Assessment for Sciences Humaines 9

Overview under the new Curriculum

As you have likely heard, the BC Ministry of Education has implemented a new curriculum across all grade levels and subject areas. The Grade 8 and 9 programs has been operating under this new curriculum for three years now. One of the driving forces of this new curriculum, regardless of subject area, is an emphasis on skills: How to research, analyze, question, evaluate, etc. information. While the content (facts and things to know) still exists, there is a reduced focus on rote memorization and an increased emphasis on *how* to use that information. That’s not to say that students don’t have to learn any facts; they certainly still do. However, in assessments tasks, students will be asked to *think about* and *use* that information rather than simply repeat it back. In the social studies program, these skills are broken down into six broad categories, called “Curricular Competencies”: Significance, evidence, continuity and change, cause and consequence, perspective, and ethical judgement (see <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/social-studies/9> for further details).

Assessment

In this course, rather than using a points system to collect scores on various assignments, quizzes, and tests, students must demonstrate their level of understanding and ability with various learning goals and competencies. For example, instead of getting one grade for a quiz that covers many different topics and/or competencies, they will be evaluated according to individual learning goals such as “I can make appropriate inferences based on the examination of primary sources.”

There are a few great reasons for using this system:

* Feedback will reflect what students know/understand, regardless of when it was learned.
* Students can use feedback from any task or assessment as an opportunity to improve their learning and understanding.
* Each assessment is directly tied to one or more learning objectives. When assessments are returned, students will know exactly in which objectives they are achieving expectations, and where they are still developing their skills.
* Students can target specific learning objectives in their learning at any later point in the year. For example, to improve their assessment or show that they’ve improved in a particular area, they don’t have to re-write the entire assessment. Instead, they can simply get re-evaluated on the target learning objective.

Feedback will be assigned based on a four-step scale: “Emerging, Developing, Proficient, and Exceptional (Extending)” (see table below). Questions of effort, lateness of work, attitude, participation, and attendance will not be addressed in this feedback. Those factors will be reported separately through work habits (N, S, G, E) and through feedback comments on report cards. To be successful, I expect that students will continue to not be late, to give their best effort, to participate, and to have a good attitude. These are attributes that lead to good learning!

Students and families will be able to keep track of student progress by using the parent portal in MyEd BC. Information in MyEd BC will reflect the most recent assessments available. As new assessments are collected, updated results for individual learning objectives (the assignment columns) will replace older ones. Note: Recorded results will only reflect the results of **the most recent assessment** for each learning objective. Overall achievement is made up of dozens of learning objectives. It is difficult to assign a single number to a student’s work that is an accurate reflection of the sum of all of the varied types of learning that students experience. For a student to do better, the path forward is simple: pick specific learning objectives that need work, read through feedback from past assessments, practice that skill, and ask to be reassessed when ready.

As the development of skills and the mastery of learning objectives is an ongoing process, all work is treated as “in progress” until the end of the year. The school year is not broken up into three “terms”. Any learning objective or assessment, regardless of when it was first targeted and evaluated, can be retried at any later point in the school year. At the end of the year, each student’s learning objectives, projects/assignments, etc., will be used for final grade determinations.

Assessment: For each learning objective, students will be getting feedback according to this rubric:

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| OR | **Exceptional / Extending (EXT)** | **Your work is remarkable.**  You have shown a thorough and complete understanding of the concepts involved and can demonstrate an advanced level of reasoning and insight. |
|  | **Proficient (PRF)** | **You have a firm grasp of the skill.**  You have demonstrated that you understand most of the concepts involved. You may miss some steps in your reasoning, or demonstrate a lack of understanding in some area. |
|  | **Developing (DEV)** | **You have demonstrated some understanding of the skill.**  You may have some confused understanding or inability to correctly apply skills to an understanding. You require help to think through the question and produce a satisfactory answer. |
| OR | **Emerging (EMG)** | **You are only starting to understand the skill.**  You can get started on the skill with significant help. |

OR

OR