

An abstract painting with thick, expressive brushstrokes in various colors including brown, green, blue, red, and yellow. The composition is divided into several large, curved sections of color.

# ASSESSMENT

Sixth Edition

SALVIA / YSSELDYKE

# ASSESSMENT

SIXTH EDITION

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# List of Tests Reviewed

*Tests marked with an asterisk are new to this edition.*

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# Preface

**I**n the short time since publication of the fifth edition of *Assessment*, much has happened. Clearly, this is a time of extraordinary change and challenge in assessment of students. Consider just a few of the things that are happening.

*Goals 2000: The Educate America Act* was signed in March, 1994. It specifies eight educational goals—goals that our educational system is to reach by the year 2000. The Goals 2000 legislation calls for development of high national standards and assessments designed to help determine the extent to which students achieve the high standards. Personnel in state departments of education in most states are specifying graduation standards, outcomes, or the goals students are to work toward. And discussions about goals, standards, or outcomes invariably lead to discussions about the ways students will be assessed.

The push to develop high standards is a response to criticism of education and schooling. Since the early 1980s several publications have challenged the status of America's schools and the performance of students. Professionals and the public alike believe that if we set high standards, test students, and hold them responsible, then students will get better.

Nowhere has the call for better accountability been more clear than with respect to students at the margins, and specifically for those who are at risk of poor performance in school. The ways we have educated students with disabilities are being challenged, and the assessment and decision-making process is being rethought. The use of tests to classify and place students is being questioned, and with that questioning comes intensified effort to engage in pre-referral problem solving. Increasingly, assessment has moved into classrooms, and the use of assessments that do not have direct instructional relevance is being re-evaluated.

The debate has brought calls for more assessment, less assessment, and different kinds of assessment. Many educators argue that if we test more, students will show more improvement. Others argue that we should test less and teach more. Most are convinced we need to do a better job of assessing students, either with new tests or new applications of tests. All argue that at this very critical time it is imperative that educators be very knowledgeable about assessment and the ways assessment information is used to make decisions about students.

## AUDIENCE FOR THIS BOOK

*Assessment*, Sixth Edition, is intended for a first course in assessment for those whose careers require understanding and informed use of assessment data. The

primary audience comprises those who are or will be teachers in special education at the elementary or secondary level. The secondary audience is the large support system for special educators: school psychologists, child development specialists, counselors, educational administrators, nurses, preschool educators, reading specialists, social workers, speech and language specialists, and specialists in therapeutic recreation. In writing for those who are taking their first course in assessment, we have assumed no prior knowledge of measurement and statistical concepts.

## PURPOSE

Students have the right to an appropriate education in the least restrictive educational environment. Decisions regarding the most appropriate environment and the most appropriate program for an individual should be data-based decisions. Assessment is one part of the process of collecting the data necessary for educational decision making, and the administration of tests is one part of assessment. Unfortunately, tests have sometimes been used to restrict educational opportunities; many assessment practices have not been in the best interests of students. Those who assess have a tremendous responsibility; assessment results are used to make decisions that directly and significantly affect students' lives. Those who assess are responsible for knowing the devices they use and for understanding the limitations of those devices and the procedures they require.

Teachers are confronted with the results of tests, checklists, scales, and batteries almost daily. This information is intended to be useful to them in understanding and making educational plans for their students. But the intended use and actual use of assessment information have often differed. However good the intentions of test designers, misuse and misunderstanding of tests may well occur unless teachers are informed consumers and users of tests. To be an informed consumer and user of tests, a teacher must bring to the task certain domains of knowledge, including knowledge of the basic uses of tests, the important attributes of good tests, and the kinds of behaviors sampled by particular tests. This text aims at helping education professionals acquire that knowledge.

## THE NEW EDITION

### Coverage

Although the sixth edition retains the style, content, and organization of the first five editions, it does embody some major conceptual shifts. It continues to offer evenhanded, documented evaluations of standardized tests in each domain, straightforward and clear coverage of basic assessment concepts, and illus-



trations of applications to the decision-making process. Major shifts are taking place, however, in assessment practices in the schools. As school personnel strive to move to an ecological approach to assessment, they are engaging in new forms of assessment: portfolio assessment, performance assessment, assessment of instructional environments, and ecobehavioral assessment.

