

## WRITING ASSESSMENT: A BEGINNING BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following bibliography is offered as a starting point for those new to the field of writing assessment, and for those who are somewhat knowledgeable about writing assessment but have not yet mastered the theory and jargon of testing and measurement. Once you are familiar with these materials, you can move on to more specialized material. It is important to note that this is a basic list. (My own selected bibliography on writing assessment contains 156 items.) After you have worked through this list, you can then begin to construct your own bibliography.

Cooper, Charles and Lee Odell, eds.

*Evaluating Writing*. Urbana Ill.: NCTE, 1977. A theory book and not a "how to" book. Cooper and Odell discuss holistic, primary trait, and analytic scoring of writing samples.

Davis, Barbara Gross, Michael Scriven and Susan Thomas.

"Student Writing Performance." *The Evaluation of Composition Instruction*. Inverness, Calif.: Edgepress, 1981, pp. 67-98. A section in an important new book on the evaluation of writing instruction, this is an excellent brief introduction to the major issues involved in the theory and practice of writing assessment.

Diederich, Paul.

*Measuring Growth in English*. Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1974. Written for the classroom-teacher, this little book is still the classic, even if parts are now somewhat dated. A good introduction to the specific topic of writing assessment.

Ebel, Robert L. *Essentials of Educational Measurement*, 3rd ed. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1979.

One of the leading authorities in the field, Ebel covers the same material as W. James Popham only his book is addressed more to the student of test and measurement theory.

Godshalk, Fred I., et al. *The Measurement of Writing Ability*. New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1966 (available from NCTE). This is the classic study which developed the scoring procedure we call holistic assessment. An essential work for anyone involved in writing assessment.

Hoover, Regina M. "An Annotated Bibliography on Testing." *College Composition and Communication*, 30 (December 1979), 383-391. Although a little bit dated, Hoover's bibliography should suggest other readings once you have completed those on this list.

Houston, Robert. "Standardized Tests of Writing Ability: A Primer." *Freshman English News*, 10 (Fall 1981), 20-22. Houston provides a good clear introduction to the special vocabulary and concepts of testing as they apply to standardized multiple-choice tests of writing. An essential introduction to reading the test manual for the teacher and tester of writing.

Lyman, Howard B. *Test Scores and What They Mean*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1979. The best introduction to the theory and practice of testing available to the non-specialist. In addition to explaining test and statistical theory in simple terms, Lyman includes a chapter on "Testing and Social Responsibility" and a glossary which defines technical terms in simple language.

Myers, Miles. *Procedure for Writing Assessment and Holistic Scoring*. Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1980. A "how to" book which is concerned not with the theory of holistic scoring but with the procedure. Myers explains in great detail how to set up a writing assessment program and conduct a holistic scoring of the writing samples.

Odell, Lee. "Defining and Assessing Competence in Writing," in Cooper, Charles L. *The Nature and Measurement of Competency in English*. Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1981. Odell's essay serves as an important theoretical starting point for any discussion of writing assessment.

Popham W. James. *Modern Educational Measurement*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1981. After Lyman, Popham is the next step in learning test theory. Popham presents in detail all the relevant theory, giving many examples to explain the more difficult concepts. What makes this book special is Popham's clear, readable prose, and the humanistic spirit which informs the book.

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