Alternative Assessments in Practice Database

User's Manual

National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST)
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CONTENTS

Preface: What You Need to Get Started ........................................ v

Chapter 1: Introduction to Alternative Assessment .................. 1

Chapter 2: Browsing Through the Database ....................... 15

Chapter 3: Searching Through the Database ..................... 31

Chapter 4: On-Line Assistance ........................................... 41

Appendix: Alternative Assessments in Practice
Database Protocol .............................................................. 45
PREFACE
What You Need to Get Started

Computer Capability Needed to Access the
Alternative Assessments in Practice Database

The Alternative Assessments in Practice Database works on any Apple
Macintosh computer equipped with HyperCard 2.0 or higher, a
minimum one (1) megabyte of memory but preferably two (2) mega-
bytes, and at least a high density 1.4 megabyte floppy disk drive. The
database will perform faster when installed on a hard drive. Dam-
aged or non-functioning diskettes may be returned to the developer
(CRESST) at no cost for replacement.

If this is the first time you have used this database, we strongly
suggest you use the Balloon Help feature described in Chapter 4.

Making a Backup of the Database

Before you do anything else, you should make a copy of the database
disk and put the original away in a safe place. If you are unsure how
to copy a disk, see the owner’s guide that came with your Macintosh.

About the Mouse and Keyboard

The Alternative Assessments in Practice Database was developed
primarily for use with a mouse. However, the keyboard can be used
to browse through the database if necessary (see Chapter 2: Browsing
Through the Database).
Description of the User's Manual

This manual contains four chapters. Individuals who want to use the database immediately may want to start with Chapter 2: Browsing Through the Database.

Chapter 1: Introduction to Alternative Assessment provides background information about alternative assessment and this database: what alternative assessment is, how new forms of assessment are being used, criteria for quality alternative assessments, and how this database was created.

Chapter 2: Browsing Through the Database describes how to begin using the database. The database user is taken through a step-by-step example of accessing and browsing through the Contact Information Cards and their respective protocol information.

Chapter 3: Searching Through the Database describes the process of searching through the database via contact information and specific characteristics of the protocols. Examples of basic searching and specific grade and subject-matter queries are provided, as well as directions on how to conduct more complex searches.

Chapter 4: On-Line Assistance provides a description of assistance available while using the database.

The Appendix contains a copy of the protocol.
CHAPTER 1
Introduction to Alternative Assessment

What Is Alternative Assessment?

With educational assessment now in the national spotlight and research showing that our traditional standardized testing approach may narrow the curriculum and negatively influence instruction (Herman & Golan, 1991; Shepard, 1991), new forms of assessment are being sought out by teachers, administrators, and policymakers. These alternative assessments—portfolios, hands-on experiments, writing-across-the-curriculum, investigations, oral presentations, and demonstrations—are being created as enthusiasm for these new types of test heightens. But what are the goals of alternative assessment? Why will alternative assessment suit our needs better than the traditional approaches to assessment, which are not fulfilling our needs?

Alternative assessment seeks to evaluate students' thinking and problem-solving skills, rather than merely testing low-level knowledge. These assessments encourage students to think critically and to draw their own conclusions to complex problems—problems that may not have only one correct answer. The primary purpose of alternative assessment is to allow students to actively construct responses to complex and significant tasks, using their prior knowledge, recent learning, and relevant skills to solve these realistic problems. This purpose highlights the importance of looking at the process of learning as well as its product.
Terminology

The term *alternative assessment* encompasses a variety of different types of nonstandard assessments, including performance assessment, exhibitions, essays, demonstrations, oral presentations, portfolios of student work, and so on. *Performance assessment* highlights the constructed, action-oriented aspects of alternative assessment: Students are asked to perform open-ended tasks that are directly related to the skills being assessed. Thus, if students are being tested on scientific methods, they do not take a multiple-choice test about an experiment; instead, they might be asked to perform an experiment and write about their own methods. *Authentic assessment* emphasizes the real-life context of alternative assessment tasks. The assessment requires the students to perform tasks with real-life applications or which represent authentic tasks of a discipline. For example, rather than composing essays in a 40-minute time limit, students use a process that more closely approximates the way professional writers approach their task; that is, students are given the opportunity over the course of a number of sessions to outline their essays, write first drafts, discuss and critique those drafts with their peers, and revise the essays, incorporating suggestions. Like many tasks in the real world, authentic assessment tasks also frequently incorporate group or teamwork.

Why Use Alternative Assessment?

The imperative for alternative assessment has arisen due in part to the needs of industry in a changing workplace and in part to recent research on learning and instruction. Industry is complaining that high school graduates are unable to function well in the new technology-driven workplace, lacking the problem-solving skills necessary for success. Conditions of employment are now likely to change several times during one’s life, making adaptive learning even more crucial. Futurists tell us that our society needs people capable of using information, of learning, of re-learning, and of solving complex problems.
Many believe that traditional standardized tests fail to assess these significant capabilities and are attempting to hold schools accountable to a wrong set of outcomes. As our society begins to realize the importance of critical thinking skills, it needs new assessments that emphasize higher-order thinking rather than low-level basic skills (Resnick, 1987; Resnick & Resnick, 1992).

