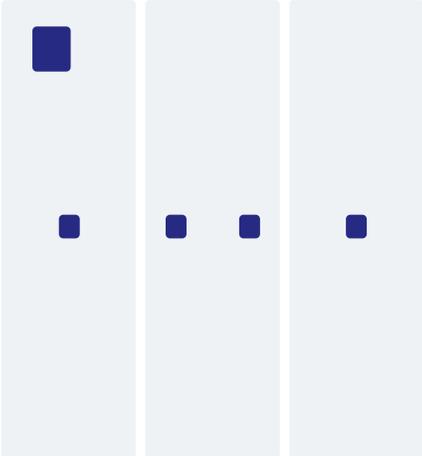
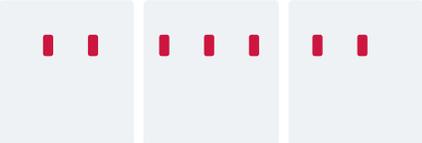
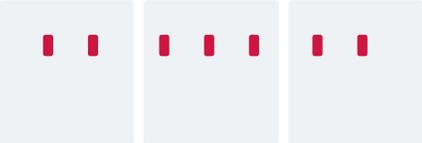
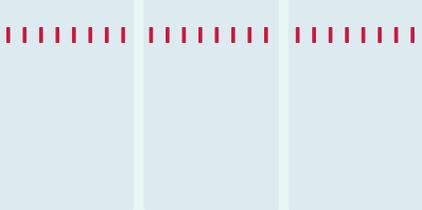


Assessing Students This Fall: Focus on the Classroom

Academic assessments are a staple of K-12, from the classroom on up to the state level. But this year, as students return to their studies, both online and in-person, after a disrupted spring, experts are advising educators to use special care in handling testing. Most are urging schools to use standardized tests sparingly, and only for appropriate, actionable purposes. They're also advising an emphasis on **informal, classroom-based tests**, since they are the best tools to adjust instruction to meet students' needs.

			WHO USES THEM	HOW TEST RESULTS ARE USED
FALL	WINTER	SPRING		
STATE 			END-OF-YEAR ASSESSMENT Large-scale, standardized summative test	State, district, school leaders Report to the public, analyze performance overall and by group, allocate resources (state leaders); as an added source of data to guide planning and practice (district and school leaders)
DISTRICT 			FALL ASSESSMENT Built into a statewide testing system or purchased separately	District leaders, principals Gauge baseline performance, get a broad-brush sense of students' academic needs. Many experts dispute claims that these kind of assessments can "diagnose" learning loss and caution that they generally are not fine-grained enough to guide classroom instruction
CLASSROOM 			PERIODIC DISTRICTWIDE ASSESSMENTS A common prompt or task; interim tests built into a statewide testing system, or purchased separately	District leaders, principals Monitor curriculum implementation, design PD, allocate resources, such as instructional coaches, where needed
			PERIODIC UNIT TESTS Embedded in curriculum	Teachers, principals Inform instruction, give students feedback (teachers); discuss instruction, guide professional learning, plan additional supports/challenges for students
			INFORMAL CLASSROOM ASSESSMENTS Well-designed, ungraded activities, questions, or short quizzes	Teachers Check for understanding, adjust instruction, give feedback

Experts emphasize that this type of testing will be the best tool in the upcoming year for teaching to grade-level, and adjusting instruction to meet students' needs