JAPAN-OECD BILATERAL AGREEMENT FRAMEWORK

Students & Teachers Together

A COLLABORATIVE JOURNEY TOWARDS THE WORLD OF EXPLORATION, INQUIRY & RESEARCH!

A WORLD OF INQUIRY-BASED LEARNING

Welcome to this invitation to consider the ways that inquiry-based learning can inspire and support all students. Because we want to nurture students' capacities for and belief in their own agency, we look to opportunities for them to have hands-on and minds-on experiences that have ample room for creativity, high engagement, and room to grow built right into the design for learning. First, we visit Carol's classroom at the Jackman Institute of Child study Lab School in Toronto, Canada to see inquiry at work throughout a unit of study. Second, a message comes from Peeter Mehisto in Estonia who focusses on the question of how to meet academic expectations and assess growth in inquiry-based learning.

We begin with the powerful experience of a teacher's challenge to young students to design a rocket. They are afforded the time to play with materials, to adjust their thinking, and to invest energy in working on a problem of relevance to them. They are allowed and expected to take risks and make mistakes, gain information, refine and try again, observe outcomes and improve on their initial ideas. We see them flex their developing sense of themselves as listeners, contributors, and independent thinkers. Watching Carol and her students at work here, we are reminded that early childhood is the perfect place to observe the skills that good learners use throughout their schooling and beyond. One might think: "This is a class of kindergartners, and my students are not". But Carol and her students approached the process of learning like any group of human beings of any age – from elementary through high school and beyond – who are excited to know more, who delight in designing their way from what they know now to what they need to know to advance their understanding. Looking to the early years reminds us that learning processes are not bound by age and stage but rather are held by principles that are foundational to all learners.

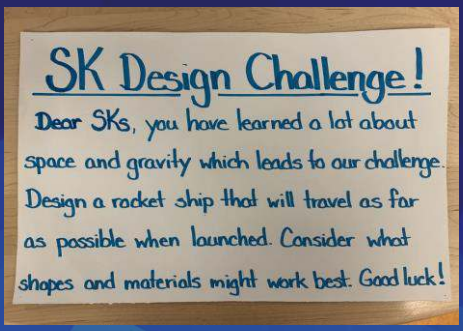
What do inquiry-based teachers do differently? There is no recipe for all contexts, ages, school systems and requirements. Perhaps what answers this question best is another question: What might you shift in small steps over time to include a larger portion of listening without judgment, making exploration possible, encouraging the borrowing of good ideas, observing the application of desired skills, supporting the improvement of ideas, and assessing the growth of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values in new ways?
The title of the student rocket-making learning is "Lift Off!" – perfect for rocket ships, and for students, teachers, administrators, and lifelong learners who take up the opportunity to change some part of their learning journey toward the path of inquiry.

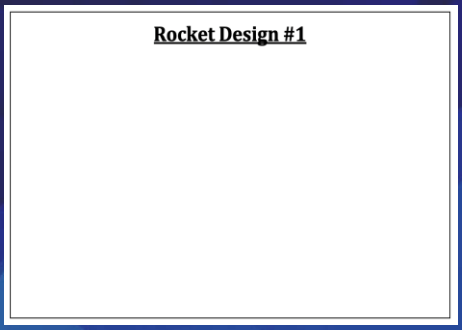
ELIZABETH MORLEY
Principal Emerita The Lab School, JICS, University of Toronto

LIFT-OFF!

EXPLORING ROCKET DESIGN IN SENIOR KINDERGARTEN

Carol Stephenson, The Lab School, JICS, University of Toronto





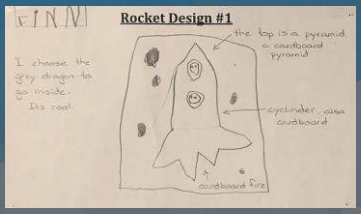
SETTING THE CHALLENGE

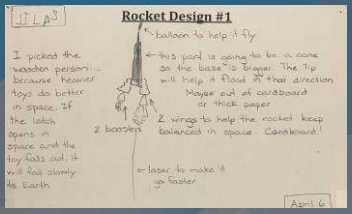
Each Spring in my SK we move into hands-on design work, an iterative process that engages my students in explicit idea improvement, integrated skill development, authentic problem-solving, and collaborative learning.

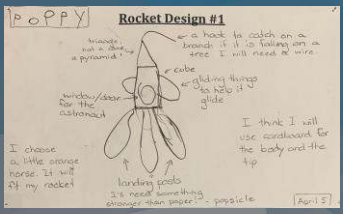
Drawing from our Winter explorations, I frame a challenge I feel will spark the children's curiosity and creativity. This past year, an investigation into Space led to a rocket challenge.

