



About Us:

The Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment System Consortium is made up of 14 states and additional partner agencies developing the Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment System, a computer-based assessment for the 1% of the K-12 public school student population with significant cognitive disabilities for whom, even with accommodations, general state assessments are not appropriate.

Led by the Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation at the University of Kansas, DLM is funded through a five-year grant awarded in late 2010 by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. The assessment will be implemented during the 2014-2015 school year.

The DLM Consortium is one of two multistate consortia to receive federal grants to create a next-generation alternate assessment linked to Common Core State Standards in math and English Language Arts for the 1% population. DLM member states are involved during every phase of DLM-AAS development.

DLM Consortium States

Iowa • Kansas • Michigan
Mississippi • Missouri
New Jersey • North Carolina
Oklahoma • Utah • Vermont
Virginia • Washington
West Virginia • Wisconsin



Instructionally Relevant Testlets

Teaching and learning are hard work and the Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment System (DLM-AAS) is being developed as a tool that simultaneously supports teacher instruction and student learning. It will accomplish both by having assessment tasks model good instruction and by being embedded within teachers' classroom activities throughout the school year.

"We are developing the DLM assessment where supporting instruction is in the very design of the assessment, not an afterthought, so that all children can meet high standards," said Neal Kingston, DLM project director and co-director of the Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation, which leads the DLM Consortium.

Because the DLM assessments can monitor students' progress throughout the year during teachers' classroom activities, assessment becomes embedded and not just solely part of a high-stakes, separate activity at the end of the school year. This gives teachers the chance to continually evaluate their students' learning and adjust teaching to optimize students' progress throughout the year.

Computer-delivered testlets are created starting with the Common Core Essential Elements, specific statements of the content and skills that are linked to the Common Core State Standards grade-level specific expectations for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Essential Elements are

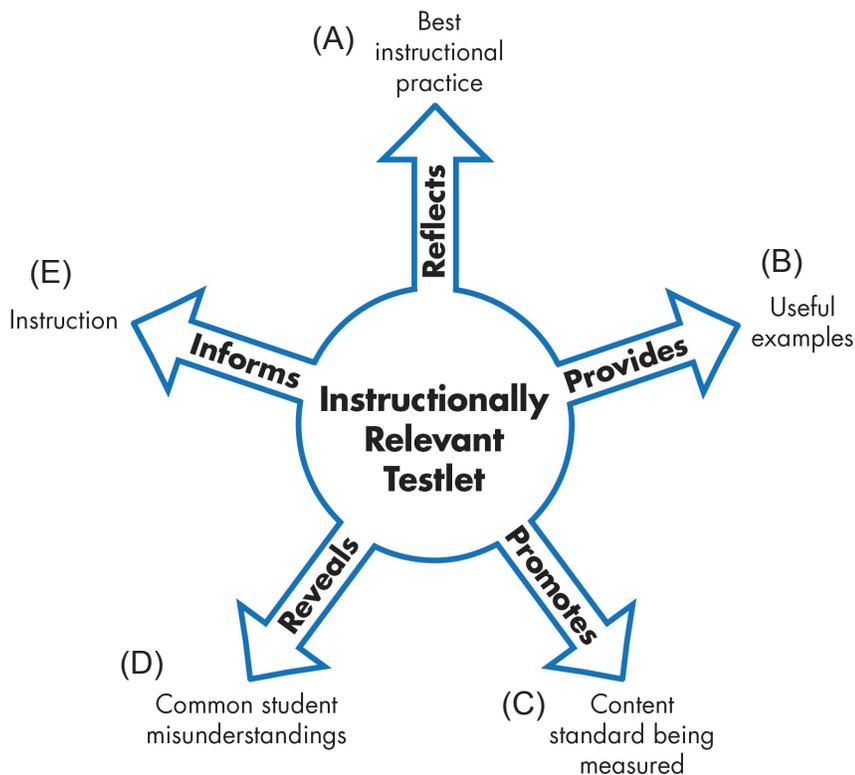
Testlets: An Overview

- Are made up of an engagement activity and 3 to 5 test items centered around a learning target
- Reflect classroom instructional activities
- Are embedded within instructional activities during the school year
- Are based on Common Core Essential Elements
- Are being designed with accessibility in mind

intended to provide links between Common Core Standards and grade-specific expectations for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

Each testlet, a package of items centered around a learning target, include an engagement activity and between three to five assessment items. Items may include performance-based tasks, technology-enhanced formats that allow students to order, sort, label, and match, or multiple choice scenarios.

The testlets and the DLM computer-based test delivery system are being developed following the principles of Universal Design, which provide access to the system to students with the most diverse learning profiles. For example, the system will be programmed to deliver the test using different response modes, such as a mouse or a one- or two-switch selection system, to accommodate students' needs.



(C) The instructionally relevant testlet promotes the content standard being measured because each testlet is based on an Essential Element. These important links to the grade-level Common Core State Standards are intended to reduce complexity of the target and increase access to the general curriculum for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

(D) An instructionally relevant testlet reveals common student misunderstandings about a particular skill or concept. As misunderstandings are revealed, missing precursor skills are identified and students are directed to testlets that provide examples of the instruction they require and assess required precursor skills.

(E) An instructionally relevant testlet informs teacher instruction by providing teachers with continuous results on student performance throughout the year. This provides teachers with valuable student performance information so teachers can adjust their instruction accordingly.

(A) An instructionally relevant testlet reflects best instructional practice because it reflects the instructional activities teachers use to support student learning. Also, the engagement activities at the beginning of each testlet provide an important instructional context around which the assessment items are centered.

(B) Instructionally relevant testlets provide useful instructional examples that teachers can carry over outside of the assessment environment. For example, teachers might use an engagement activity that begins each testlet as a model for setting the context for other lessons they teach.

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