CAST

Large-Scale Assessments in the 21st Century

Points to Ponder

21st Century Assessments

360 million dollars has been awarded to four consortia to develop 21st Century assessments

General Observations about 21st Century Assessments

- Assessments are developed primarily intended for **electronic/digital delivery**
- There is great concern about **security and construct validity**
- In some areas, **more than one construct** is being measured (e.g. reading) in the same item.

Observations about 21st Century Assessments

- **Three levels of supports** are currently planned: general for all, supports for some, accommodations for a few
- Some supports will be **"built into"** the system (e,g, APIP)
- Little information is currently available about **interoperability across platforms**
- Little information is currently available about **assistive technology**

AT Mentioned–or not– in Current Consortia Accessibility Documents

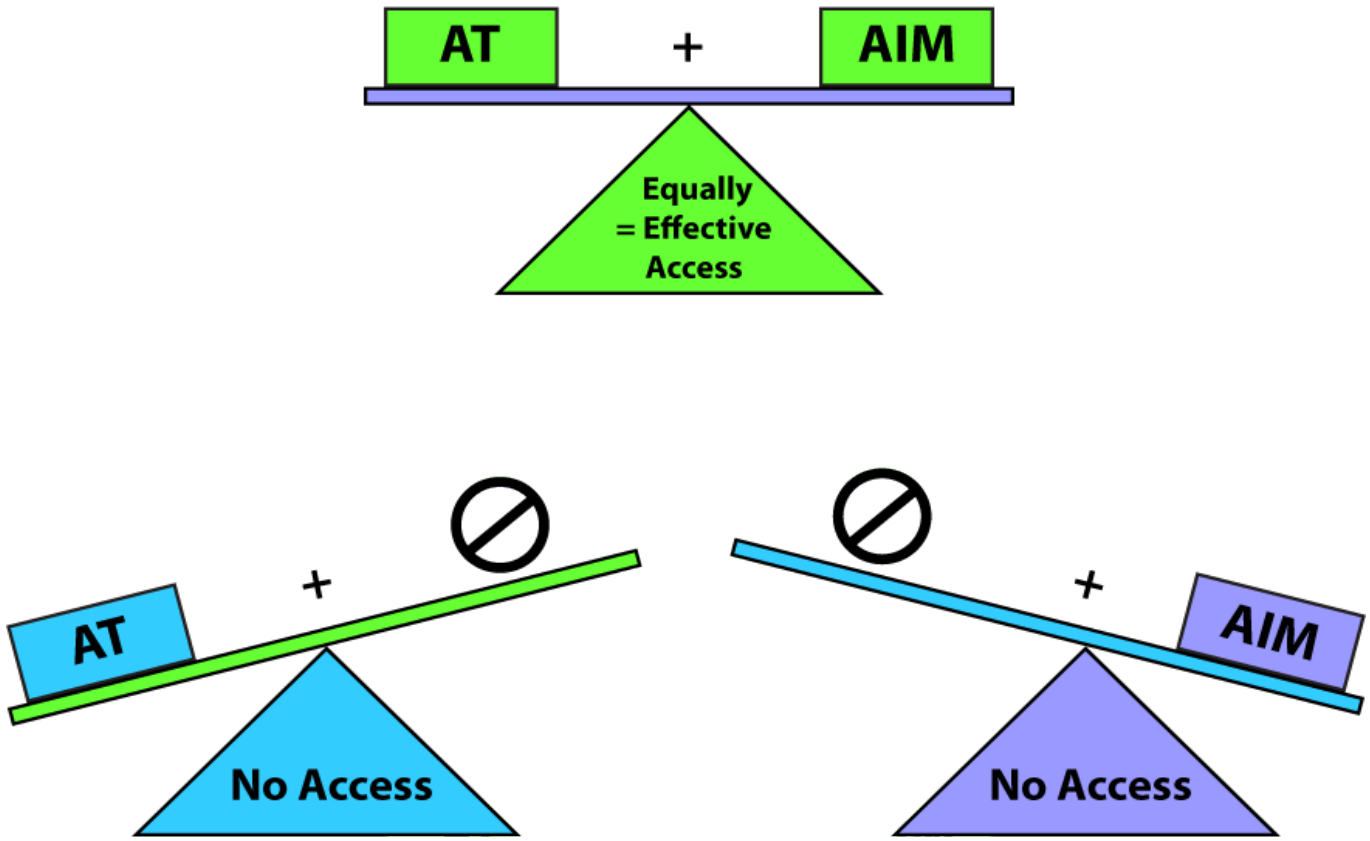
- **PARCC** - "Additional Assistive Technology: Guidelines will be provided in Fall, 2013
- **SBAC** – No specific mention
- **DLM** - "a variety of assistive technologies commonly used by students"
- **NCSC** – No specific mention