THE POTENTIAL OF A BLANK PAGE

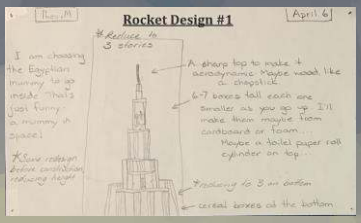
I begin by presenting the children with a blank page. This may sound scary. Perhaps some children will have nothing to say or draw. Yet in twenty years, I have never experienced a child unable, or even unwilling, to engage, and the results are fabulously individual and idiosyncratic. This is the ultimate in "low floor-high ceiling" accessibility, and allows for the broadest possible range of response.

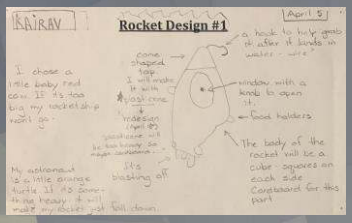


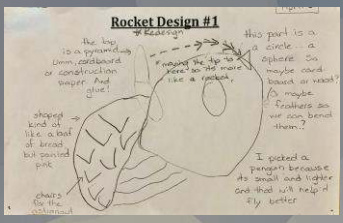


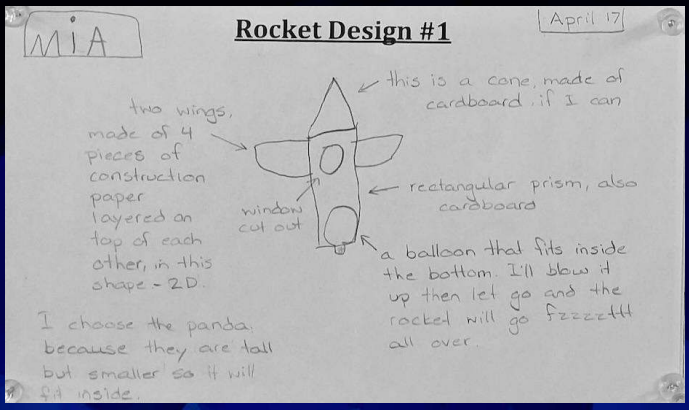


Idea diversity enriches community discussion and learning!









ASSESSING 'FIRST THOUGHTS'

These first designs become assessment benchmarks, a window into each student's initial understanding, as well as an archive of how they communicate what they know, visually and verbally.

Together, the students' drawings and words – as scribed by me – reveal aspects of their thinking, conceptual reasoning, vocabulary, and ability to explain their choices. We discover who they are as learners, creators, and communicators.

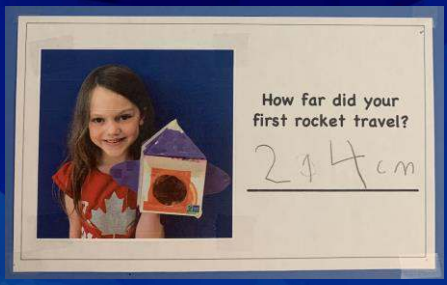
As the children drew, I made no comment on how much or how little their drawing looked like an "iconic" or "proper" rocket shape. When done, I simply asked them to tell me about each part of their design and consider what materials they want to use. (A balloon to make her rocket go "fzzzztt"? What a fantastic idea!)

Inevitably, the children asked if we were really going to turn their ideas into rockets. When assured we really were, the excitement grew exponentially!

COMMUNITY PREDICTIONS

Once all the rockets were made according to their designs, they "lived" in the classroom, on display. The children were encouraged to look, compare, and discuss the various shapes, sizes, and attributes amongst themselves before we all came together. The talk was rich and plentiful.

The day before the first test, we all sat down for a group discussion: Which rocket might travel the farthest and why? The conversation lasted over twenty minutes, and stayed focused not on who made what, but on the design elements. The children talked about size, weight, shape, the addition of wings – or balloons! And they almost always explained why they thought a particular element might help or hinder the rocket's flight, sometimes ingeniously.

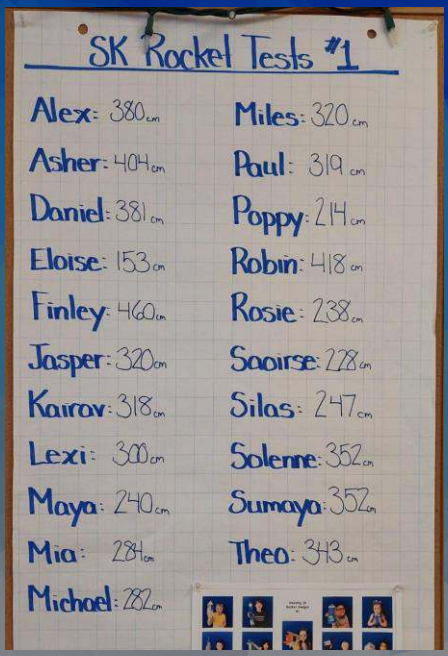


THE FIRST TEST
Authentic actionable assessment

Before any rockets were launched, we reiterated the purpose of the first test - to learn how to make a better rocket. We would watch for what elements seemed to work and what didn't. However far a rocket traveled, we would learn from the result and put that learning to immediate use in the second design.

