

M2-S6: Culturally Responsive Assessment Practices

GK	<p>Hello Christina and hello listeners, you are on Module 2, session 6 of the Tale Academy, Culturally Responsive Assessment Practices. Welcome! Now I want you all to listen up: you've all got to master all of the material in this session because some of it is going to appear on the CTLE exit quiz!</p> <p>You see what I did there?</p>
CLH	<p>Indeed I did, Gina! And how many of us have been guilty of prefacing a lesson with a statement like this? Like, you gotta learn this because it's ON THE TEST. If we're honest, we've all probably said it at least once – even if it was just a last-ditch effort to convince our students that they need to pay attention and do the work! However, statements like this not only undermine the true purpose of education but also represent a missed opportunity to demonstrate the relevance of what students are learning. This is why it is so important to include authentic assessments in our practice – especially if we want to uphold the principles of the New York State Education Department's Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework.</p> <p>The New York Performance Standards Consortium, which is developing models for reimagining assessment in the state of New York, asserts that authentic assessment tasks are those that “grow out of the curriculum.” Let's explore this concept in more depth.</p> <p>First, what is an authentic assessment? I mean, I sort of know...</p>
GK	<p>As a refresher, according to Jon Mueller's Authentic Assessment Toolbox, authentic assessment is “a form of assessment in which students are asked to perform real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills.” Authentic assessments literally grow out of the curriculum.</p> <p>Student performance on authentic assessments is typically measured via a rubric that is aligned with specific standards. Now, let's look at the connection between authentic assessment and CRSE.</p>
CLH	<p>Right, because what we choose to assess and how we choose to assess are frequently embedded in culturally biased patterns and can result in perpetuating perceived deficits of marginalized students.</p> <p>An underlying assumption may be that our assessments are sound, and some of our students are impaired. However, looking at our assessments through a CRSE lens suggests that the reverse may be true. Perhaps our students are sound, and our assessments are impaired.</p> <p>The CRSE lens suggests that If we evolve our assessments to be more inclusive of our students' intersectional identities, we are more likely to engage them in ways that will lead to their enhanced learning and improved achievement. A foundational</p>

M2-S6: Culturally Responsive Assessment Practices

	premise of CRSE is acknowledging, honoring, and leveraging the whole child and connecting their lived experiences to the content and, thus, also to the assessments.
GK	In <i>Equity and Assessment: Moving Towards Culturally Responsive Assessment</i> , the authors write: There is an assumption at play within the field of assessment that while there are multiple ways for students to learn, students need to demonstrate learning in specific ways for it to count. That’s intense. For instance, in a specific course[,] different approaches may be used to engage students in the material, but demonstration of...students’ knowledge, skills, and abilities are done uniformly in the same assignment or approach — so while there may be multiple approaches and methods used across a program or institution for assessing student learning, at each instance of demonstration a single approach is employed.
GK	In other words, the efforts we make as teachers to modify our curriculum to be student-centered and culturally responsive can be completely compromised by not extending this to our assessments. Let’s do a side-by-side comparison of traditional assessments and authentic, CRSE-aligned assessment methods.
CLH	How do you want to do this side-by-side thing? Should we do a role play? Do you want to be traditional assessment and I can be authentic assessment?
GK	A traditional assessment tends to have more concrete questions that seek “correct” answers.
CLH	An authentic assessment promotes critical thinking with diverse perspectives - perspectives that are grounded in students’ intersectional identities.
GK	A traditional assessment seeks to measure knowledge acquisition.
CLH	An authentic, CRSE-aligned assessment seeks to develop meaningful skills and recognizes various and equally valid ways of knowing.
GK	A traditional assessment focuses primarily on written measures.
CLH	An authentic, CRSE-aligned assessment combines written, performance, and arts-based measures allowing room for variances in learning preferences, language proficiency, interests.
GK	A traditional assessment usually prioritizes the “what” of the standards... ...whereas authentic, CRSE-aligned assessment usually prioritizes the “how” of the standards. In doing so, we allow for more inclusive and expansive ways to measure learning.

