



Authentic Assessment and Learning Symposium

HKU

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What is Authentic Assessment

- requires learning that goes beyond mere recall
- requires the making of connections between doctrinal learning and the real world
- involves complex, ill-defined problems (requiring higher order thinking)
- requires real-world applications of learning
- takes into account the broad social context
- is sustained (work is spread over time)
- requires learning by doing (task-based)
- requires independent learning (individually or in groups)
- involves learning by discovery
- does not sacrifice the intellectual rigor of the discipline

Some advantages of Authentic Assessment

- enabling; feeds forward into future applications
- nurtures higher-order critical thinking and problem-solving skills
- permits/requires consideration of the social policy dimension
- nurtures independent and life-long learning disposition

How Law is Assessed

- Largely by way of examination, usually consisting of a series of hypothetical, often exaggerated fictional narratives created by the teacher
- Students respond with appropriate study habits

Some problems with the hypothetical problem

They are recognizable as hypothetical, ie they are often exaggerated and in the sequences presented bear only limited resemblance to the world of real events

They are teacher-invented, and carry the expectation of a pre-conceived solution

Students may focus on what the teacher was thinking

They may distance students from the social policy context, that legal problems are puzzles to be solved, rather than real problems suffered by real people

Reflective Media Diary:

News reports as learning and assessment tools

Context: Tort law

- Compulsory year 2 course
- 250 students
- Common law and legislation
- Text book and case law
- Lectures and tutorials
- Such courses typically assessed largely by in-hall examination



Reflective Media Diary:

News reports as learning and assessment tools

Characteristics of news reports:

- The material is realistic
- It is generally complex, requiring multiple perspectives
- The material is often factually incomplete, thereby mimicking a realistic professional scenario
- Its authenticity and relevance can foster a more serious approach to analysis and develop the habit of spotting issues in unflagged situations
- **It fosters good reading habits**