Critically, this shifted us away from a one-shot, 'make or break' scenario in which only one child could 'win', and the rest would 'fail'.

And the tests were thrilling! The children cheered each other on, and whooped with joy when a rocket really took off. There was no sense of defeat - just excitement to get right back to the drawing board.



ARCHIVING THE DATA

We carefully noted the distance of each flight, as a group and individually, and the information was posted to the classroom wall – an example of how integrated, meaningful experience extends and deepens learning. Those three digit numbers had real, authentic meaning for these five and six year olds.

AUTHORITATIVE SOURCES
Expert knowledge

Before redesigning, I wanted to expose the children to information they might not intuit, or reason their way to. Books, videos and expert guests were all options. I invited a friend who is an aerospace engineer.
His visit highlighted four essential points underpinning idea improvement:

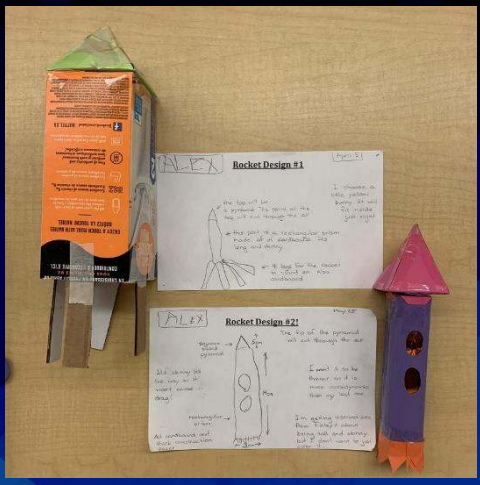
The introduction of scientific language on which to hang their developing understanding, in this case air resistance, thrust, drag, stability.

The introduction of new information, such as the concept of momentum.

Challenges to our assumptions, e.g. the impact of the 'astronaut's' weight.

Confirmation of promising ideas, such as narrow bodies and sharply coned tips.

***Note** – at no point did our visiting expert tell the children what to do or give them a template to work from. The next steps in redesign remained in their hands.*



REDESIGN
Key moment for reassessment, by teacher and student!

The student here said he was getting information from the child whose rocket went the furthest "but I don't want to just copy it."
He redesigned his rocket to be "tall and skinny all the way so it won't cause...drag!" and "thinner, so it is more aerodynamic than my last one."
As the teacher, I took note of the drawing, the incorporation of new information, the vocabulary used, and the explanatory reasoning. All had increased in sophistication.
Also note the idea of "copying". If you can explain *why* you are copying, you are effectively learning from others.

Air Resistance

Look how the skinny cone cuts through the air resistance!!!

Waving the paper, can you feel the difference?

Comparing the surface area of the balloon with a cone…

…the pointed cone falls quickly but the broad surface of the balloon is creating drag.

REBUILD
An example of community knowledge advancement

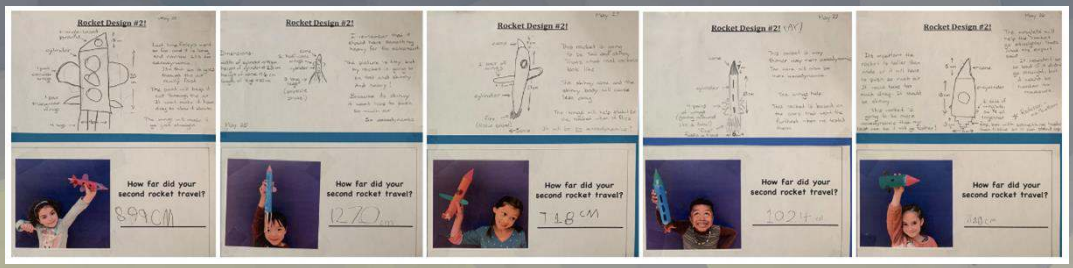
When the second rockets were all made, the children noticed that they looked much more similar than the first batch. I asked why that would be. "That's because we all learned about being more aerodynamic!"

THE RETEST
An opportunity to embed the importance of reiteration, trying again, learning from ourselves and others

The second test was not focused on which rocket went the furthest – though that was exciting, for everyone. Our focus was ”How much further did your second rocket go?” Every child’s second rocket improved on their first, by hundreds of centimeters!

I can still hear the mounting excitement as we counted each distance out along the measuring tape - ”…700, 800, 900, 1000, 1037!”

