Reflection Report

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1. CBC, CBE, and CBA as a System

CBC (Competency-Based Curriculum) is an educational program focused on developing key competencies in students rather than just memorizing facts. It emphasizes practical application, the ability to use knowledge in real-life situations, and developing critical thinking skills. CBE (Competency-Based Education) is a teaching method in which students learn at their own pace until they master a specific competency. The emphasis is on outcomes — what students can do, not just what they know. CBA (Competency-Based Assessment) is an evaluation system designed to measure how well a student has mastered particular competencies. Unlike traditional assessments, CBA focuses on practical skills and depth of understanding rather than rote memorization. These three components are interconnected: CBC sets the framework and learning goals, CBE organizes the process of learning, and CBA checks whether the student has achieved the desired outcomes. Together, they create a unified and effective system of competency-based education. In short, the curriculum (CBC) defines what needs to be learned, the methodology (CBE) guides how to reach those goals, and the assessment (CBA) helps determine whether the goals have been achieved. For example, in early grades, we conducted a lesson on the topic “Who Lives Where: Plants and Animals in Nature.” The students went outside to observe insects and plants, took notes, and later shared their findings. This gave each child a chance to express themselves: some made drawings, others gave verbal reports, or created presentations. Although the project was engaging and interactive, it revealed some challenges in assessment. First, the variety of

presentation formats made it difficult to objectively compare student performance. Additionally, students worked at different speeds — some finished early and became disengaged while waiting for others. This experience highlighted the importance of pre-planning evaluation criteria, using clear rubrics, and structuring the lesson to accommodate different learning paces.

2. Curriculum Development and Learning Goals

In the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) framework, effective learning is built on three key pillars: clear learning goals, purposeful activities, and meaningful assessment. A well-defined learning objective outlines the specific skills and actions students are expected to demonstrate after the lesson. The emphasis shifts from memorization to the practical application of knowledge in real-life contexts. In CBC, learning activities are designed to actively engage students through tasks and projects that develop and showcase competencies. These experiences encourage learners to participate meaningfully and apply what they've learned in realistic situations. Assessment in CBC focuses on how well students can apply their knowledge and skills. A variety of tools such as projects, presentations, and real-life simulations offer a comprehensive view of student progress. Example: Science Lesson (Grade 4) Unit: "Substances and Their Properties" Learning Objective: 4.3.2.2 — Identify sources of air pollution The goal was for students to recognize air pollutants and explain their sources in everyday life. Groups received illustrated cards with real-life situations (e.g., traffic, factory emissions, forest fires). They identified likely pollutants in each case. Classroom experiments, like burning paper, visually demonstrated how substances become pollutants. A follow-up outdoor walk allowed students to observe and document actual pollution sources near the school. Assessment methods included: Observation cards with 3–4 sources recorded Group presentations analyzing one scenario Oral responses identifying at least one pollutant and its source Results: Students were engaged, curious, and thoughtful in discussions. Formative feedback supported better understanding. Area for improvement: Uneven group participation made individual assessment difficult. Future lessons could include individual tasks and reflection sheets for more accurate evaluation. This example highlights how clear goals, engaging activities, and varied assessments in CBC foster both deep understanding and real-world relevance.

3. Assessment Quality: Validity, Reliability, and Fairness

Lesson Objective: Students should learn to identify sources of air pollution. Validity The assessment was directly aligned with the objective — to develop students' ability to recognize

