Greetings

First Edition

Asked to talk about how it was decided what to include in the first edition of the book because it is one way to define assessment literacy

Personal Experiences

-- my initial experience was with norm referenced standardized testing
------ Oscar Burros at Rutgers University
------ Leonard Feldt and Iowa Testing Program
-- ---- unlike some standardized tests IA Testing Programs believed their test items were good samples from the ultimate domain of what students should know and do
------ they sent me our to IA schools to help teachers to understand test results and dialogue how to use results of the Iowa tests to improve curriculum and teaching
-- after graduating I went to the Learning Research and Development Center, Univ. Pgh
----- worked with Bob Glaser who was applying his ideas of criterion referenced testing to teaching
----- I worked with teachers and curriculum developers to craft tests for the Individually Prescribed Instruction Project
---- idea was to create a curriculum in which lessons and units were defined into prerequisite learning sequences where students did not move forward until they mastered prerequisites for the next lesson/unit. Students proceeded at their own individual pace
---- tests were embedded in lesson materials and students were retaught if they didn't show mastery. Lesson tests were called curriculum embedded tests and there were end of unit tests.
---- today we might call these "monitoring" or "formative" tests
-- so working with teachers and observing classroom gave me additional insights

Field was Changing Rapidly

-- testing field was changing rapidly in the 10 years before the first edition of our book and these changes were appearing in school districts. Teachers were expected to cope with them

-- formative assessment vs summative assessment vs diagnostic assessment
-- very beginning of mainstreaming students with disabilities and classification decisions for them
   — ESL programs we just begging; talks of test bias just starting
-- ways to prepare students to prepare well for tests
-- higher order thinking questions
-- criterion referenced vs norm referenced testing
-- test bias and bias in test items
-- assessment and decisions about children

So the book tried to provide a resource that could be used by teachers not only while taking a course in assessment but as a continuing guide as teachers and other educators were engaged in professional practice.

For Whom it was Intended

-- what I experienced in working with educators guided what eventually got into the book.
-- pre-service teachers needed to learn the basics to begin assessing students as they were expected to do
-- experienced teachers needed more in depth understanding of assessment issues so they could improve and defend their own professional practices; and fend off unreasonable assessment pressures and fad practices that often were forced on them
-- teachers in turn become principals, coordinators, and superintendents.

Functional assessment literacy had both basic and advanced levels. These were mapped out in the first edition of the book for different levels of educational practice.

Second Edition

A long time between the 1st and 2nd editions (13 years). A lot changed in assessment, ideas about what learning is, about teaching, and about schooling.

My Experiences were Changing

Through interacting and working with teachers my own understanding of classroom assessment broadened. I worked with teachers and observed their teaching not only in the USA but Africa (Malawi, Namibia), South Asia (Indonesia), and the Caribbean (Barbados). I worked with school principals as well as ministry of education curriculum developers and teacher development specialists. So my understanding of the practical issues and need of educational assessment deepened.

Field had Changed

Teachers were trying to apply many of the newer concepts of teaching and learning that were merging:

-- cognitive rather than a behavioral approach to leaning and assessment
-- new taxonomies of learning outcomes as the older Bloom Taxonomy became less popular
-- research on classroom assessment that documented the hundreds of decisions that teachers make in the course of instruction highlighted how information was needed and used in the classroom
-- increased pressure for mainstreaming students with disabilities and accommodations for their learning assessment
-- a pressure to use performance assessments, portfolios, alternative assessments, rubrics
greater focus on professional ethics as these were extended to assessment

The field of measurement was changing:

-- a refined conception of validity that looks toward providing evidence and logical support for every decision and use for tests scores were employed.
-- NCME worked with the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association to create "Standards for Teacher Competence in Educational Assessment of Students"
-- NCME working with other professional associations developed the "Code of Fair Testing Practices in Education"
-- NCME developed the "Code of Professional Responsibility in Educational Measurement"
-- assessment of higher order thinking processes and skills were given great emphasis

So as assessment research, theory, and practices changed and developed, so did literacy requirements. The book tried to reflect these.

Subsequent editions have followed this same processes of updating the landscape and boundaries of assessment literacy as the fields of teaching, learning, and assessment grew and improved.

**Three Points to Summarize Assessment Literacy**

— Should be functional literacy— not just knowing concepts but being able to use the concepts effectively in daily life and work
— Professional educators’ roles change over time as they gain experience and increase their responsibilities so they focus on different aspects of assessment and their depth of literacy changes
— The fields of instruction and assessment change over time and so does functional assessment literacy

I would like to add that in making the book a resource, I attempted to present various points of view, criticisms as well as praises for assessments. If an assessment practice was not supported by research, I called it a tradition or part of “assessment lore”. If a technique had not been changes in 30 years, I tended to reference the original sources to indicate that is hasn’t been improved upon. If I observed poor classroom assessment practices, I included these as well as exemplary practices as examples. An assessment literate person should be able to know various viewpoint and recognized good and poor practices

**Acknowledgment**

I realized that my own understanding of classroom assessment was still very limited. I began thinking how the field could be improved if only I was able to convince Sue Brookhart to join in the effort to improve the book as one way to define and clarify assessment literacy.

I met Sue in Pittsburgh while she was a young professor at Duquesne. I was impressed by her understanding of classroom practices and how assessment, especially formative assessment and student feedback could improve student learning. I’m delight that she agreed to join in on
sustaining and enhancing the book as an assessment literacy resource. She has now taken over the book and its direction. I'd like to take this occasion to thank her for her significant contribution to the field and for sustaining this project, hopefully for many years to come.

Another person on this panel is Sarah Bonner. I met Sarah at the University of Arizona where I was teaching for a while after I retired from the University of Pittsburgh. Sarah helped me to teach and eventually taught alone, a course on assessment for pre-service teachers. She did a wonderful job and I thank her now, also. Sarah went on to Hunter College to do important research in assessment and teaching. She will tell you a little bit about this later.