And as soon as we finished the second round of tests, just days before the end of school, a child asked ***“When can we start making our next rockets?”***



A Reflection Guide

by Yoshiko Maruiwa Art Teacher, The School at Columbia University
Richard Messina Principal Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study Laboratory School
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education University of Toronto

The workshops on inquiry-based education unfolded in Kobe, Japan, in August 2023, marking the commencement of a transformative approach. In her presentation on the "Lift Off" unit for Kindergarten, Carol Stephenson illuminated the potential of young minds and inquiry-based curriculum. The session showcased how her students learned about rockets and physics by creating paper rockets, conversing with experts, learning from peers, and creatively solving challenges. This demonstration drew attention to the universality of learning across all age groups through curiosity, embracing mistakes, and fostering collaboration.

Carol's presentation resonated among Japanese educators, sparking all kinds of questions and insightful comments. Recognizing the challenge of breaking away from established traditions, these educators exhibited bravery in taking the first steps toward becoming learners of inquiry for inquiry learning. Embracing curiosity and trial-and-error in teaching and learning, they embarked on a journey of growth and discovery alongside their students.

Embracing the inherent uncertainty that accompanies inquiry learning, the educators recognized the importance of fostering a safe and supportive space for learners to make mistakes or try something different from others in order to learn. As this educational odyssey continues to unfold, questions will inevitably evolve, reflecting the dynamic nature of inquiry-based education.

ENHANCED REFLECTION
A Journey into Inquiry-Based Teaching

Carol's thoughtfully designed study offers a rich opportunity for reflection, allowing us to delve into the nuances of inquiry-based teaching. As we navigate through the various aspects of her approach, let's ponder on the potential shifts we can incorporate into our own teaching contexts.

1. Setting the Challenge and Safe Expression of Ideas

a. Recording students' original ideas fosters a baseline for learning. How can you create a conducive environment for this in your classroom?

b. Carol ensured a stress-free sharing of pre-conceptions. What strategies could you employ to make it safe for your students to articulate their initial thoughts?

c. Using drawings to express ideas was an ingenious approach. How might you encourage alternative modes of expression for your students?

2. Value of Iterative Processes

Multiple opportunities enhance understanding. In what ways can you integrate iterative processes to allow your students to showcase their comprehension?

3. Sparking Curiosity and Creativity

Presenting an intriguing topic sparks engagement and creativity. How can you infuse curiosity into your lessons to captivate your students?

4. Hands-on Learning Opportunities
Carol provided materials for students to "play with their ideas." How can you incorporate hands-on learning opportunities in your teaching to allow students to explore and experiment?

5. Formative Assessment and Learning
How can you employ formative assessments to inform your teaching, focusing on the learning journey rather than the final destination?

6. Assessment as Learning
Creating assessments that are also learning experiences fosters a collaborative learning environment. How can you design assessments that promote learning in your context?

7. Timing of Expert Knowledge
Why did Carol delay bringing in expert knowledge? Consider the advantages of introducing external expertise/information at specific points in your teaching.

8. Collaborative Learning
Collaborative learning builds a shared collective understanding. How might fostering a sense of community impact engagement, knowledge, and the learning process?

9. Assessment of Knowledge and Skills
What strategies can you employ to assess students' understanding, including knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values?

10. Connection between Excitement and Engagement
Explore the connection between excitement, engagement, and learning. How can you cultivate enthusiasm in your students to enhance their engagement?

11. Teachers as Designers of Learning Experiences
Reflect on your role as a designer of learning experiences. How can you actively shape and enhance the learning journey for your students?

12. Embracing Idea Improvement
Making students aware that all ideas are improvable instills a growth mindset. How might this perspective influence their views on mistakes?

13. Curriculum Coverage in Rocket Study
Consider the multifaceted curriculum areas covered by the Rocket Study. How can you integrate diverse subjects into your teaching?

14. Developing Agency in Students
Reflect on how Carol's approach empowered students with agency. In what ways can you facilitate your students in taking responsibility and affecting positive change?

15. Transformative Competencies
Explore how Carol's teaching experience helped students develop transformative competencies. How can you foster value creation, dilemma reconciliation, and personal responsibility in your students?

16. Cyclical Learning Process
Apply the Anticipate, Act, Reflect cycle to Carol's study. How does this process align with the learning journey she orchestrated?

In drawing inspiration from Carol's example, let's embark on a journey of gradual change, aiming for a 1% improvement in our teaching practices each day. These incremental adjustments will undoubtedly shape a new and enriched approach to inquiry-based teaching.

A journey to explore new visions of assessments that motivate students ~ Students' colours can change! ~

1. Learning from an Estonian experience to reform assessment

Peeter Mehisto University College London Institute of Education, Faculty of Education and Society

'**The primary purpose of assessment is to support learning'**, so states the Estonian strategic plan *Education 2035*. Assessment is as a tool not only for students to learn, but also a means for the education system and its people to learn. It has taken two decades to largely realise this intention, as well as professional development, research, new legislation and new assessment instruments. Yet more work is needed.

