



## The Clapping Activity

**Purpose:** To help students understand why they need to be involved in the classroom assessment process.

**Variation:** If you have a DJ and music available, consider dancing rather than clapping.

### Directions

1. Invite eight volunteers to sit in groups of four facing the audience. They should also be able to view each other easily.
2. Be ready to record. Have on hand chart paper or a white board to record criteria.
3. Explain to the audience that they are about to see a demonstration that will show the history of involving students in classroom assessment. Note that each example occurs over time so it is not helpful to compare one to the other as if they are all happening at the same point in time. Explain that the job of the audience is to listen and become involved only when asked. Then, name one group of four "Judges" and the other group "Participants".
4. Number the participants in each group from one to four.
5. Ask Participant #1 to clap.
6. When #1 finishes, say, "thank you". (If participant looks surprised, let it be. I usually quietly check back with this person later to make sure she or he is still okay. In my experience the person is fine and later ends up debriefing and talking about how it feels to not know what to do or how to do it.)
7. Ask the judges to award 1, 2, 3, or 4 points, with 4 being the highest. Discourage discussion. Ask the judges to not report out to others.
8. Ask #2 to clap. When #2 is finished say, "thank you," and send #2 from the room for a few minutes. While #2 is out of the room, ask the judges to score the clapping 1 to 4. Invite the judges to discuss the scoring quietly amongst them. Ask for individual scores, as well as one thing the person did well and one thing they need to work on to get better at clapping. Add all the scores together. Invite #2 back into the room and announce the combined score as well as something to work on.
9. Turn to #3 and hesitate. Ask participant #3 to wait and then turn and ask the judges to list all the characteristics of a really good clap. Record their responses on chart paper. Encourage them to think of everything.
10. Turn to #3 again and say, "Number 3, knowing all this, could you clap for us please?" When #3 finishes, say, "thank you."
11. Ask the judges, "Given the criteria and the performance, what score would you give and why?" Give them time to discuss it prior to reporting out.
12. When the judges have reported, turn to #4 (who is very, very nervous by now) and ask #4 to tell about a situation in which he or she has needed to clap, such as at a sports or music event. Ask clarifying questions.
13. Draw participant #4's attention to the criteria set for #3 and ask if there are any criterion that needs to be changed.
14. Then, ask the judges if there is any criterion that needs to be changed – added or deleted.
15. Once you have agreement from the judges, invite #4 to imagine an amazing performance, and to clap.
16. Ask #4 to self-assess the clapping.
17. Then, ask the judges to score the clapping and provide specific feedback in relation to the criteria.
18. This is the end of the activity. It is time to reflect on what happened. Ask the participants and judges to reflect on their experience and make some connections. While they are thinking, ask the audience to talk about their connections.
19. After 3-4 minutes, debrief in turn with contestants, judges, and audience. Listen for ideas such as:
  - It is important that the standards or outcomes be clearly defined.
  - Those unlike competitions such as the Olympics where only some can win, K-12 education needs to ensure all students learn.
  - More learning motivation occurs when students are involved in assessment.
  - Clear standards and student involvement makes evaluation (judging) easier and fairer.
  - The more assessment information available to the participant/learner, the more likely they are to use it and learn from it and succeed.

Adapted from *A Tool Kit for Professional Developers: Alternative Assessment* by Laboratory Network Program.

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