**Designing High Quality Classroom Assessments:**

**Method-Target Match**

**Key question**:

Do assessment methods match learning targets?

**Assessment Method-Target Match**

Assessments can accurately or inaccurately reflect the current level of student learning. Obviously, our goal always is to generate accurate information. When we are clear about our purpose and have deconstructed the learning targets to determine the level of rigor and expectations for our students, then we have the foundation for a quality assessment because we know what needs to be assessed and what kind of results are needed. Determining the type of learning target—**knowledge** attainment, **reasoning** proficiency, mastery of a performance **skill**, **product** creation or disposition attainment will determine the type of assessment that is most appropriate.

* **Knowledge Targets** represent the factual information, procedural knowledge, and conceptual understandings that underpin a standard.
* **Reasoning Targets** specify thought processes students are to learn to do well within a range of subjects—solve problems, make inferences, draw conclusions, and form judgments.
* **Skill Targets** are those where a demonstration or physical skill-based performance is the heart of the learning.
* **Product Targets** describe learning in terms of artifacts where creation of a product is the focus of the learning target. With product targets, the specifications for quality of the product itself are the focus of teaching and assessment.

Next comes the challenge of creating an assessment that will deliver useful results. This task requires an assessment method capable of reflecting the intended target. Will it be selected response, written response, performance assessment, or personal communication? These four assessment methods are not interchangeable: each has strengths and limitations and each works well in some contexts but not in others. Our aim always is to choose a useful method for the intended purpose and learning targets—the quality of our assessments hinges on it.

**Learning Progressions**

Once the learning targets have been identified, it is helpful for students to see the progression from entry level to target level to advanced level. Click on this link to see a middle school teacher explaining her experience using learning progressions: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QkVEFYbG45w](https://email.sparcc.org/OWA/redir.aspx?C=1gM0tWm7aUuKLf-2GPYzEpw0iKWbhNIINTKsjjWWu9T_VEDBS2QJJ5rBKP6nnqHkms631mZxxow.&URL=https%3a%2f%2fwww.youtube.com%2fwatch%3fv%3dQkVEFYbG45w)