In addition, new ideas regarding learning and cognition have brought about a need for new forms of assessment. Current learning theory has moved us from a behavioral view of learning—in which students are passive participants who are taught isolated skills with an emphasis on simple, discrete outcome measures—to a cognitive view of learning. Students are now seen as active participants in the learning process who construct meaning from the information presented to them and who integrate their existing knowledge with new knowledge (Bransford & Vye, 1989; Davis & Maher, 1990; Wittrock, 1991). Emphasis has moved from learning outcomes only to a growing appreciation of learning processes; metacognition (thinking about one's own thought processes and being conscious of the strategies one is using), motivation, and application and use of information thus become important.

In order to assess student processes and deeper student understanding, new forms of assessment are needed. Moving away from traditional testing, new assessments use contextualized problems to add relevance and meaningfulness for the students; they require students to apply and integrate what they know. New group assessments add cooperative learning, collaboration with others, and mutual feedback as important components of learning (Resnick & Klopfer, 1989). With their emphasis on complex skills, new assessments probe deeper than traditional multiple-choice testing, tapping students' abilities to analyze, generalize, and hypothesize. In general, new forms of assessment aim to measure complex thinking skills in ways that examine those skills directly and meaningfully, in sharp contrast to traditional methods of multiple-choice testing. New forms of assessment model good instruction and the kinds of capabilities students—and our society in general—need for future success.
How Is Alternative Assessment Being Used?

Alternative assessment serves many purposes in education (Nickerson, 1989; Resnick & Resnick, 1992) at the individual, class, school, and program levels. These different purposes have implications both for the kinds of assessments that are most appropriate and for the technical rigor they should embody.

Individual classroom teachers are integrating new forms of assessment into their classrooms, using them to analyze student progress and to guide learning and instruction. These assessments are intended to help teachers and students in their classroom work and to encourage them to focus on progress and significant accomplishments. For classroom assessment purposes, the emphasis is often on the individual: How are individual students performing? As a teacher, watching students perform and analyzing their responses, what diagnostic information can I glean? What does that information tell me about what experiences Johnny and Carmen need next to broaden their understanding or to improve their performance? What does it tell me about what they have learned or even about what grades they should receive? Or, as a student in the classroom, what does the assessment tell me about what's important for me to learn, how I've grown over the course of the year, and what my strengths and weaknesses are? Classroom assessments also can be useful at the group or class level. For example, as a teacher looking over the results for the class as a whole, what do they tell me about the effectiveness of my curriculum or about the strengths and weaknesses of various teaching strategies I employ?

A single classroom assessment rarely carries enormous stakes; there are not significant personal consequences for students or teachers based on the results of one assessment, and teachers have a rich variety of information about students to counteract the influence of a
faulty assessment. When, however, individual student results are used for proficiency and certification testing—with an emphasis on reporting competence rather than diagnosing student needs—the stakes are high indeed, as are demands for technical rigor. Some states, districts, and schools are planning to use alternative assessment for such purposes, intending to answer questions such as: Is this student ready to move on? Ready to graduate? Should he or she be accepted into college? Should he or she be hired? When some aspect of an individual's future is based on alternative assessment, the stakes are high; thus, ensuring high-quality assessment is crucial.

New forms of assessment are also being piloted widely for use for school accountability and program evaluation purposes. In contrast to the previous examples discussed in this section, these assessments may provide information at the school, district, and state levels; individual scores are not necessary for program evaluation. These tests help school boards, district or school administrators, or states understand how effective their schools are. Results may give funding agencies information on how well the school system as a whole, or the instructional program as a whole, is achieving its goals. This kind of information also can be helpful to schools and teachers, aiding analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of their curriculum and planning for instructional improvements.

Alternative assessments, in short, are being developed to serve many purposes. Their development spans all grade levels—from preschool to adults—with the number of new assessments in elementary, junior high, and high school, according to our database, being evenly distributed. Alternative assessment is utilized across many content areas, including but not limited to language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and foreign language. Alternative assessments in language arts tend to be the most common at this point in time.
Criteria for “Good” Assessments

Alternative assessments, it should be clear, are new. New forms of assessment call for new assurances of quality: Traditional indices used for multiple-choice tests do not work, and merely looking “interesting” or “authentic” is not sufficient to assure quality assessment. The National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST) has therefore proposed a new general set of criteria to judge the quality—or validity—of an assessment, regardless of assessment type, purpose, or format (Linn, Baker, & Dunbar, 1991). These criteria include: consequences, fairness, transfer and generalizability, cognitive complexity, content quality, linguistic appropriateness, instructional sensitivity, content coverage, meaningfulness, and cost and efficiency. Based on these criteria, the list below can serve as a practical guide for judging a “good” innovative assessment.

Consequences
The history of testing is replete with examples of good intentions gone awry: tests that were supposed to improve the educational system, tests that were supposed to focus instruction on core skills, tests that were supposed to promote equity. Good intentions are clearly not enough. Cognizant of past problems, we need to design assessments that minimize unintended, negative consequences, and we need from the outset to assess the actual consequences of our actions.

The validity of how an assessment is used is also a key concern. Validity refers to how appropriate or suitable the use of assessment results is to the actual decisions being made with these results. Is the information provided by an assessment about a student relevant to the decision being made regarding that student? Does it provide sound, appropriate information for that decision?

