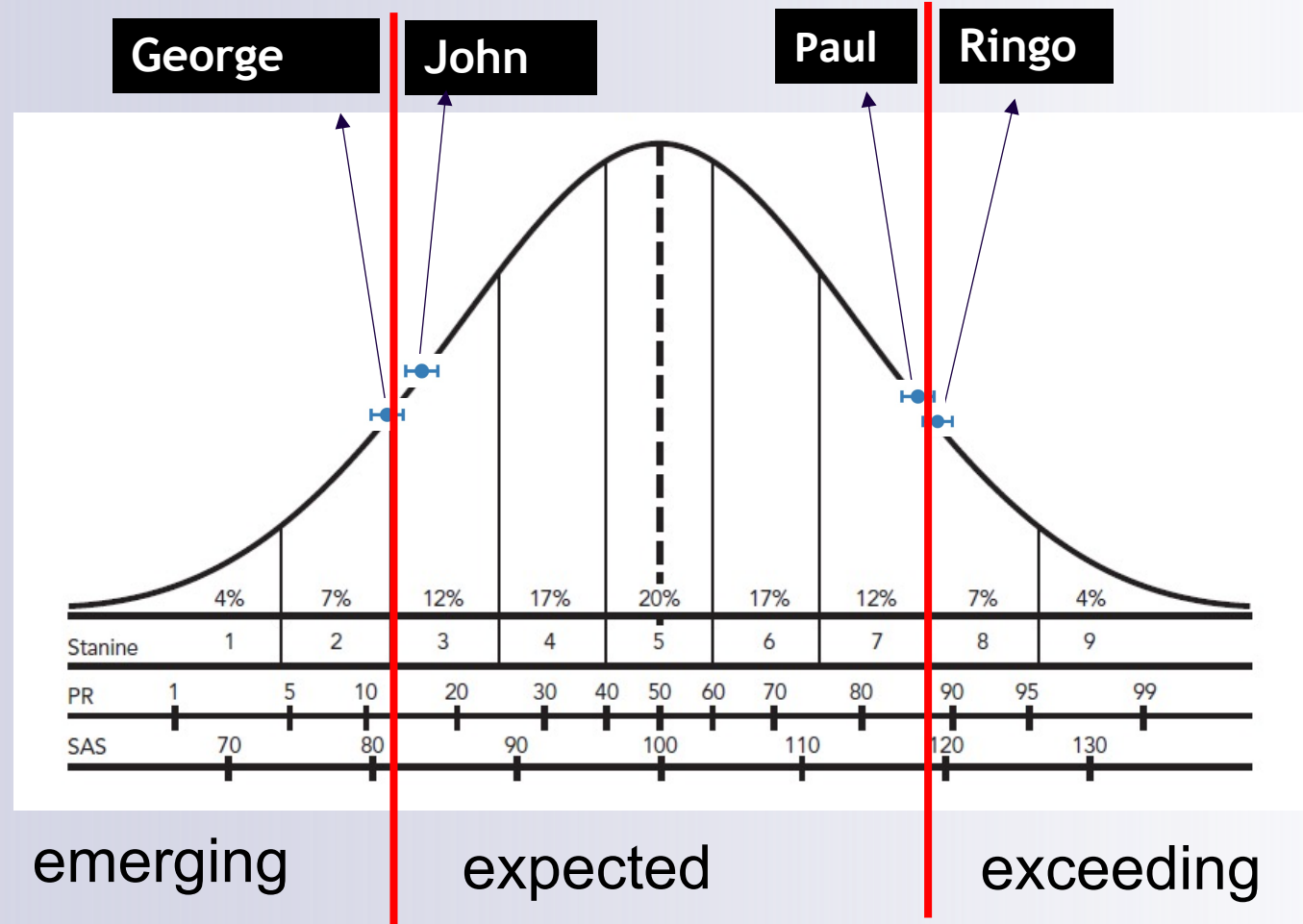
Unlike the hope of the passengers, the storm
 wouldn't fade. Crew members, wailing. Children, crying. Parents,
 wailing. A mish-mash of noises sent all into panic as
 people fell into the water left and right. Water
 sloshing onto the deck as they held onto pillars,
 doors and walls for dear life. Captain James, while
 attempting to calm down other crew and passengers, was
 scared out of his mind. No one trusted his words of
 comfort.

4e: when necessary, use such punctuation precisely to enhance meaning and avoid ambiguity.



Standardised scores

What is a grade?





Key principles

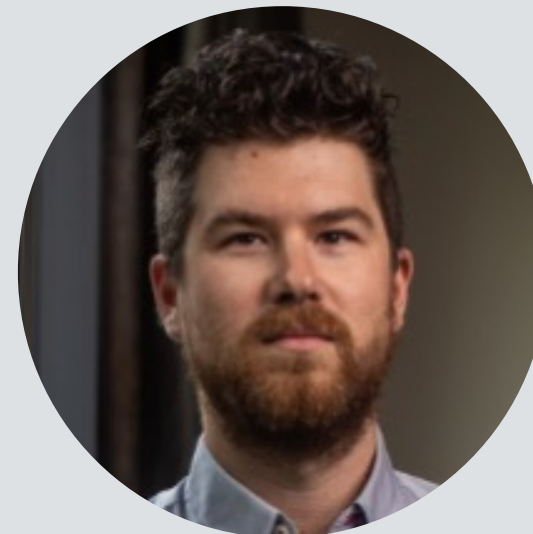
1. **Distinguish between the end goal and the steps on the way.**
2. **Use multiple-choice questions and whole-class feedback to define the steps on the way.**
3. **Use scaled scores & Comparative Judgement to define the end goal.**



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