Considerations in Policy and Practice

Flexible, Inclusive Assessments

When thinking about accessible digital assessments it is important to understand that **content** and **delivery technology** are two sides of the AIM coin and both require careful consideration and selection.

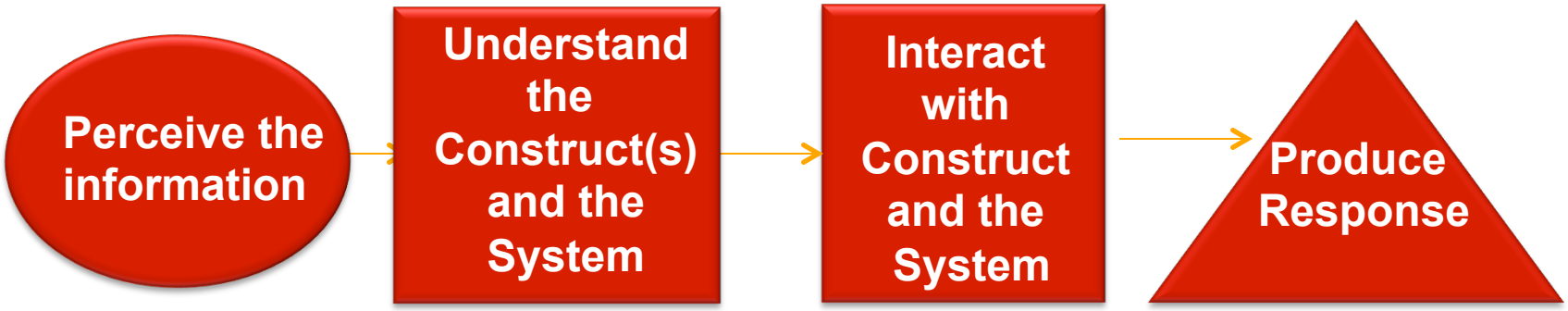
The Content/Technology Balance



“Accessibility problems can be eliminated and the “playing field leveled” when course content is delivered using various and redundant modes such as speech, text, and graphics…These modes make it possible to deliver content based not only on disabilities, but also on learner preferences or preferences.”

Center for Online Learning Teacher Resources

Functional Requirements



There are cognitive, linguistic, sensory, physical and social-emotional requirements for participation in assessments that involve both the content and the delivery system.

Commonly Used Supports

Scaffolds, access supports and accommodations provided to students during instruction should be available during assessment as long as they do not violate the construct(s) being assessed.

If technology or any other support/accommodation is commonly used in education and life, why would it be unavailable in assessment?

Flexible, Malleable Content

If content is inflexible or “locked down”, delivery systems will not be able to deliver the content in ways that promote wide usability and accessibility.

Is the content designed be “displayed” in multiple ways? (video captions, alt text, text and image descriptions that can be voiced, digital braille, etc .)

The Dilemma of Multiple Constructs

When more than one construct is being assessed and the inability to successfully deal with one construct blocks the way for assessing the others, consideration should be given to accessing the constructs separately.

