



## Adding Assessments Augments the Traditional Approach

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In a college setting, it is hard to get around traditional assessment methods. In fact, for many courses, the type of assessment, and maybe even the actual assessment, are mandated; however, this doesn't mean that better assessments can't be added.



For example, in my speech course, I try to give my students as many opportunities for success as possible. Instead of their grade resting solely on speech performances, they have many other opportunities to earn points. One way I do this is by assigning projects.

### Twenty Different Projects

I compile a list of at least 20 different projects. Each student chooses two projects. The idea behind the projects is to give students more experience/knowledge in an area of interest to them.

This approach gives students several benefits:

- ▶ More choice,
- ▶ Additional points to earn,
- ▶ Makes allowance for many different learning styles.

As I compile the list, I take into consideration all of the different learning styles, intelligences and personalities and try to make sure that I include at least one project for each, if possible.

For example, using a multiple-intelligence approach to assessing learning means:

- ▶Linguistic students have the option of delivering a dramatic interpretation; my interpersonal students can conduct an interview.
- ▶Intrapersonal learners can find examples of each type of supporting material in journal articles.
- ▶Logical students can use the research option.
- ▶Kinesthetic learners may choose projects that require them to do something active, like videotaping or acting out a skit on tape.
- ▶Musical learners have the option of finding literary elements in songs.

I even have a make-your-own-project option (which has to be approved by me first). By now, I'm sure you see the endless learning possibilities that assessment by project can afford.

These projects enable my students to learn in their own style while enabling me to assess their learning through a nonthreatening but rigorous manner.