The consequences criterion demands that we consider the consequences of the use of an assessment. A good assessment should:
• Be worth the instructional time devoted to it.
• Encourage good instruction.
• Exemplify valued student outcomes.
• Address a wide range of skills and content, so as not to narrow curricular focus.
• Provide ample time for the students to complete the assessment so that results will reflect actual performance rather than test-taking skills.
• Provide information that is relevant to the decisions being made with that assessment.

**Fairness**
An assessment should allow students of all cultural backgrounds to exhibit their knowledge and skills. Equity, furthermore, demands that all students have equal opportunity to learn the complex skills being assessed. A good assessment should:

• Tap knowledge and skills students have had adequate time to acquire in class instruction.
• Be free of cultural, ethnic, or gender stereotypes.
• Represent tasks that do not unfairly disadvantage students of different backgrounds; i.e., do not use tasks that are likely to be more familiar to students of one background or gender than another.
• Use a scoring process that is free from bias.
• Include no irrelevant task difficulty for the students; e.g., do not use difficult language when assessing science performance.
• Enable students to demonstrate what they know.
Transfer and generalizability

Students' scores on an assessment should be indicators of how well they will perform on other, similar tasks. After all, we usually care about how well students do on a test because we believe that that performance represents a larger domain of significant knowledge and skill. If we are using assessment results to make decisions about individual students, the scores should be able to be used to make a statement about the student's capabilities. Studies are needed to examine critically the match between an assessment's intended purpose and what the assessment actually measures; demonstrating that an assessment is indeed measuring intended outcomes can be partially accomplished by comparing the new assessment to other tests measuring the same outcomes.

The assessment results must also be reliable: consistent across raters, time, and locations. Because the scoring schemes—like the assessments themselves—are new, reliability concerns are of heightened importance. Reliability refers to how repeatable the assessment scores are. Will the same essay, oral presentation, or portfolio receive the same score, regardless of rater, day, or school? Do two scores of equal value guarantee equivalent performance, across students, raters, days, and schools? A good assessment should:

- Describe the domain or content area it intends to assess.
- Provide evidence that results are generalizable; i.e., that they represent performance on a significant domain of knowledge.
- Take into consideration the number of tasks a student must complete in order to yield generalizable results.
- Include explicit criteria for scoring, and preferably a guide describing the application of those criteria.
- Provide evidence that results are consistent across raters and across scoring occasions.
Cognitive complexity
An assessment should require students to use complex thinking skills. That an assessment appears to require such skills is not sufficient; be aware of flaws in an assessment that might enable students to complete the assessment successfully without thinking critically. Could they have learned to complete the task by rote? Are they blindly following procedures? A good assessment should:

- Consider students' prior knowledge of the content and tasks.
- Examine the processes by which students attempt to solve the task.
- Provide novel problems for the students to solve.
- Include tasks that cannot be memorized by the student in advance.
- Provide evidence that its tasks elicit complex understanding or problem-solving skills.

Content quality
The content being evaluated by an assessment should be important and valid. Its importance should endure the test of time. Also, the assessment tasks themselves should be worth the students' time and effort. A good assessment should:

- Avoid irrelevant or unimportant information.
- Employ tasks that are consistent with current educational pedagogy.
- Deal with enduring themes or significant knowledge within or across disciplines.
- Be reviewed by content experts to judge the quality of the content and the content authenticity of the tasks.
Linguistic appropriateness
We must assure that all students receive credit in our assessments for what they know and can do, in part to maintain their motivation for school. So that real content-based and thinking skills competencies are not inappropriately swamped by the language demands of many performance assessments and to provide a greater choice for students, we need to understand the role of language in the creation of alternative but equally challenging measurement procedures.

Instructional sensitivity
Just because an assessment task is interesting and challenging does not necessarily mean that it taps knowledge and skills that are affected by instruction and schooling. Does optimal instruction produce improvements in performance—or, for example, does an assessment tap individual differences which are immune to school efforts? Accurate inferences about the quality of schools or about student progress demand evidence that performance assessments are sensitive to instructional effort. Yet to date, such evidence has not been well-developed.

Content coverage
An assessment should match well the content of the curriculum. In a good, comprehensive assessment system, there should not be any significant gaps between important curriculum goals and material covered by an assessment. A good assessment should:

- Cover a broad range of skills and content.
- Include tasks sampled from throughout the curriculum.
Meaningfulness
An assessment should be meaningful to students, teachers, parents, and the community. It needs to be credible to the various constituencies who are interested in the assessment results. Students should find the assessment interesting and worthwhile. A good assessment should:

- Evoke positive reactions from both students and teachers.
- Be perceived by students and teachers as a valid indicator of student competence in the particular area being assessed.
- Engage and motivate students to perform to the best of their capability.
- Be credible to parents, the community, and the policymakers.

Cost and efficiency
An assessment should be practical. The information gained from an assessment should be worth the cost and effort required to obtain it. Although the addition of performance-based tasks usually raises the cost of an assessment, an assessment that meets the above criteria will be worth the investment. A good assessment should:

- Be cost-efficient.
- Be administered and scored in an efficient and effective manner.