In recent years, the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research has guided the creation of formative assessment vehicles including surveys to nudge education stakeholders to take more personal and collective responsibility for their own long-term development and school improvement. These instruments are mainly voluntary and mark-free. Importantly, they generate substantial feedback for teachers and students.

For example, there are instruments to assess the general competences of self-management, learning to learn and communication. The assessments are conducted in Grades 2, 3, 6 and 8. Estonian research has shown that self-management and learning skills are intertwined and help students to be more effective learners and improve their sense of wellbeing. Teachers choosing to use these assessments may also fill out a survey on their teaching practices. The survey aligns with the student assessments.

Feedback is automatically generated in the form of individual reports on each student and classes as a whole. The reports identify student and teacher development needs and help teachers interpret the results. School principals do not receive the reports.

Student, teacher and parent surveys help make visible factors associated with satisfaction and wellbeing that influence student learning. Stakeholders in education can use survey data to cooperate in co-constructing more supportive, stimulating and safe learning environments.

At the school level, for example, in order to help students build planning, group work, self-reflection and self-regulation skills, Pelgulinna Gümnaasium in Tallinn runs independent learning days. They take place one day a week for 3 terms in Grades 5–11. Students are given integrated assignments that connect concepts from diverse subjects. This helps make learning more meaningful. The school gathers feedback from students about the independent learning assignments and the related learning processes in order to enhance both. A side-effect has been that student examination results have substantially improved.

For more details, please visit the code;
"Estonia: Co-constructing the future we need now"
Chapter Title: "Voluntary, yet attractive and powerful low-stakes assessment "

What does 'evaluation' mean to you?
What is it for? Who is it for?

2. Implications for Japan on assessment from the Estonian case study: through the eyes of a researcher and a teacher

Thorough distinction between 'formative assessment' and 'summative assessment'!

Tadahiko Abiko, Professor Emeritus, Nagoya University

It was B. S. Bloom who, in the late 1960s, brought ‘formative evaluation’ to people’s attention by distinguishing it with the conventional form of evaluation which he named ‘summative evaluation.’ In doing so, he emphasized the significance of formative evaluation. Bloom clearly stated that the foremost difference between formative and summative evaluations was its purpose. On the one hand, the formative evaluation’s purpose was to use the evaluation data in order to redesign and improve the methods and processes of instruction. On the other hand, summative assessment’s purpose was to use the evaluation data to indicate the students’ level of achievement.

Despite the fact that these two forms of evaluation are distinguished by the 'purpose' of the assessment, some researchers and especially those at the National Institute for Education Policy Research interpreted these two forms of evaluation as ‘analytical evaluation’ and ‘comprehensive evaluation’ or ‘assessment’ and ‘rating’ by focusing on the 'method' of the assessment. As a result, formative evaluation turned into ‘perspectival assessment for learning’ and summative evaluation into a comprehensive ‘rating’ that averaged out the multiple perspectival assessment results in the Guidance Record (e.g. three perspectival assessments A, B, and B would result in a rating of B). Because perspectival assessment and rating were made to have a direct correlation with each other, the difference between the two became blurred, and 'formative' and 'summative' assessments, which should have been differentiated by their 'purpose', became widespread in schools, with the only difference being whether they were 'analytical' or 'comprehensive/summative', focusing on 'method'.

However, according to Peeter, not only is the intended distinction between formative and summative evaluations observed in Estonia but the formative assessment that was originally used in classroom learning and instruction has been extended to the evaluations of curriculum, schools, institutions, and other administrative policies and guidance at all levels. I was surprised but it made sense that formative evaluation should be applied to all aspects of educational activity, and I see Estonia as an esteemed model in this regard. During my tenure at the Central Council for Education, I repeatedly made the distinction between formative and summative evaluations to defend my argument that the cumulation of perspective evaluation does not result in 'comprehensive' evaluation. My plea, however, was not supported and the two are still correlated in Japan as ‘perspectival assessment for learning’ and its overall ‘rating,’

Finally, I would like to discuss the data used in these evaluations. There is a wide range of qualitative and quantitative data collection around assessment. In my view, the same data can be used in different ways depending on its purpose. Some of them may be used for 'formative' assessment but not for 'summative' assessment, in which case data may have to be collected separately for the latter purpose. We must keep the number of activities to be assessed to the necessary minimum, but it is necessary to determine whether the data is intended to help improve teaching for formative assessment or for rating useful for placement in a scale of measurable order. The content of 'assessment data' and 'rating data' can be different. Discarding such differences, it is logically a mistake to believe that the cumulation of analytically derived data will result in an overall rating. We must follow Estonia’s example and separate the two even for administrative activities. (OECD, External Expert)

On ‘rating’ and ‘assessment’

Kiichi Chichiishi, Art teacher, Ozu Junior High School

I believe it is important to distinguish the terms ‘rating’ which places the learning outcome in a serialized order and ‘assessment’ that points the learner toward the next step in his or her learning process. Due to the evaluation system adopted by the school or the municipal government, I have been asked in the past to numerically ‘rate’ an artwork. It is, however, a problem for a single teacher to numerically rate an artwork because the ‘rating’ is bound to change with the instructor.

