

# Reimagining Assessments to Measure Success

The following is an excerpt from our ebook, *Transforming Learning: A Personalized Approach to Competency-Based Education*. We invite you to download the entire book by [clicking here](#).

Traditional education relies on one-size-fits-all rubrics and assessments, while competency-based assessments are highly-individualized. It's tempting to repackage generic standards or repurpose traditional courses to fit into your new CBE model. Don't! It's easier up front, but won't set you (or your students) up for long-term success.

That's right, step away from the multiple-choice tests.

Instead, rely on performance-based assessments, which ask students to apply what they are learning to meaningful, real-world problems. When educators pursue assessments outside of high-stakes testing, students have the chance engage in more authentic demonstrations of what they've learned.

The following key performance assessment types are related to and often seen in conjunction with each other. They all enable students to demonstrate and apply the skills they are learning in real-time.

## Project (or Problem) Based Learning

With project-based learning, educators present students with a project (or have them create their own) that asks them to solve real-world problems with the skills they've learned, all while challenging them to collaborate and think critically. The more authentic the project, the more meaningful it will be, which fosters personalized learning that engages students through intrinsic motivation.

## Inquiry Assessment

Inquiry tasks and assessments use real-world challenges to engage students in their learning. When they're tasked with asking all the right questions, rather than being given the answers, they engage in intrinsic discovery. To that end, educators become learning facilitators, and help students uncover the truth by giving them space to miss the mark, retry, and deeply inquire about the world around them.

## There's No Such Thing as Failure in CBE

“ In competency-based education, assessments are tied to fundamental concepts and learning outcomes, not a passing or failing grade. When an outcome is missed, a holistic rubric helps pinpoint where a student is experiencing difficulty, allowing educators to adjust their strategies accordingly. In addition, it allows for more than one attempt to achieve mastery—there's no such thing as failure. ”

**AJ Dellicicchi**  
Chief Technology Officer, Motivis Learning

## Authentic Assessment

Authentic assessments require students to demonstrate skill acquisition through real-world application (are you noticing a trend yet?). Students direct their own learning, allowing them to uncover deeper-level answers on their own, which engages the critical thinking skills that are required in college, their career, and beyond.

## How to Assess in a Competency-Based System

In their book, *Off the Clock*, Fred Bramante and Rose Colby identify different competency categories that educators should incorporate when assessing student performance:



### Core Competencies

Essential for college and career readiness:

- Language Arts
- Reasoning
- Literacy
- Math
- Science
- Social science



### Communication Competencies

Essential communication skills for a variety of settings.

- Language development
- Writing proficiency
- Public speaking
- Digital media
- Social networking



### Creative Competencies

Essential for innovative and out-of-the-box thinking.

- Critical thinking
- Collaborative problem solving
- Resourcefulness
- The arts



### Cultural Competencies

Essential for students to understand their role within the world.

- Citizen participation
- Globalization
- Cultural understanding
- Appreciation of diversity