sources of air pollution. It included several components: Illustration analysis: Students were shown images of different pollution sources, such as a person smoking, bonfire smoke, cars, factories, etc. This helped them connect theoretical concepts to real-life situations. Pair discussion: Learners shared observations about pollution in their surroundings, promoting deeper understanding and engagement. Individual task: Students completed a table listing pollutants and their sources, which gave everyone the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding on an individual basis. Reliability Assessment was based on the following criteria: Identifying the pollution source Briefly explaining its impact on air quality Despite having clear criteria, oral responses were evaluated differently depending on the teacher, leading to some inconsistency. To improve reliability, a scoring rubric with specific examples and point allocations should be introduced. For example, students could earn points for each correctly identified pollutant and its source, with additional points for clear explanations. Fairness and Inclusion A key strength of the assessment was offering diverse ways for students to express their knowledge: Oral responses supported students who struggle with writing. Drawings gave creative learners a chance to visualize their ideas. Table completion helped organize information clearly and suited visual thinkers. This flexible approach ensured equal opportunities for all learners, including those with learning difficulties. It promoted fairness and allowed every student to demonstrate their strengths. Conclusion: The experience showed that well-structured tasks, flexible methods, and consistent evaluation criteria form the foundation of high- quality assessment. Such planning not only improves learning outcomes but also makes the process more inclusive, fair, and reliable, especially in the primary grades.

4. Grading and Standard Setting

Kazakhstan implements a criteria-based assessment system that includes formative assessment (FA), summative assessment for the unit (SAU), and summative assessment for the term (SAT). Formative assessment is conducted regularly and is aimed at monitoring students' ongoing progress. It provides constructive feedback that helps learners improve throughout the learning process. SAU and SAT, on the other hand, are carried out after the completion of specific units and at the end of each term, respectively, to evaluate the students' understanding over a longer period. Transparency and fairness Assessment criteria are communicated in advance to both students and their parents, making the process more transparent and understandable. The evaluation is based on clearly defined standards aligned with learning objectives, which ensures a more objective and fair grading process. Alignment with learning goals The assessment system is closely connected to educational objectives that go beyond the acquisition of knowledge. It supports the development of critical thinking, analysis, and independent learning skills. While formative assessment identifies learning gaps and allows for timely intervention, summative assessment reflects the overall mastery of the

content. Threshold scores Converting summative scores to traditional grades is done using the percentage of points earned out of the total possible. For instance, a score of 81–100% corresponds to an “excellent” grade, 65–80% to “good,” 40–64% to “satisfactory,” and below 40% is considered “unsatisfactory.” Recommendations for improvement: Professional development for teachers: Continuous training in criteria- based assessment methods to ensure the validity, reliability, fairness, and consistency of evaluations. Enhanced feedback mechanisms: Developing structured systems for delivering more detailed and timely feedback to students and parents, enabling better support and adjustments in the learning process. This system not only supports academic achievement but also promotes fairness and continuous growth in the educational journey of each student.

5. Use of Rubrics

Within the framework of Competency-Based Assessment (CBA), using assessment rubrics is highly effective. Rubrics help teachers evaluate student work objectively and transparently, while also guiding students by showing them what is expected and what steps they can take to succeed. An example of rubric use took place during a Grade 4 science lesson on the topic “Sources of Air Pollution.” Students were asked to create a poster that described a pollution problem and suggested possible solutions. To ensure fairness and clarity in grading, a rubric was developed in advance with four key criteria: Completeness of information – e.g., one source of pollution without a solution (1 point); one source with a suggested solution (2 points), and so on. Accuracy – e.g., includes incorrect or misleading information (1 point), mostly accurate with few errors (2–3 points), fully accurate (4 points). Visual design – e.g., basic layout, partially readable (1 point), neat and readable (up to 4 points). Presentation – e.g., unclear explanations, limited group participation (1 point), confident and clear delivery by all members (4 points). Each criterion was rated on a scale from 1 to 4 points. Students were able to use the rubric during preparation, allowing them to self-check and improve their work before presenting. As a result, most of the posters were well-structured and thoughtfully presented. For rubrics to be effective, several factors are essential: Clarity — the rubric must be understandable to both teachers and students. Alignment with learning goals — each criterion should reflect key aspects of the expected outcome. Opportunity for self-assessment — allowing students to evaluate their own work increases engagement and responsibility. Thus, well-designed and properly applied rubrics are not just grading tools but active components of the learning process, supporting skill development and motivation. They also promote fairness and improve the overall quality of education.

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