In art education, it is more important to provide an ‘assessment’ that helps students articulate their production process using language. When I speak to my students about their artwork, I make sure to point out its positive aspects and characteristics that make the work stand out artistically. Students who notice something through their communication with others or by observing other artwork will deepen their inquisitive thoughts that guide their inquiry process. Giving an assessment to their inquisitiveness will also, at the same time, improve the students’ self-efficacy. In this way, the ‘assessment’ cycle helps students learn by deepening their inquisitiveness that can guide them to their next challenge.

What makes ‘formative evaluation’ and ‘summative evaluation’ different for you? How about ‘rating’ and ‘assessment’?

3. Students' voice: assessment we want

OECD Learning Compass places 'student agency' at its center. In Japan, an 'agentic action' aspect is mainly picked up, i.e. 'the capacity to set a goal, reflect and act responsibly to effect change'. It is important to remember its underlying belief, i.e. 'students have the ability and the will to positively influence their own lives and the world around them'. Therefore, for students to have that will to influence their life and the world around them (including their everyday normal life), it is essential that they can 'feel confident that they can make a difference (self-efficacy)', and 'value their own being (a sense of self-worth)'. Students find comfort in discovering the valuable, unseen parts of themselves (their true colours).

Children have the right to be heard (Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 12). In our projects, we tried our best to create 'safe and secure space' in all and various situations where children, students and pupils can freely express their opinions about 'assessments we want', hoping that they can discover their 'true colours' in their own inspiration. Below, please listen to the students' voices from several journeys exploring 'assessments we want'.

A journey to discover my true colours begins!

The first journey, searching for 'my true colours', began with one of the sessions at the workshop held at Kobe Shinwa University on 27 August. This session focused on 'student voice', bringing together a diverse group of students, not only junior and senior high school students, but also university and graduate students. It started with the questions such as "What is assessment in the first place?", "What kind of assessment do you want?" and "What do you feel uneasy about the current assessment". The session was conducted in a hybrid format, utilising a whiteboard and sticky notes/Jamboard. Please imagine as if you were with us at the workshop, by answering the following questions as a student!

1. What is 'assessment' for you?
2. What kinds of assessments make you happy, and make you want to learn more? What kinds of assessments let you feel down, and make you feel unmotivated to learn?
3. Let's re-imagine future assessments!
   - Who is assessment for?
   - Who do you want to assess you?
   - Who do you want to asses?

I had the experience of stop going to school when I was in junior high school. At that time, I received the lowest marks for my studies or, in some cases, teachers didn't even give me any marks. In such a situation, I could not have the courage to go to school. Even if I went, the only words my peers said to me were, 'You just arrived now?', 'You are late again.', etc. But one teacher said to me" Oh, you managed to come to school! That's great!" and praised me. At that time, I felt that everyone takes it for granted that all students come to school. But, for those who struggle coming to school, if teachers can value the courage to come to school, it can help raise self-esteem of those students.

Our dialogue has revealed some unintended effects of discussing 'evaluation'. The word 'evaluation' itself implies a divide of positions - a person who evaluates (teacher) and a person who is to be evaluated (student). After the dialogue among students themselves, though an authentic process of re-thinking and re-imagining evaluation, students started to uncover what they expect of evaluation. Students' voices include 'evaluation should be for me', 'I want my evaluation to show my progress and efforts', 'I want my evaluation to help me to become aware of what I am not aware of', 'I want evaluation that can make what is invisible in me visible', etc.

We would like to invite the readers to think about the question below. Please think with us!

The invisible yet valuable elements within us. That is our true colours.
How can teachers evaluate our invisible inner talents, our true colours?

A journey to think about assessment from “time not worrying about ratings”

The second journey ‘assessment we want’ was held on 23 December. Students organised a workshop themselves. They wanted the workshop to be for those students who feel they may not good at studying as a Christmas present for those students.

They gave the title of the workshop as ‘Changing your own way of looking at things can change your world". Based on their own experiences, they felt - if students feel they are not good at a subject, or if their grades are poor, they may dislike the subject. So, the students tried to secure time and space where <students don't have to worry about their grades or chance of being evaluated>. To this end, the venue of the workshop was chosen at a ‘farm’ to liberate oneself outdoor, which is situated in Tokyo Gakugei University.

Some high school students also wanted the session for participants to discover how different subjects can be connected to their daily lives. So, the activity for the workshop was chosen as a familiar everyday scene, 'taking a walk'. This is because anyone, at any age, can do.

