




### Personal Reflections: Looking at the Affective Domain

When I first began teaching, teachers determined what students knew about reading, writing and every other subject primarily by using multiple choice tests. More recently, we have also been assessing what students know about a subject (content) with retells/summaries in reading, work samples in writing and math and experiments in science. We've also been observing how our students do things, what processes/strategies they use to read, write and learn. Oral reading assessments like Running Records and Reading Miscue Inventories are routinely used in many classrooms to observe strategy use.

There's a third area that should be consider, students' feelings about what and how they're learning, the affective domain. This is a powerful filter through which they view their world. Here's a simple, yet effective assessment, to glean information about your class as a whole and individual student's perceptions .

Procedure:

- In front of the students, using an overhead or piece of butcher paper, make a simple table and complete the left hand column by drawing a smiley face with a large smile, a regular smiley face and a straight mouthed face. Select a focus, for example, reading expository books. Explain that the big smile means that you totally enjoy reading informational books; the regular smiley face indicates that you like to read nonfiction and the straight mouth means that you'd prefer not to read informational books.

	feelings about informational books
	
	
	

- Determine how many people (students, adults, teacher, too) are in the room. Write a denominator to represent the total number of people. Then ask for the vote as you point to and describe what each face means. Record the number of votes for each and record as the numerator. If some people decide not to participate, DO NOT force them to vote. An estimate will do. Now you have an overview of your class' opinion about expository texts.

- At the conclusion of the whole class vote, you may have students use their reading journals or a piece of paper (if journals are not available) to record the smiley face that represents their feeling about the topic and write an explanation why they feel as they do. Have students date their entry so that future reflections can be compared to their earlier reflections.

You may have a good handle on how individuals feel, but most teachers have had some new insight or were surprised by a response. Assessing for content and strategy use, as well as for students' affect, will paint a more vivid picture of their beliefs and needs. What surprises await you around the next assessment bend in your classroom?