Learner-Centered and Authentic Assessment Checklist

What would education be like if we as educators, as bell hooks suggests, taught "from a standpoint aimed at liberating the minds of our students rather than indoctrinating them"? (2003. P.1)

Many options exist for assessments that aim for this goal. Some examples of learner-centered and authentic assessment tools are: portfolios, rubrics, student self report and feedback on program/course, teacher observations and feedback, peer assessment, interviews, learning plans, and action plans, among others.

Whatever the tools and processes you decide to go with, use the checklist below to determine if your assessment is learner-centered and authentic:

- ☐ Have you worked with learners prior to assessment to help them understand the purpose and vocabulary of assessment?
- ☐ Does it capture real life uses of skills?
- ☐ Are the skills you are assessing transferable and measurable and observable?
- ☐ Can your assessment process adapt to meet the unique needs of individual learners?
- ☐ Is your assessment process directed by the individual learner's goals?
- ☐ Does your assessment process build on learner's strengths and prior knowledge?
- ☐ Do your assessment tools actively involve the learner?
- ☐ Does your assessment process measure change? (i.e. do you do assessment at the beginning, throughout and at the end of your time with the learner?)
- ☐ Does your assessment process offer opportunities to think critically and reflectively, develop independence and engage in problem-solving?
- ☐ Do you continually develop your assessment tools in response to feedback?
- ☐ Are your assessment tools free of bias? (i.e. do they assume cultural understandings etc.?)
- ☐ Do your assessment tools connect to a larger framework or process? (ie. Career pathways, program outcomes)
- ☐ Does your assessment process inform curriculum, program and broader educational development?

Jessica Paterson and Johanna Petite
George Brown College

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Jessica Paterson and Johanna Petite
George Brown College