The participants, ranging from a primary school pupil to university professors, enjoyed the 'farm walking' and chatting together regardless of age, position or school. During the walk, participants were asked to wear a set of ‘an discover meaningful patterns, and decode the world’! imaginative pair glasses of a particular subject' such as Japanese, maths, biology and art, Even though it was the same farm, wearing a pair of glasses of a different subject allowed participants to discover different connections between what they see in the farm and so-called ‘epistemic knowledge’ of a specific subject.

One student who joined this workshop because she was not good at maths. When she walked around the bamboo bush in the farm, a maths teacher came to her and said "We could use bamboo joints as a unit of measurement instead of a ruler." This was the moment for her to change the way she looked at math, i.e. from a ‘subject to study by memorising mathematical formula and solving problems in classrooms’ to ‘a subject to

Let’s re-imagine “a new report card”!

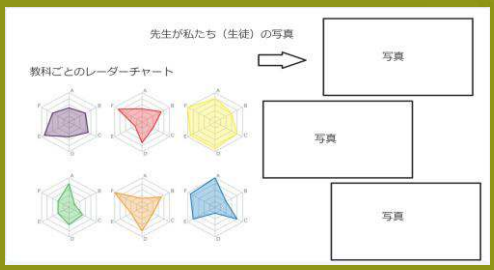
The third journey was the workshop 'Let's create a school compass' held on 26 December at Ozu Junior High School. Students interacted in a hybrid format and created a 'new report card they would like to receive'.

The first step was to discuss what they liked or disliked about the current report cards and evaluation. Many students wanted to receive more words from their teachers about their daily life; they want a report card that is like a letter from a teacher. They want the report card to be something they wish to want to read, something like letters with sincere thoughts. The students also used Jamboard to create a template for a new report card they wished to receive (*1). An interesting idea came up; students suggested a report card from students to teachers as a 'caring report card’ for reciprocal care. It would be good to have a system where both students and teachers can be evaluated in a mutually meaningful way in education.

By observing some changes in students after having enjoyed the walk, I learned that a sense of difficulty students feel with a certain subject could have a strong relationship with 'evaluation' in the classroom. I felt that students can, by physically leaving the classroom, naturally make new discoveries from a playful mindset, without worrying about ‘being evaluated', with the example of the student who learned that 'maths learning doesn't start with formulas, but it starts with discoveries'.

I also learned from student voice that, when they say they don’t like a certain subject or they feel they are not good at it, it could be because they are traumatised by 'words and/or evaluations given by others (especially teachers)'. By hearing a number of students’ personal experiences, I became aware that evaluating students with a single 'assessment criteria' can limit a student's future capabilities. I also felt that 'evaluation' should not only be based on exam scores or how students act in school, but also be done in an authentic context, going beyond the barriers between schools and communities.

Why do you study?



How significant does “evaluation” carry its meaning for you?

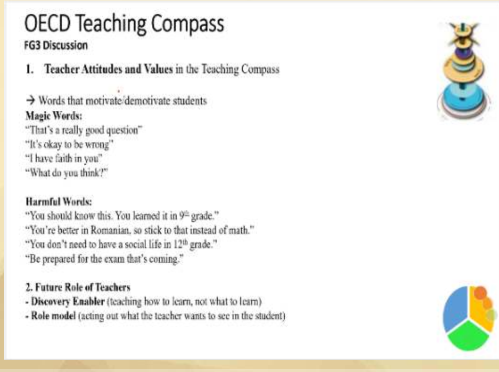
To our dear future teachers, "Assessment" we want - views of students from the world

On 6-8 December 2023, I took part in the OECD Education 2030 Global Forum held in Romania as a university student, together with two high school students, one graduate student, and other adult participants, At the forum, we students were given a number of opportunities to be engaged in dialogues, as equal partners, with many adult partners with different backgrounds, such as governments, schools, companies and universities from all over the world. Topics focused on how to navigate through uncertain and unpredictable future, such as the conflict in Ukraine and generative AI.

During the forum, one session was devoted to time for dialogue among students themselves. We prepared messages "To our dear future Teachers". We focused on two activities.

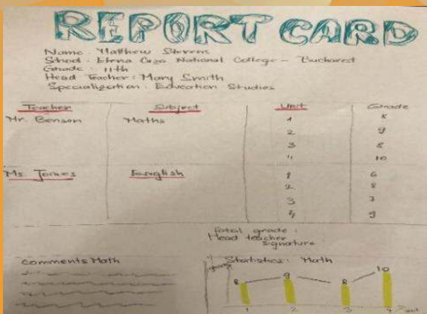
One was to reflect on 'teachers' words' – what students wished to hear from their teachers. Teachers' words matter for students much more than what teachers think.
Note: Please see the picture on the right; students were asked to share the 'magic words' and 'harmful words' from their students. Their responses will be considered for the teachers' attitudes and values in the OECD Teaching Compass.