To reflect new assessment approaches, we have added five chapters and have incorporated into the chapters on technical considerations new material specific to these new approaches. The text devoted to reviews of assessment in specific domains is now divided into two parts, one on assessment in classrooms, the other on assessment using formal measures (largely outside of classrooms).

Our description of the kinds of decisions made using assessment information has been extensively revised to reflect current thinking and practice. In previous editions, we described five kinds of decisions made using assessment information. In this new edition, we describe thirteen kinds of decisions, grouped into four areas. We describe the ways assessment information is gathered for purposes of making pre-referral classroom decisions, entitlement decisions, post-entitlement classroom decisions, and accountability/outcomes decisions.

The sixth edition of *Assessment* features five entirely new chapters. Chapter 9 (Adapting Tests to Accommodate Students with Disabilities) covers the extensive work now going on in modification of test stimulus and response requirements to enable students with disabilities to participate in assessment. Chapters 12 (Using Student Portfolios in Assessment) and 13 (Assessing Instructional Ecology) describe new approaches to assessment including portfolio assessment, performance assessment, ecobehavioral assessment, and assessment of instructional environments. Chapter 26 (Assessment of Social-Emotional Behavior), also new to this edition, contains a review and evaluation of the scales most commonly used to rate personal and social behavior. Chapter 30 (Outcomes-Based Accountability Assessment) reviews the emerging practice of collecting data on the extent to which all students, including those with disabilities, are benefiting from their educational experiences.

Three chapters have been extensively revised. The first two chapters of the text now reflect current thinking on the use of assessment information to make decisions about students and many of the new concepts that underlie assessment practices. The chapter on Developmental Appraisal (Chapter 29) has been extensively reworked to include new measures and descriptions of new practices.

Test information has been updated and new reviews have been added. Forty-one new or revised tests are reviewed in this edition of *Assessment*. (A list of all the tests reviewed in this edition follows the Contents.)

## Organization

The sixth edition, in four parts, is an introduction to psychoeducational assessment. Part 1, Assessment: An Overview, places testing in the broader context of

assessment: Assessment is described as a multifaceted process, the kinds of decisions made using assessment data are delineated, and basic terminology and concepts are introduced. In Chapter 3 (Legal and Ethical Considerations in Assessment), we describe the ways assessment practices are regulated and mandated by legislation and litigation. In Part 2, Basic Concepts of Measurement, we give readers an understanding of the measurement principles needed not only to comprehend the content in Parts 3 and 4 but also to apply and use information obtained from tests they may administer.

In Parts 3 and 4, we review the most commonly used assessment instruments and approaches. In Part 3, Assessment in Classrooms, we address the kinds of assessments that typically take place in classroom settings. The focus of these chapters is on observations, interviews, non-test-based approaches, and those test-based approaches designed specifically to provide information on effective instruction. In Part 4, Assessment Using Formal Measures, we review formal (usually standardized) testing that occurs for the most part outside of classrooms.

Test evaluations follow a similar format. Initially we describe the kinds of behaviors sampled by tests in the domain; then we describe specific tests. For each test, we examine the kinds of behaviors it samples, the adequacy of its norms, the kinds of scores provided, and evidence for technical adequacy (reliability and validity). Consistent with our earlier editions, we evaluate the technical adequacy of tests in light of the standards set by three professional associations (the American Psychological Association, the American Educational Research Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education) in their document entitled *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*.

A summary of chapter content, a list of additional reading, and several study questions appear at the end of each chapter to help readers expand their knowledge and apply the fundamental concepts developed. Appendixes at the end of the text include two tables of statistical data, a list of equations used in the text, a list of test publishers, suggestions for how to review a test, and a description of item-response theory. Complete references for in-text citations follow the appendixes.

Assessment is a controversial topic; we have attempted to be objective and evenhanded in our review and portrayal of current assessment practices.

## Acknowledgments

Many people have assisted in our efforts. We wish to express our sincere appreciation to Michael Vanderwood (University of Minnesota) and Nicole Ofiesh (Penn State University), who helped us conduct background research on specific topics. The following individuals provided constructive criticism and helpful suggestions during development of this text:

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The text represents a collaborative effort, and we believe we have produced an integrated text that speaks for both of us.

John Salvia  
Jim Ysseldyke

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