

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Step 1 (Application 9.1)

Unit Topic: Desktop Publishing

Content: Learners are comprised of 7th/8th grade Computer Applications students. In this unit, students learn how to use Microsoft Word for basic desktop publishing. Skills include using WordArt and Autoshapes, inserting/formatting text boxes and pictures, and creating documents with two or more columns. Basic design principles are also covered. Other more basic formatting skills such as changing margins, orientation, line spacing, font, etc. were mastered in earlier units.

Performance Task: Each student will use Word to create a flyer giving information about an actual upcoming school. They will work on individual projects but will also be organized in groups of three so that they can assist one another as needed. Each student will also critique the work of the two other students in their group and offer constructive feedback as to how the end product can be improved.

Reflection: I am going to write these reflections as I progress through this assignment rather than trying to remember my impressions and write them all at the end. As such, each reflection only applies to the information above it as later steps have not yet been accomplished. This part of the assignment was rather difficult for me. I knew that I wanted to design a performance assessment to be used with my Computer Applications class in the spring, but the topic was a bit elusive. I finally settled on desktop publishing because it lends itself well to a cumulative project, I do not currently have a desktop publishing project in my curriculum, and it has many real world applications that extend beyond my classroom. The B & T textbook is proving to be an excellent guide in this process.

Step 2 (Application 9.2)

Knowledge Construction: Students will have to make connections between the isolated skills and principles learned previously and the end product that they will create. They will have to plan methods for gathering the information needed for their publication and determine how it will be distributed. Students will also need to evaluate what information is relevant and necessary in order to create an effective flyer.

Strategic Thinking: Students will need to recall the design guidelines for desktop publishing (colorful, readability, relevance, etc.) and apply them to their own flyers. They will also need to remember how to change fonts and colors, add text boxes, format columns, and place pictures or clipart in Word.

Clear Communication: Students will need to ensure that the end product communicates the information that was intended. They will also communicate within their groups about the

strengths and weaknesses of their peers' flyers, verbalizing in a constructive way their justification for their opinions.

Social Skills: The social skills I will be assessing as students are working in groups are adapted from those on the Collaborative Skills Checklist on page 207 of the text: praising, listening, following rules, assisting, and respectfulness.

Reflection: Planning for ways for the students to acquire new knowledge in this project was somewhat difficult. I don't exactly know where the line is between applying prior knowledge in new ways and constructing new knowledge, especially when dealing with computer skills. However, after considerable time (I have been working on this section for many hours), I finally decided that while making "connections between the isolated skills and principles learned previously and the end product that they will create" may not truly be knowledge construction, evaluating information for relevance definitely is as they themselves will have to determine what information is important to them and their peers concerning the event they are advertising. Honestly, I am not completely confident that I have done this section exactly right, but I do believe that it will lead to an effective performance assessment in the end.

Step 3 (Application 9.3)

Directions: Using Microsoft Word and your knowledge of desktop publishing, create a full-page flyer for an upcoming school event such as Spirit Week, Red Ribbon Week, the Spring Dance, MAP Testing, the Heart N' Sole volleyball tournament, or the Scholastic Book Fair. Other school events are okay, too, as long as they involve all of the students at Sullivan Middle School. Whatever event you choose, you will be responsible for gathering all of the information that you will need and deciding what information to include on your flyer.

You will work in teams of three, but each student will create their own flyer. Your teammates are there to help you if you can't remember how to do something and you are there to help them. Before the final version of the flyer is completed, each member of the team will review the other two members' work, commenting on what is good about the project and making suggestions about what can be improved. Remember to be courteous and kind when reviewing your teammates' work. After the reviews, you should make any changes to the project that you wish and add the finishing touches in preparation for publication. You will publish enough copies of your flyer so that each member of the class can have one. You should also provide a copy for the teacher and a copy to present to the sponsor of the event. They may even ask you to publish even more copies to put up around the school to promote the event!

Reflection: I feel that these directions are definitely clear though there might be some confusion about what students should do when it comes time to review each other's work. However, I believe that I should be able to address this on the spot as questions arise. After I have actually used this with students, I will have a much better idea about what is clear and what needs to be clarified.

The project has multiple goals/solutions because students are allowed to choose their own event and how they want their finished project to look. It also achieves a level of authenticity because

the students will be promoting actual events and sharing their products outside of the classroom. Perhaps when they see all the work that goes into making a flyer, they won't be so quick to throw them away when flyers are distributed in class (but I won't hold my breath).

Step 4 (Application 9.4)

Scoring Rubric: Attached at the end of this document

Reflection: This part of this assignment was very difficult. I found it really challenging to isolate all of the points I wanted to assess. This is another thing about my performance assessment that will be greatly improved after I have used it with students next semester and can identify what was missing.

I decided to go with a checklist rather than a rating scale because the points I wanted to assess are easily rated as present or absent. I considered using a rating scale because that is the kind of rubric that I am used to, but I feel it would have been awkward to try and differentiate additional points of differentiation. In the past, I have forced my way through it and have developed rubrics that are rather difficult to use. I just feel that the checklist is going to be much more effective, at least once I have tried it and ironed out the kinks.

Scoring Rubric for Desktop Publishing Performance Assessment

Computer Skills

- ___ Student demonstrates mastery of all relevant Word skills from previous units including: Page Setup functions (orientation, margins, etc.), copy/paste, undo, tables, font styles and attributes, line spacing, bulleted/numbered lists, etc.
- ___ Student uses WordArt where appropriate (as titles/headings, not as main text)
- ___ Student uses AutoShapes, ClipArt, and/or other images to add interest and variety
- ___ Student uses text boxes and/or columns to arrange text on the page

Flyer Design

- ___ Flyer is limited to one page
- ___ Flyer is colorful to attract attention
- ___ Flyer has ample white space so it is easy to read
- ___ Pictures relate to the subject of the flyer
- ___ All capital letters used sparingly to enhance readability
- ___ Fonts are easy to read
- ___ No more than two different fonts are used
- ___ Bold, italics, and/or various font sizes are used to draw attention to key points and vary appearance
- ___ Flyer contains correct spelling and grammar
- ___ Flyer design reflects student's creativity and individuality

Social Skills

- ___ Student performs critique on other group members' projects
- ___ Praising. Student identified strengths in group members' projects
- ___ Listening. Student attended to others when they were speaking and acknowledged that he/she heard what was said
- ___ Following Rules. Student complied with all group rules
- ___ Assisting. Student offered helpful suggestions for improvement to peers
- ___ Respectfulness. Student spoke kindly and supportively when discussing projects with group members

Following Directions

- ___ Student provides enough copies of flyer for entire class, teacher, and activity sponsor
- ___ Flyer advertises upcoming school wide activity

Total Points: _____ **Student Name:** _____ **Hour:** _____