

Module: **Assessment of Infants and Toddlers With
Visual Impairments**

**Session 1: Legal Basis and Overview of
Recommended Practices**

**Study Questions and Answers for Recommended Reading B:
Neisworth & Bagnato**

Neisworth, J.T., & Bagnato, S.J. (2004). The mismeasure of young children: The authentic assessment alternative. *Infants and Young Children, 17*(3), 198-212.

1. Define and describe the four purposes of assessment in early intervention.
 - **A screening is a rapid, community-wide method for identifying children in need of further assessment. They require little time, effort, and cost but are subject to false positives and false negatives.**
 - **Eligibility assessments are done to determine if the child meets the state's criteria for early intervention services. Typically, cutoff scores from norm-referenced tests are used to determine eligibility. Disability, not capability, is documented.**
 - **Program planning and progress monitoring use assessment results to document children's strengths and needs in order to plan interventions and services.**
 - **Program evaluation uses assessment results to assure accountability of teachers and early intervention programs.**

2. List and define the two fundamentals and the eight major standards for early childhood assessment. Choose three major standards and provide examples to illustrate their importance in conducting authentic assessments.

Two fundamentals:

 - **Developmentally appropriate assessment contexts, content, and procedures**
 - **Sincere and active cooperation with parents and caregivers**

Eight major standards:

 - **Utility: Assessment is useful in that it helps identify what to teach, how to teach it, and whether the objectives are being reached.**

- **Acceptability:** Professionals and parents agree on assessment's content and methods; information from assessment portrays socially detectable and valued competencies.
- **Authenticity:** Assessment yields information about what the child really knows and can do.
- **Equity:** Assessment is conducted in a way that accommodates individual differences.
- **Sensitivity:** Assessment provides enough items and materials to detect small increments of change.
- **Convergence:** Assessment materials are usable and understandable by professionals from multiple disciplines, as well as by parents.
- **Collaboration:** Assessment requires and benefits from teamwork among professionals, and between professionals and parents.
- **Congruence:** Assessment tools were developed with children who are similar to those being assessed.

Participants' examples will vary.

3. Compare and contrast the four major differences between authentic assessments and conventional testing.
 - **Where they are performed:**
 - a) **Conventional testing:** clinic or laboratory setting, testing rooms at schools, hospital examination rooms
 - b) **Authentic assessment:** within the natural environment, in child's ongoing daily routines and typical circumstances
 - **What they assess:**
 - a) **Conventional testing:** responses to standardized item content from norm-referenced tests
 - b) **Authentic assessment:** behaviors that occur in daily activities, functional behaviors
 - **How they are performed:**
 - a) **Conventional testing:** child's responses to standardized objects and procedures are recorded. Little to no accommodations made for special needs
 - b) **Authentic assessment:** observations made of child's responses to daily routines. Competencies may be shown in many different ways.
 - **Who performs them:**
 - a) **Conventional testing:** professionals who have received specialized training in the particular instrument
 - b) **Authentic assessment:** familiar adults in the child's life observe and record behaviors

4. What is the major criterion for evidence-based validity in authentic assessment? On what continuum can it be observed?
- **Context is the major criterion.**
 - **The continuum ranges from decontextualized clinical settings such as laboratory situations; to simulated, replicated situations; to analog situations (prompted behaviors in everyday routines); and finally to a more contextualized natural context (spontaneous behavior in everyday routines).**