



An example of a valid group assessment

<http://topdrawer.aamt.edu.au/Patterns/Assessment/Approaches-to-assessment/Group-assessment/Designing-group-assessment>

Mrs A's Year 1 class had been making repeating patterns in a variety of media. She wanted to be sure that all her students understood the general idea of a unit of repeat. So she prepared the following group assessment.

The student response sheet had six rows like this, well spaced out and with each row numbered.

1.

Here is what Mrs A said to the students. The ellipsis (...) shows where she paused to check that all the students were following her.

Mrs A: Look at the paper I gave you. Please write your name at the top. ... Do you see the rows of squares? ... You are going to make some patterns in each row. I will tell you what sort of pattern to make. You are going to use your coloured pencils. ... Are you ready? Put your finger on the number 1. ... In that row, colour in the first square in green. ... Now colour in the second square in that row in blue. ... Now finish colouring in the row to make a pattern with these two squares as the unit of repeat. ... Put your finger on the number 2. ... You are going to make a different pattern in this row. ... Draw a red circle in the first box. ... Now draw a red triangle in the second box. ... Now draw another red triangle in the third box. ... Now finish the row to make a pattern with these three squares as the unit of repeat. ...

Mrs A had created similar tasks for Rows 3 and 4, using letters for Row 3 and dogs and cats for Row 4. For Row 5, she had them colour a unit of repeat in the 3rd, 4th and 5th boxes and extend it in both directions. For Row 6, she said:

Mrs A: Make any pattern you like in the last row, but circle your unit of repeat.

Notice how Mrs A had followed the four principles of designing group assessment.

- She started with a pattern based on colour (which students had used most in the patterns they had made in class) and the shortest possible unit of repeat. The students experienced **immediate success**.
- Then she varied both the objects and the unit of repeat. This type of activity was **familiar to** the students, because they had also varied the objects and the unit of repeat in classroom tasks.
- She gave **short, simple instructions** and always paused to ensure that students had understood what she was saying. (She also observed students as they made each pattern, checking again that they understood the task.) In order to give all students the best chance to show what they had learnt, she always waited until all the students had finished one task before presenting the next one.



- She included only six patterns in the assessment. Students enjoyed this exercise because it was **not too long**, included a wide variety of challenges, and gave them a feeling of success. They particularly enjoyed the final, creative task.

As a result, she had created a valid assessment of her students' understanding.