



Validating Observation and Conversation when Assessing Learning: An Introductory Course

VOCAL 101 is Damian Cooper's new online professional learning course that takes K-12 educators inside classrooms to see why and how using mobile technologies to capture digital evidence through observations and conversations can be a powerful tool for assessing learning.

A concise five section course design ... provides K-12 educators with an effective and manageable professional learning experience.

Key concept lectures ... explore the foundational ideas and research that underpin VOCAL and best-practise assessment.

Authentic in-class videos ... model how teachers and their students use everyday mobile technologies to capture and use evidence of learning through observations of performance and conversations.

How-to tips, tools and strategies ... provide practical support to encourage and enable educators, regardless of their experience with instructional technology, to use more observation and conversation when assessing learning.

Professional learning activities ... are differentiated to reflect educator readiness with respect to VOCAL - just committed, building capacity, or confirming results.

A flexible online format ... means VOCAL can be used anywhere, anytime and on any device, individually, in professional learning communities, or as the basis for collaborative inquiry.



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1-800-314-4644

VOCAL 101

Section 1 Validating observations and conversations when assessing learning

In this introductory section, participants learn why a balanced, triangulated approach to assessment, that includes evidence gathered through observation and conversation, is essential. This section explains the need to match method of assessment to curriculum targets, as well as how to use a variety of assessment methods to address the different learning strengths and needs of students.

Section 2 Planning for observations and conversations

In order to observe students performing and to engage them in conversation, teachers must plan from the outset for such assessments. This section explains how to plan a balanced portfolio of assessment evidence that enables teachers to be more effective and efficient. It also explains how to plan for the effective use of technology, and how to plan classroom management.

Section 3 Gathering digital evidence of observations and conversations

With an assessment plan in place, teachers need efficient and effective ways to gather digital evidence of student learning. This section demonstrates how mobile phones and tablets can be used to gather diagnostic evidence to inform instruction, formative evidence to improve learning, as well as summative evidence to certify proficiency.

Section 4 Using observations and conversations to improve learning

This section explains how hand-held technology facilitates the connection between assessment and further learning. Because digital evidence of learning captured through observations and conversations is immediate, students are now able to receive and apply instantaneous feedback from their teacher, peers and themselves that allows them to adjust their performance “in the moment”.

Section 5 Using digital evidence of observations and conversations for evaluation and reporting

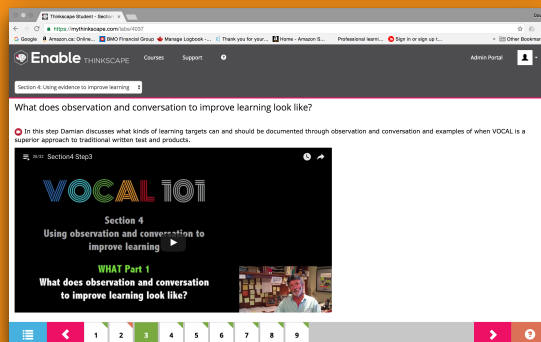
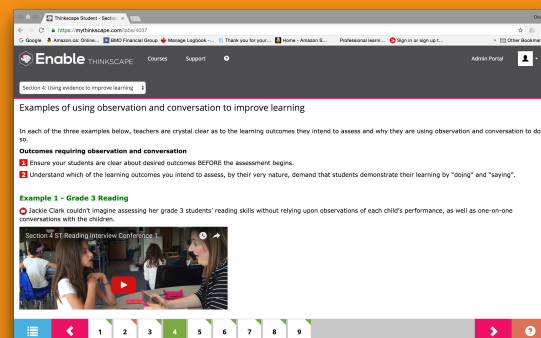
While assessment evidence gathered through observation and conversation is powerful for students, teachers, and parents, it may represent a significant change in practice, particularly when used for evaluation and grading. This section explains how digital evidence of learning can, and should, be accorded equal significance to other more traditional forms of summative assessment.

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VOCAL 101 is delivered on the **Thinkscape** online learning platform. Thinkscape offers an easy-to-access and easy-to-use online learning experience.

- Simple user registration and access
- User-friendly interface and navigation
- Multimedia note-taking
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- District administration options
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