M2-S6: Culturally Responsive Assessment Practices

CLH	
GK	A traditional assessment offers a single glimpse of student understanding.
CLH	An authentic, CRSE-aligned assessment offers a more comprehensive view of student understanding and, therefore, a strengths-based approach to assessing student knowledge.
GK	A traditional assessment considers only direct measures of specific standards...
CLH	...whereas an authentic, CRSE-aligned assessment often incorporates factors that extend beyond academic proficiency, which offers flexibility and mitigates implicit bias.
GK	A traditional assessment may emphasize more basic tasks and concrete skills...
CLH	... vs. equipping students with the dexterity to solve real-world problems. Doing so leverages the unique cultural lenses and experiences of our students.
GK	Another difference is that traditional assessment focuses on the product and the summative outcomes...
CLH	...whereas a focus on the process of formative learning values the diversity of learner readiness and increases equity by prioritizing student growth over time.
GK	With traditional assessments, curriculum drives assessment.
CLH	With authentic, CRSE-aligned assessment, the assessment drives curriculum and even creates opportunities for students to inform and co-design the curriculum.
GK	Finally, a traditional assessment sets up a more competitive learning environment focused on individualism...
CLH	...whereas an authentic, CRSE-aligned assessment sets up a more collaborative learning environment focused on cooperation. This demonstrates the ways in which we value the unique identities of our students who are from cultures rooted in

M2-S6: Culturally Responsive Assessment Practices

	communal ways of being.
GK	<p>Hoo boy, that was a lot! Let's put that into a specific example, okay?</p> <p>We need an example of a traditional assessment vs. an authentic assessment that is also CRSE-aligned:</p>
CLH	<p>Here's straight-up traditional:</p> <p>A traditional assessment may instruct students to read the section in the U.S. history textbook about the Homestead Act, answer the multiple choice questions, and write a paragraph for the following prompt: Summarize the significance of the Homestead Act of 1862.</p>
GK	<p>An authentic CRSE-aligned assessment might instruct students to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Read the section in the U.S. history textbook about the Homestead Act. – Read the article on local remnants of redlining and its residual impacts. – Write a letter as a novice lobbyist to your local state representative, advocating for some funding to go to first-time homebuyers who come from families who did not receive or have access to any of the benefits that came from the Homestead Act. – Make sure your letter demonstrates the connection between the Homestead Act and the systemic roots of the current racial wealth gap. <p>That is much more meaningful.</p> <p>CLH: It's got a project based learning feel to it.</p> <p>Let's now take the same example of an authentic assessment that is CRSE-aligned and see how it might look across learning environments.</p>
CLH	<p>That's what we do best. A CRSE-aligned assessment in a physical classroom may instruct students to</p> <p>Read the section in the U.S. history textbook about the Homestead Act independently during the class period.</p> <p>Read the article on local remnants of redlining and its residual impacts using a Gallery Walk method in small groups.</p> <p>Then, Write a letter as a novice lobbyist to your local state representative, advocating for some funding to go to first-time homebuyers who come from families who did not receive or have access to any of the benefits that came from the Homestead Act</p> <p>OR create a video for a social media campaign.</p> <p>So we're talking about different methods.</p> <p>And, refer to the rubric for your project for success indicators.</p>

M2-S6: Culturally Responsive Assessment Practices

	<p>A CRSE-aligned assessment in a <i>virtual classroom</i> may instruct students to</p> <p>Read the section in the U.S. history textbook about the Homestead Act independently as flipped classroom pre-work. A flipped classroom is one in which students access content online, prior to the in-class discussion of the material. Maybe for homework.</p> <p>Then, read the article on local remnants of redlining and its residual impacts, then complete a Gallery Walk that entails students responding to the text and to other students' comments digitally, using Jamboard in small groups.</p> <p>Choose one of the following to advocate for some funding to go to first-time homebuyers who come from families who did not receive or have access to any of the benefits that came from the Homestead Act:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> –Write a letter as a novice lobbyist. –Create an infographic to share with your congressperson. –Create a video for a social media campaign.
GK	<p>They still have the same key elements. Next let's look at a set of recommendations that are rooted in the CRSE principles of student agency, autonomy, and self-expression. By providing students with a variety of options and mediums to demonstrate their understanding, we expand rather than limit their ability to feel seen, heard, valued, and supported as learners. The recommendations are as follows:</p> <p>(Okay, so we're going to run through a ton of web-based suggestions – you can find all the links in the podcast transcript.)</p>
CLH	<p>Create choice boards: students have a choice in the “how” (product type) for the evaluation of the “what” (standards), which can be done through digital assignment handouts with hyperlinks for those choices in a learning management system, such as Google Classroom or Canvas LMS.</p>
GK	<p>Include interactive content through platforms such as genially.</p>
CLH	<p>Integrate the use of digital whiteboards, such as Jamboard, Kami, Whiteboard.fi, or Whiteboard.chat.</p>
GK	<p>Utilize interactive videos that include Flip, Nearpod, and Edpuzzle.</p>
CLH	<p>Provide additional customized practice on platforms such as Seesaw (geared for elementary school).</p>
GK	<p>Foster digital collaboration through platforms such as Padlet, Wakelet, and Pear Deck.</p>
CLH	<p>Provide feedback sessions in real time with video conference platforms or asynchronous feedback using video platforms such as Screencast or audio platforms such as Mote and Kaizena.</p>
GK	<p>Include real-time polling through platforms such as Mentimeter and Kahoot.</p>