Since most alternative assessments are still new, some of the criteria described above may not have been assessed yet. Validity and reliability are key issues for new assessments—issues that are just starting to be addressed in alternative assessment.
The Alternative Assessments in Practice Database

CRESST compiled the *Alternative Assessments in Practice Database* to promote the exchange of innovative assessment ideas. The database is designed to provide easy access and retrieval of information about ongoing and newly developed measures from around the world. It draws on the diverse assessment initiatives currently being implemented at the local, state, and national levels, as well as those of CRESST, curriculum and teacher groups, and other research and development providers.

Information on the assessments currently in the database was collected over the past eighteen months, using the *Alternative Assessments in Practice Database* Protocol (see Appendix). Developers of assessments were asked to complete a protocol for each distinct subject area and grade level for which they had created an assessment. The protocol asks for:

- Contact information
- Subject matters and specific topic areas assessed
- Assessment purpose
- Student grade levels for which assessment is intended
- Special student groups for whom the assessment is designed and with whom the assessment is being used
- Cognitive skills (and/or attitudes or affective behaviors) assessed
- Student response mode
- Administrative context, requirements, and costs
- Characteristics of scoring
- Developmental status, including availability of empirical data and availability of actual assessment

- Actual assessment or a sample of the assessment, if available

Copies of the protocol were sent to all the State Departments of Education, to the Council of Big City Schools, to the national research centers in education, to the various Regional Educational Laboratories, to numerous people involved in innovative assessment networks fostered by large organizations such as the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, the National Education Association, and the American Federation of Teachers, and to other people involved in innovative assessment. In addition, CRESST used colleague recommendations, publications such as newsletters, and leads from institutions such as the National Science Foundation to find innovative assessments for the database. Information about the database was also presented at numerous conferences, including those of the Education Commission of the States, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and at the Large Scale Assessment Conference and various CRESST conferences.

Thus far, CRESST has received protocols for over 250 alternative assessments focusing on a wide variety of subjects, ranging from the traditional—language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies—to the less common—foreign language, workforce readiness, and fine arts. Data from these protocols have been assembled into a Macintosh HyperCard-based database, thus forming the *Alternative Assessments in Practice Database*. In April, 1993, CRESST requested all organizations who had submitted protocols to verify the accuracy of their input. To the best of our knowledge, the information within this database is correct as of May, 1993; however, because this information is likely to undergo constant change, we strongly suggest you contact the agency directly for their most recent information.
References


CHAPTER 2
Browsing Through the Database

This chapter contains instructions for browsing through the database using the Contact Information Card.

Important Terms

Contact Information Card:
A Contact Information Card contains administrative information about a protocol, including: title, sponsoring organization, contact name, address, and developer information. It also contains information about the abstract and classification information (state, local or international education agency, testing service, or university research affiliation).

Full Protocol:
The Full Protocol contains 19 screens with a wide variety of information from the Alternative Assessments in Practice Database protocol. (For a complete description of the protocol, see the Appendix.)

Dog-Ear:
When you mark a Contact Information Card for printing, you “dog-ear” the card.

Pop-up Menu:
You activate a pop-up menu when you hold the mouse down on certain buttons. The pop-up menus appear in dialog boxes containing several options, such as search and print preferences.

From time to time, you will see supplementary information on the chapter topics in a grey box, like this one.
Getting Ready to Browse

This database allows you to browse through the currently held protocols of alternative assessments. You can search the database via any item that appears on the protocol and the results of your search can be viewed on the screen or printed out in report form. Each protocol contains the following information:

- Contact information
- Subject matters and specific topic areas assessed
- Assessment purpose
- Student grade levels for which assessment is intended
- Special student groups for whom the assessment is designed and with whom the assessment is being used
- Cognitive skills (and/or attitudes or affective behaviors) assessed
- Student response mode
- Administrative context and requirements
- Characteristics of scoring
- Developmental status, including availability of empirical data and availability of actual assessment
How to Begin

Insert the database disk into the disk drive. Double click on the "Assessments in Practice DB" icon. The database will open with the following title screen (Figure 2.1).

1. Click anywhere on the title screen (Figure 2.1).

The main menu will appear (Figure 2.2). You have the option of browsing through the database via (1) contact information or (2) substantive inquiries.

2. Click on the button labeled Browse by Contact Information (Figure 2.2).

See Chapter 3 for instructions on making substantive inquiries.
You will go to the search screen (Figure 2.3) containing the Contact Information Search Template.

3. **Click on the button labeled** `SEARCH` **near the bottom right of the screen** (Figure 2.3).

   If you have not entered any search criteria, you will simply go to the first Contact Information Card in the database (Figure 2.4).
Description of a Contact Information Card

The Contact Information Cards in the database are displayed in the format of an open notepad (Figure 2.4). Each Contact Information Card contains the following information:

- Title of assessment
- Sponsoring organization
- Point of contact and phone number
- Title and address of developer
- Assessment reporting date

Figure 2.4 shows many of the features of the Contact Information Card. Take a few minutes to look at the card, the buttons and the explanations. The next several pages consider each of these functions in detail.
Looking Through the Database

You may browse the database using either the mouse or the keyboard.

Using the Mouse

The buttons used for browsing forward or backward are indicated in Figure 2.5. To go to the next Contact Information Card, click on the right arrow at the bottom center of the screen. To go to the previous Contact Information Card, click on the left arrow at the bottom center of the screen.