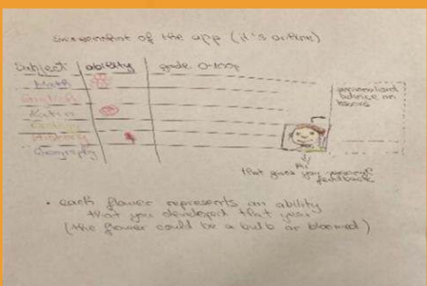
Words that bind them to do certain things do not make them happy, such as "You are already in grade X, so you should do 'Y", or "You need to study for your exams". Instead, words that help them to express their own being and feelings can make them happy, such as "It's okay to make mistakes", and "What do you think?" It has become clear that students feel empowered when they are given 'choices'. Teachers' words play a critical role in creating a safe and secured environment for students to feel relaxed and grow at school.



The other activity was to reflect on 'report cards' which students would have wished to receive from their teachers. We worked with students from around the world and came up with a 'new report card' that we would be happy to receive and that would make us want to learn more. We want a report card that is fun to look at, so we use colours to express this. In our dialogue, we faced a dilemma; while numerical grading is daunting, it is also easy to understand (how we are doing). An Estonian student preferred to see the max 100 scales, instead of 10-point scales, for a more precise evaluation per student. A Romanian student shared her preference for numerical grading per unit within each subject (rather than grading per subject); this way, she thought she could analyse better about her own learning. As shown in the pictures on the left, the students created a diverse types of report cards that do not exist today; they do not only contain graphs but also comments from teachers and AI or show assessment using a flower growth, photos and numerical values.

It was interesting to hear (from students from other countries) that numbers are necessary to some extent. The students from various countries co-created these new report cards through xxxx on their own experiences and shared and sympathised with each other's problems, Students were not able to share their true feelings about assessment (till they were engaged in this exercise), but we have it now. Some of their thoughts and feelings are now actually visible in the form of these 'new report cards'. I hope that future evaluation will be different.





← Examples of Report Cards created at the Global Forum

What are the future teacher profiles who can assess their students in ways in which they wish to continue learning with excitement?

The Value of Report Card for Students

The final journey to explore ‘assessment we want’ for us to ‘find our true colors’ occurred at the reflective workshop about the "Global Forum (GF) in Romania". It took place online on January 17 and 18. We shared the content of the GF dialogues with a broader range of people in Japan. The participants were able to understand the types of global conversations happening around the world today; they were also engaged in dialogues around the types of questions GF participants had given deeper thoughts on.

Like the original Global Forum, the reflective workshop also carved out time for a dialogue only among students. We had a discussion about their 'Dream Report Cards’ by generating new ideas from scratch.

I asked the students what they wanted to keep and what they wanted to change from the report cards they had received. They shared their views, such as “I don’t really have a vivid memory of my report card” and “I don’t really remember what it said.’

What struck me was that some students did not even have a memory of it and, thus, they could not answer what they wanted to keep or change from the report cards they had received.

This is when I came to realise how (Japanese) students perceive the current report card; many expressed similar opinions such as ‘I wouldn’t look back at it many times’, and ‘I would just scan through the grades.’ These opinions revealed what the current report card holds for today’s Japanese students.
I think this is something that came out from a dialogue only among Japanese students at this reflective workshop, which did not come out from a mixed group of students all around the world at the Global Forum.

Students wrote:
“I don’t really look at the report card much. It doesn’t leave me a big impression.”
“I can’t recall any stories that left me an big impression about the report card.”

What do you think should be included in a memorable report card?

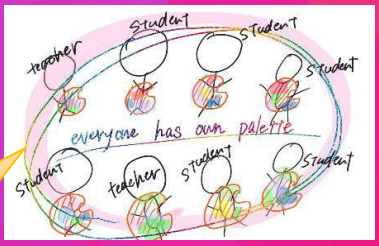
What are your true colors?

Did you enjoy the exploration of discovering your personal palette of colours (by answering the types of questions I set out for the readers)? Engaging in genuine conversations with students about ‘Evaluation/ Assessment’ helped me to reflect on the pitfalls of report cards as well as the intrinsic value which assessments hold for students. Students’ genuine thoughts and feelings surfaced when they were engaged in dialogue beyond pre-defined roles. They are not merely students (as passive recipients of education); they are an integral part of the education system.
I hope you will value the colours you discovered today. I believe those colours will change over time as you navigate through life; your colours will blend with others’, thought dialogues and mutual recognition, and give rise to new hues…
I would be happy if you could place your colours you discovered today on the palette within your hearts, blend them with various shades through many conversations with others, and keep creating new hues for the future.

What are your colours today?

Today’s classroom with a clear distinction between teachers evaluating students, and students being evaluated (left photo)

A future classroom where both students and teachers can confidently express their individual colours through evaluations (right photo)



End Credits

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