M2-S6: Culturally Responsive Assessment Practices

CLH	<p>Finally, let's explore how to implement equitable grading.</p> <p>Joe Feldman, School Grading Policies Are Failing Children: A Call to Action for Equitable Grading said, "In the vast majority of schools across the country, educators are using practices that are outdated, inaccurate, and undermine student success. In fact, grading policies actually help fuel achievement gaps, reinforcing the differences in family resources and support based on students' race and income."</p> <p>In addition to aligning our assessment strategies with CRSE principles, it is equally important to consider how those assessments become grades.</p> <p>Equitable grading is a response to disparities in grading practices that widen the opportunity gap.</p>
GK	<p>This includes a lack of consistency in grading practices among teachers throughout a school and across grade levels and subject areas. Grades may lack clarity on the actual student learning that is represented by the student score. I've heard students say "She's an easy grader".</p> <p>Some methods for calculating grades rely on mathematically unsound practices that result in inaccurate depictions of student progress. These may all be reflective of implicit biases that need to be brought to the surface. Joe Feldman, author of Grading for Equity, and others assert there are better, more equitable ways to grade, including the following.</p>
CLH	<p>Practices that calculate student proficiency in more mathematically accurate ways, such as using 0-4 instead of 0-100 scales, eliminating zeroes as a grade, and weighing more recent scores more heavily.</p> <p>Another equitable grading practice is to communicate explicit expectations for what mastery entails and how to achieve it. This can be accomplished through creating clear standards-aligned rubrics and developing standards-based or standards-referenced grading scales and formulas for gradebooks.</p> <p>Another strategy for equitable grading is to cultivate students' development of their soft skills that are not calculated in the final grade, such as incorporating self and peer assessments and infusing formative feedback</p> <p>Teachers can also lean into practices that promote a "growth mindset" and offer students hope. Examples are incentivizing multiple attempts at mastery and allowing multiple opportunities to demonstrate learning in the assessment cycle.</p>
GK	<p>Finally, we can find ways to value student understanding and skill rather than environment or behavior. What might this look like in practice? Some strategies include eliminating extra credit, eliminating any subjective criteria such as effort or</p>

M2-S6: Culturally Responsive Assessment Practices

	<p>participation, and providing alternative, non-grade-based consequences for any academic behavior-related issues, such as missed work.</p>
CLH	<p>It's important to remember that authentic assessments possess the opportunity to integrate all of the pieces from the previous five sessions in Module 2.</p> <p>Assessments can, and should, align with the CRSE goals, which we covered in Session 1. They can affirm students' intersectional identities and create a sense of belonging within the classroom and school communities.</p> <p>Assessments can reinforce rigorous, relevant, and student-centered curriculum choices, support relationship building in ways that engage and empower, as well as position students to strengthen their sociopolitical consciousness and sociocultural responsiveness.</p>
GK	<p>The goal of the TALE Academy is to help teachers rethink education so that everyone—students, families, educators, school leaders, and communities—all have the opportunity to succeed. You've just added another tool to your toolbox when you develop culturally responsive assessment practices.</p> <p>Thanks for listening! You can find links to all of the resources mentioned in this session in the podcast transcript.</p> <p>Bye!</p>