Using the Keyboard

If you are more comfortable using the keyboard instead of the mouse, you may press the left or right arrows on the keyboard to move back or forward through the cards. The location of the arrow keys is dependent upon the style of the keyboard you are using. Pressing the arrow keys on the keyboard provides the same results as using the mouse and clicking on the arrows (Figure 2.5).
Viewing the Abstract

Inside each Contact Information Card is an abstract of the complete protocol, including a summary of the subject area being assessed, grade level, task characteristics, mode of response used in the assessment, unit of analysis, administration time, special requirements, whether a scoring guide is included and the assessment's availability.

To display the abstract while looking at a Contact Information Card (Figure 2.5):

4. Click on the button labeled Show abstract in the bottom left corner of the screen (Figure 2.5).

The abstract will appear on the screen (Figure 2.6), covering all of the Contact Information Card except for the title and sponsoring organization fields. The Show abstract button changes to Hide abstract.

5. When done viewing the abstract, click on the button labeled Hide abstract in the bottom left corner or click anywhere in the abstract field (Figure 2.6).

The abstract will disappear and the Hide abstract button will change back to Show abstract (Figure 2.5).
Marking Contact Information Cards for Printing

As you browse through the Contact Information Cards, you can mark them so that they can be printed when you’re finished browsing.

To mark a Contact Information Card:

6. **Click on the upper right area of the screen.**

The current Contact Information Card will be marked (Figure 2.7). A card is marked, or “dog-eared,” when the corner of the page is turned down.

![FIGURE 2.7 Dog-eared Card](image)

If you change your mind and want to unmark a Contact Information Card, simply click on the area of the screen where the corner of the page is “dog-eared.” The current card will revert back to its original unmarked status.
**Printing Contact Information and Abstract**

While browsing through the Contact Information Cards, you can print any card you dog-ear. Both the Contact Information Card and the abstract for that card will be printed.

When looking at a dog-eared Contact Information Card (Figure 2.7):

7. **Click on the button labeled** **Printing Controls** **at the bottom of the screen** (Figure 2.7).

The Print Report window will appear on the screen (Figure 2.8). There are two buttons and a pop-up menu in the Print Report window (Figure 2.8).
8. **Click down** (hold down the mouse button) **on the pop-up menu** (the elongated white box) **and move the mouse pointer down until it is over the desired printing option** (Figure 2.9). Release the mouse button.

The selected printing option will appear in the menu box (Figure 2.9).

9. **Click on the button labeled** Print or press the return key to print the report (Figure 2.9).

Your record or records will print out.

**Click on the button labeled** Cancel to stop printing or dismiss the printing request (Print Report window).
Accessing a Full Protocol

A Full Protocol provides detailed information about each assessment. To access the Full Protocol, make sure you are looking at a Contact Information Card (Figure 2.4). Then:

10. Click on the button labeled Full Protocol at the bottom of the screen.

You will go to the first screen of the Full Protocol for that assessment (Figure 2.10).

[Diagram: 1. SUBJECT MATTER ASSESSED:
- English/Language Arts
- Science
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics
- Earth Sciences
- Other Physical
- Other Life
- Thematic (e.g., Project 2061)
- Social Studies
- History
- Civics/Government
- Geography
- Other Social Science
- Law
- Foreign Language
- English as Second Lang.
- Computer Science
- Accounting/Business
- Health/Physical Ed.
- Drug Ed.
- HIV/AIDS Ed.
- Health Ed.
- Phys Ed./Fitness
- Fine Arts
- Visual Arts
- Music
- Performing Arts
- Work Force Readiness
- Vocational Skills
- Interdisciplinary
- Other
- Click here to go to the previous screen
- Click here to go to next screen
- Click here to go back to Contact Information Card]
Browsing Through Protocol Screens

By clicking on the bottom center buttons (Figure 2.10) or using your keyboard, you can now browse through all of the following protocol screens:

- subject matter assessed
- specific topics of focus
- assessment purpose
- student and grade levels or status
- special student groups for whom the assessment was designed
- special student groups with whom the assessment has been used
- assessment task characteristics
- administration conditions
- characteristics of scoring
- development status of the assessment
- estimated administration, scoring, and reporting costs
- availability of the assessment

Printing a Full Protocol

You can print information on the assessment from any card of the Full Protocol.

When looking at a Full Protocol screen (Figure 2.10):

11. **Click on the button labeled** Printing Controls **at the bottom of the screen.**

The Print Protocol window appears (Figure 2.11). There are two buttons and a pop-up menu in the Print Protocol window.
12. Click and hold down on the pop-up menu until you have selected the desired printing option (Figure 2.12). Then release the mouse button.

The selected printing option will appear in the menu box (Figure 2.12).
13. Click on the button labeled Print or press the return key to print (Figure 2.13).

You can also print a blank protocol. The blank protocol will contain a template for the protocol information but will not contain any specific information about the protocol you are currently looking at.

Returning to the Contact Information Card

When looking at a Full Protocol screen (Figure 2.10):

14. Click on the return button at the bottom right of the screen.

You will go back to the Contact Information Card for this Protocol (Figure 2.5).
Exiting the Database

This section describes how to exit the database from wherever you are.