Is the assessment designed to confirm what we already know a student cannot do or to determine what she CAN do?

System/Tool Interoperability

Interoperability across platforms and tools (hardware and software) is critical to a flexible system that can be effectively and efficiently used across the widest possible range of student diversity and variability.

Avoid writing one particular "solution" into a system.

One size never did fit all.

System/Tool Navigation

Navigation support option are important for EVERYONE!

How are users of the system move about through the content? When happens when they move about?

(e.g.note maintained? time management cues?

Tool/System Transparency

If a student is unfamiliar with available tools or with the way the tools are presented, the cognitive and physical attention required to deal with the tools take cognitive attention away from the task.

.

Are available tools for the assessment those that are commonly used by THE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT who is expected to use them in high stakes assessments?

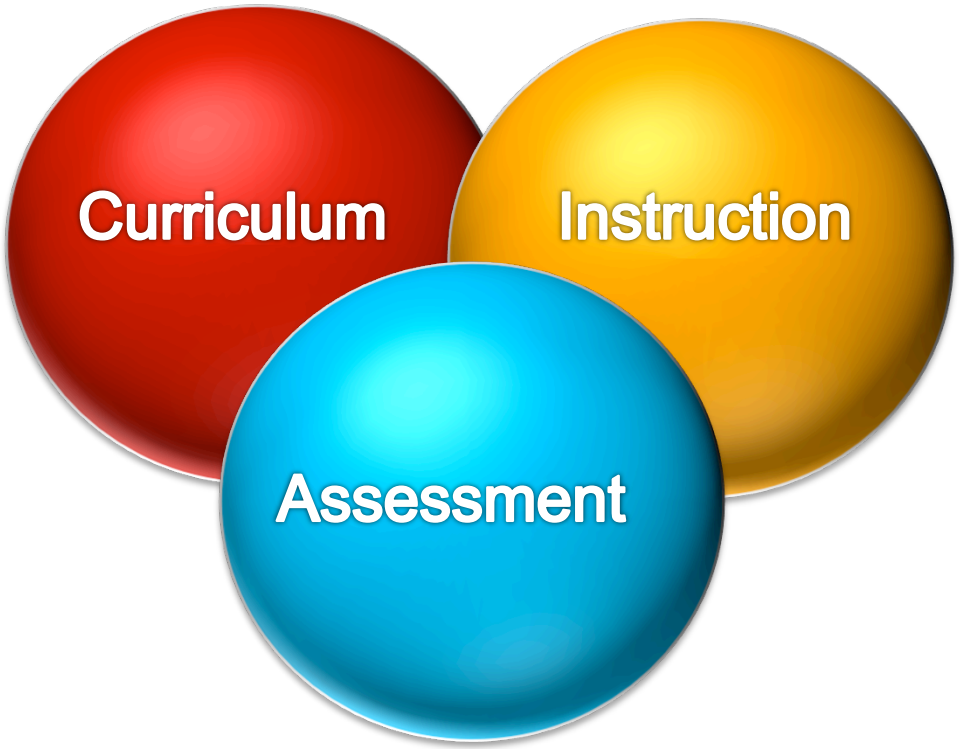
Multiple Supports

Many students use more than one type of technology and/or strategy depending upon the task and the facilitators and barriers within the environments in which the tasks occur.

Does the student have an array of "tools" from which to select depending on what needs to be done, where and when?

Assessment Guiding Instruction

What is available in assessment has great influence on what is made available and used during instruction.



Decision-making Responsibilities

Students, educators, families and others need support to build their familiarity with the strengths and challenges of various accommodations and their capacity to select among them.

Do decision-makers know their roles and how to go about considering the barriers lowered – and possibly raised – by various support options?

Examples of Capacity-Building Tools

- The AIM Navigator
- The AIM Explorer
- Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology (QIAT)

http://www.qiat.org