

Design a speaking task and a writing task for your class that fulfills the criteria of the GRASPS frame.

The GRASPS Frame

As a means of creating more authentic “performances of understanding,” we recommend that teachers frame assessment tasks with the features suggested by the acronym GRASPS. In other words, include (1) a real-world **goal**, (2) a meaningful **role** for the student, (3) authentic (or simulated) real-world **audience(s)**, (4) a contextualized **situation** that involve real-world application, (5) student-generated culminating **products** and performances, and (6) consensus-driven performance **standards** (criteria) for judging success. Notice these elements in the two previously presented examples.

We do not mean to imply that *everything* we teach or assess needs to be framed using GRASPS. However, for those important ideas and processes that you really want students to understand, we believe that more authentic tasks have merit. Performance tasks having these features provide meaningful learning targets for learners, worthy performance goals for teaching, and the kind of evidence needed to assess true understanding.

Moreover, it is important to stress that virtually all students in our schools should have regular opportunities to demonstrate their proficiency with important content goals through assessments that embody the GRASPS characteristics. Some parameters for student work and teacher scaffolding of student success may well need to vary among students, but not the opportunity to express learning through meaningful assessments that include student choice, that are focused on essential content goals, and that are judged according to substantive criteria. A highly advanced learner, for example, may apply understandings in a less familiar or less well-defined context or for an audience with sophisticated knowledge of the domain in question. A student who struggles to learn may apply understandings in a more familiar or more structured context or for an audience of peers or younger students. Both students should be expected to demonstrate genuine understanding of essential principles in real-world situations.