When looking at any type of card or screen in the database:

15. Click on the return button at the bottom right corner (Figure 2.14).

Continuously clicking on the return button will eventually lead you back to the title screen. When you get back to the title screen, click on the QUIT button to exit the database.

This concludes Chapter 2. In order to conduct a “substantive search,” please proceed to Chapter 3.
CHAPTER 3
Searching Through the Database

This chapter shows you how to conduct an inquiry focusing upon grade level or topic (or both). The latter part of the chapter shows you how to define a very specific inquiry utilizing Full Search.

Some users will find the menu-driven grade-level/subject-matter search in this chapter to be a quick and simple mechanism for finding the information desired. Other users will appreciate the power and flexibility of the database's Full Search capabilities.

Chapter 3 is divided into two sections to reflect this two-leveled approach. Section A explains how to conduct simple subject-matter and grade-level searches. Section B explains the more powerful Full Search procedure.

A. Subject-Matter and Grade-Level Searches

1. From the Main Menu (Figure 3.1), click on the button labeled Substantive Inquiries.

   The Substantive Search Card appears.

![Figure 3.1 Main Menu](image-url)

Alternative Assessments Database
UCLA CRESST

This is the main menu. From here you must make your first decision concerning how you want to search or browse this database. Your choices are to conduct a substantive inquiry (i.e., the science subject area at the 8th grade), or to Browse by Contact Information (i.e., State - California).

Click here to go to the Substantive Search Card
2. Click on **Proceed** to conduct a grade-level and subject-matter search (Figure 3.2).

**FIGURE 3.2**

**Substantive Search Menu Card**

A dialogue box appears, asking for subject-matter and grade-level information (Figure 3.3).
3. Click **down** (hold down the mouse button) on either of the pop-up menus (the two elongated white boxes) and move the mouse pointer up or down until it is over the item you wish to select (Figure 3.4).

4. Once you have selected a grade level or subject matter, release the mouse button.
The item selected appears in the pop-up menu (Figure 3.5). If you wish to change your selection, repeat the previous step and your new selection will replace the present one.

![Figure 3.5: Search Parameter Dialogue Box With Selections Made](image)

Selections of Elementary Mathematics

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You can conduct a search with either an item from Subject Matter or Grade Level selected or both. In other words, you need not supply both a subject matter and a grade level.

5. **Click on the OK button to start the search. Be patient; it may take a few seconds to complete.**

When the search is complete it will take you to the first record of the set that matches your search request (Figure 3.6).
From here you may browse through the descriptions of the alternative assessments that match your interests (see Chapter 2).

If there are no entries in the database matching your request, an apology will be shown in the field directly above the Proceed button (Figure 3.2).

This concludes the subject-matter and grade-level search. To conduct a more complex search, see Section B, Full Search, which follows.
B. Full Search

If you want to search by defining special characteristics of the assessment, such as administration conditions or developmental status, use the Full Search feature.

1. From the Substantive Search Card, click on the small button labeled Full Search (Figure 3.7).

The Full Search Card appears (Figure 3.8).
You will see a list of 18 categories each marked by a bullet (*) just to the left of the category name (Figure 3.8). There are also 18 corresponding pop-up menus (the small, rectangular white boxes). These pop-up menus work just like the other pop-up menus in this program with one important difference—the fields can hold multiple entries. You can search for all records of assessments in math or science or history. Additionally you can further specify any number of other search criteria from any of the other categories or subcategories.

2. Click on the pop-up menus directly to the right of the categories you wish to include (Figure 3.9) and hold the mouse button down.

**FIGURE 3.9**
Full Search Card
A long list of criteria appears for each category (Figure 3.10).

3. Move the mouse up or down until it is over the item you wish to select. Release the mouse button to select that criterion (Figure 3.10).

Your selection appears in the pop-up field. If you wish to add another criterion to this list, repeat the last step.

If you wish to change a category selection you have made, click on the bullet (•) for that category. You will be asked to confirm that you wish to clear the choices you have made. Click **Yes** if you want to clear the field. You can now re-enter the search criteria.
4. When you are finished marking the items upon which you wish to search, you have two choices.

You can click on the Do Search Now button (Figure 3.9).

You will go to the first contact card that meets the criteria of your selection (Figure 3.11). From this point you may also browse through the Contact Information Cards as you did via “Browse by Contact Information” in Chapter 2.

**FIGURE 3.11**
Contact Information Card

Or you can further refine your search to return only those assessments from, for example, the state of California, by pressing the Connect Search to Contact Info button (Figure 3.9). This button takes you to the Contact Information Template Card (Figure 2.3) and delays the actual search until you specify further information. (See gray box on page 18.)

This concludes Chapter 3. Chapter 4 contains on-line assistance information.
CHAPTER 4
On-Line Assistance

Important Terms

Balloon Help:
Balloon Help, when turned on, provides assistance when you point
the mouse at specific screen items. You can turn on Balloon Help by
clicking on the ? button at the bottom of any screen.

HELP button:
The “HELP” button appears as a ?. If the HELP button is
darkened (highlighted), then Balloon Help is turned on.

Introduction

On-line assistance is available to you in the form of Balloon Help. A
Help button ( ? ) is located on every screen, and on-line assistance
can be turned on or off at any time while using the database (see
above).

Accessing On-Line Assistance

To access on-line assistance at any time (Figure 4.1):

1. Click on the ? button.

■ FIGURE 4.1
Using Balloon Help

Click on ?
to turn on Balloon Help
Balloon Help is turned on (Figure 4.2). The Help icon (❓) is now darkened (highlighted).

2. Move the mouse to an area or button on the screen you want to know more about (in this example, the mouse was moved to Full Protocol) (Figure 4.3).

A balloon will appear with a help message (Figure 4.3).
When the mouse is moved away from a field or button, the balloon will disappear. If you happen to move the mouse to another field or button that contains a help message, another balloon will appear.

**Pop-Up Menus**

Balloon Help is also available when using pop-up menus. If Balloon Help is turned on before a pop-up menu is activated, you can find out about the buttons in the pop-up menu.

1. **When looking at any pop-up menu** (Balloon Help turned on), move the mouse around the pop-up menu.

A balloon will appear with a help message about a particular feature in the pop-up menu (Figure 4.4).

![Figure 4.4](image)

This concludes the *Alternative Assessments in Practice Database User's Manual*. Should you have questions or problems, please call CRESST at (310) 206-1532 or write to CRESST/UCLA, Graduate School of Education, 405 Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024-1522.
APPENDIX

*Alternative Assessments in Practice Database Protocol*
CRESST

ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENTS IN PRACTICE DATABASE PROTOCOL

CRESST's Alternative Assessments in Practice Database is intended as a repository of current efforts to develop alternative assessments, i.e., alternatives to norm-referenced multiple choice tests which are intended to assess students' higher-order thinking skills.

Directions: Please fill out one set of these forms for each distinct subject area assessment you have developed and/or are using (e.g., elementary mathematics, high school government, middle school science, interdisciplinary humanities) and are willing to have included in our Alternative Assessments in Practice Database. On this page indicate the appropriate contact person for additional information about the assessment; the subsequent four pages gather descriptive information about your assessment. Please complete these pages, in order, for each distinct format included (essay, experiment, portfolio, expanded multiple choice, etc.) in each subject assessment. If possible, attach a sample of all your assessment materials. Feel free to make copies of these forms or call us for additional sets. Or if you prefer to have us fill out the forms, call us for an interview.

Return all material to: Dr. Joan Herman
CRESST
145 Moore Hall
405 Hilgard Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90024-1522

For additional information or assistance, call (310) 206-1532, fax (310) 825-3883.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Title of Assessment: ________________________________

Sponsoring Organization: ________________________________

Point of Contact: Name: __________________ Phone: ________________

Title: ________________________________

Address: ________________________________

City: __________________ State: ___________ Zip: ________________

Developer: ________________________________

Today's Date: ________________
Directions: For all the following items in this protocol, please check all the boxes that apply.

1. SUBJECT MATTERS ASSESSED:

- English/Language Arts
  - Reading
  - Writing
  - Literature
  - Oral Communication
  - Other: ____________

- Science
  - Biology
  - Chemistry
  - Physics
  - Earth Sciences
  - Other Physical: ____________

- Mathematics
  - Basic
  - Algebra
  - Geometry
  - Advanced (Trig., Calculus, etc.)
  - Other: ____________

- Other Life:
  - Thematic (e.g., AAAS Project 2061)

- Social Studies
  - History
  - Civics/Government
  - Geography
  - Other Social Science: ____________

- Law

- Foreign Language: ____________
  - English as a Second Language
  - Computer Science
  - Accounting/Business
  - Health/Physical Education
  - Drug Education
  - HIV (AIDS) Education
  - Health Education
  - Physical Education/Fitness

- Fine Arts
  - Visual Arts
  - Music
  - Performing Arts (Drama, Dance)

- Work Force Readiness/ Employability Skills
  - Vocational Skills
  - Interdisciplinary
  - Other: ____________

2. PLEASE LIST SPECIFIC TOPIC(S) OF FOCUS WITHIN SUBJECT MATTER(S)
   (e.g., American History, Poetry Analysis, Differential Equations, Problem-Solving, Mental Arithmetic, Estimation, Conceptual Understanding):

3. ASSESSMENT PURPOSE:

- Diagnosis of student learning
- Selection/Assignment to groups
- Grading/Course exam
- Other: ____________

- Proficiency Testing
- Program or Curriculum Evaluation
- Research

- School Accountability
- School/Instructional Improvement
- Promotion or other certification

4. STUDENT GRADE LEVELS OR STATUS:

- Preschool
- Post-secondary-Academic
- Post-secondary-Vocational
- K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
- Military
- Business
- Other: ____________
5. SPECIAL STUDENT GROUP(S) FOR WHOM THE ASSESSMENT WAS PARTICULARLY DESIGNED:

- Gifted
- Low achievers/
  low verbal
- Other: ______________
- Limited English proficient
- Ethnic/Racial minorities
  (Specify): ______________
- Physically challenged
- Emotionally challenged
- All students
- Economically disadvantaged

6. SPECIAL STUDENT GROUP(S) WITH WHOM THE ASSESSMENT HAS BEEN USED:

- Gifted
- Low achievers
- Other: ______________
- Limited English Proficient
  Low verbal
- Ethnic/Racial minorities
  (Specify): ______________
- Physically challenged
- Emotionally challenged

7. ASSESSMENT TASK CHARACTERISTICS:

Cognitive Skills Assessed Within the Subject Matter:

- Knowledge of facts
- Knowledge of concepts
- Knowledge of procedures
- Problem identification
- Strategy selection
- Principle application

- Comprehension/Explanation
- Synthesis/Creative production
- Analysis/Evaluation
- Solution testing
- Self-monitoring skills
- Other: ______________

Attitudes or Affective Behaviors Explicitly and Concurrently Measured, If Any:

- Motivation
- Subject matter interest
- Anxiety
- Curiosity
- Other: ______________

- Work habits
- Commitment
- Persistence
- Self-reflection
- Other: ______________

- Group cooperation
- Tolerance
- Multi-cultural awareness
- Responsibility in learning

Primary Student Response Mode:

- Selected Response items (e.g., multiple choice)
- Short answer
- Essay
- Report
- Other written product

- Portfolio
- Art or graphic product
- Demonstration/
  Using manipulatives to solve a problem
- Other:

- Hands-on performance, (e.g., an experiment)
- Oral performance, (e.g., speech, reading aloud, acting)
- Group discussion
- Simulation (computer or non-computer)
- Computer-administered:
  (name of system ______________)

- Physical performance, (e.g.,
  dance, swimming, etc.)
Secondary Student Response Mode:

- Selected Response items (e.g., multiple choice)
- Short answer
- Essay
- Report
- Other written product
- Portfolio
- Art or graphic product
- Hands-on performance, (e.g., an experiment)
- Demonstration/Using manipulatives to solve a problem
- Other:
  - Physical performance, (e.g., dance, swimming, etc.)
  - Oral performance, (e.g., speech, reading aloud, acting)
  - Group discussion
  - Simulation (computer or non-computer)
  - Computer-administered:
    (name of system ________________)

Tasks Performed Individually or in Groups:

- Individual
- Small Group (2-5)
- Large Group (6 or more)
- Other ____________

Individual or Group Performance Results:

- Group
- Individual
- Both

8. ADMINISTRATION CONDITIONS:

Individual or Group Administration:

- Group
- Individual
- Other ________________

Ratio of Assessment Administrators/Record Keepers to Students:

___________ to ___________ students

Time Requirements:

Is there a time limit?  
- Yes  
- No  

Estimated time for administration (if individually administered, report amount of time needed for each student):  
_________ total minutes  
_________ days for administration

Special Requirements:

Special Materials Required?  
- Yes  
- No  

(Check and/or list):

- Audio tape  
- Video tape  
- Computer  
- Lab Equipment  
- Other ____________

Special Room or Space Arrangements?  
- Yes  
- No  

List or provide examples, e.g., multiple testing stations; outdoor area:
9. CHARACTERISTICS OF SCORING:

Records Required to Provide a Score:

☐ Individual student product or records
☐ Group products or records
☐ Observer check lists or ratings
☐ Anecdotal records or notes
☐ Structured protocols, completed by
☐ Computer records
☐ Video records
☐ Audiotape records
☐ Other ____________________________

Type of Rating/Scoring:

☐ Process ratings    ☐ Holistic ratings    ☐ Individual ratings    ☐ Cutoff score for passing
☐ Product ratings    ☐ Analytical ratings    ☐ Group ratings    ☐ Other _________

Nature of Rating Process:

☐ Explicit, prespecified criteria
☐ More than one rater per performance
☐ Rater training provided
☐ Scoring guide available
☐ Other ____________________________
☐ Rating not required, machine scored

10. DEVELOPMENTAL STATUS OF ASSESSMENT

Status:

☐ Exploratory—no empirical data anticipated
☐ Prototype under development, with data collection in process or planned
☐ Final field tested version
☐ In regular use. Specify for how long? _______ Years

Confidence in Measurement Quality of Current Form of Assessment:

☐ Very High    ☐ High    ☐ Fair    ☐ Uncertain    ☐ Low
Available Data on the Measure:

☐ Teacher reactions
☐ Descriptive statistics/ Normative data (means and standard deviations)
   Describe sample on which data is available
☐ Student reactions
☐ Validity studies (e.g., comparisons with other tests or judgments)
☐ Rater agreement
☐ Inferential statistics (power of measure for predicting other outcomes)

☐ Staff development and/or teaching strategies & materials

Test Specifications:

☐ Manual available: □ Free Cost $ ________
☐ Report available: □ Free Cost $ ________
☐ Update planned: Date: __________

11. ESTIMATED ADMINISTRATION, SCORING, AND REPORTING COSTS
(for one class, approximately 28 students):

☐ Estimated special administration costs (e.g., salaries): $ ________
☐ Material costs (e.g., equipment, test forms) $ ________
☐ Estimated scoring costs: $ ________
☐ Estimated reporting costs: $ ________

12. AVAILABILITY OF THE MEASURE

☐ Publicly available at no cost
☐ Publicly available, cost $ ________
☐ Available on a restricted basis. What are restrictions? ______________________________

☐ Only samples or prototypes are available
☐ Not available

Please attach samples of materials.