

# Evaluation & Assessment for Classroom Teachers

Dr. Julia Harper, a professor of education at Azusa Pacific University shares what she has learned about evaluation and assessment through her many years of teaching in the classroom, as well as her doctoral studies and graduate level instruction. Her wisdom in this area is experienced, practical, and eminently usable.

*Evaluation*, at the heart, is judgment, making decisions based on values. It is our decision-making about student performance and about appropriate teaching strategies.

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching-learning connection. Teachers should make it very clear for students how their work will be assessed. And, when students are allowed to be creative in the process, it means you as a teacher must be prepared to think through even more clearly how that should be assessed. Otherwise, students will be inhibited in what they do or create. As you think about the evaluation process, there are two types of assessments to think through—formative and summative.

*Formative evaluations* are measurements that help teachers understand what students are learning and how they can adjust the teaching and learning environment to meet student needs. The purpose of formative evaluations is twofold: improving instructional practices and monitoring learning. As a type of ongoing evaluation, formative assessments also give students feedback on how they are doing.

*Summative evaluations* are measurements that show what students have learned over time. They can also be used to help determine the effectiveness of a program. The research and reporting project could be your summative assessment for a unit of study, but it is also a performance assessment.

You want both formative and summative assessments throughout the course of study. As you think about the various options that students take to learn material, your assessments should be identified as either formative or summative, depending on how you are using the assigned tasks. For instance, as a formative assessment for Unit 1—Napoleon & Early Missions—you could observe a student's participation in the class discussion or the recap activity to let the teacher know what the students are learning. As a summative assessment for Unit 1—Napoleon & Early Missions—along with the research report, you could develop a test to assess the Key Concepts to measure their basic knowledge and understanding for that Unit. The research report would allow for maximum divergence among students, even as they comply with a specific protocol of

completeness which would be expressed in a rubric. Other activity choices accomplished within that Unit may serve as formative assessments of how students are learning the Key Concepts for that Unit. These Key Concepts will finally be measured in an objective test at the end of the Unit. The objective test is a summative assessment that lets you as a teacher know how well the students are learning. The formative tasks let them learn in a way that is most meaningful for them.

That is why it is so important to think formative and summative as you plan your assessment process. Formative allows you to assess your students and then make changes in what YOU do so the student can learn better; you can make course corrections based on your formative assessments. If you learn to read and interpret your formative then students should not find summative evaluations difficult either, because they will know what they know and will know what they don't know realistically.

A scenario comes to mind when I think of this principle.

In a rural part of the country where there was a high rate of poverty and low achievement, I got a job as the Title I teacher (5th and 6th grade). My training had been as a Talented and Gifted teacher, so I knew how to individualize with students, and how important it was to get them engaged in the learning. I devised *formative assessments* based on the individual learners and worked with them as individuals because their problems were not the same. As they were charting their learning in folders that contained their goals for learning, they began to see that they could make measurable change by using their own thinking, while learning new skills with me as the teacher. These students began to recognize what they needed to learn and take responsibility for themselves. But everybody took the same summative exam for the different content areas that I taught. It was really fun and exciting. I was able to see, through sustained gains testing when they were in high school, that they were scoring in the 80–90% on our standardized test. We had four elementary schools and one middle school and high school. When the State Department came down to our town, they discovered that the students scoring in the 80–90% came from one elementary and from one particular teacher—my class. These students, who had been marginal learners, were now thriving in their learning and outperforming the norm.

Formative and summative assessments can be developed with objective kinds of assessments or performance types of assessments. Creating a quiz or multiple choice test would be considered more objective. They can be used in either formative or summative evaluations. Performance

assessments are used when there are different ways of demonstrating learning. Developing criteria for how a project is assessed gives the learner more freedom in the process. Rubrics are tools to give form and structure to more creative or performance types of learning.

Rubrics: As you let students make decisions on types of projects to demonstrate their learning, you may want to set up a rubric to help the student identify performance expectations. These rubrics will also assist you in the assessing of these different types of projects. Creative projects can be very risky for students when they don't understand how the grading will be worked out. Remember too, creativity is at the top of the critical thinking structure. Creativity requires a transformational action which allows them to go from what has been learned, apply it in a creative process, and end with a new product. This is also where students make meaningful and personal connections to the learning, and it is very exciting and motivating. So there is a need for flexibility within the process but also a need for form that helps guide the process. Here is a link to a website for you as a teacher to use for developing rubrics for many kinds of projects that students may come up with. It also lets you develop the criteria and the different elements that you may want to put into that project: [http://teach-nology.com/web\\_tools/rubrics/general/](http://teach-nology.com/web_tools/rubrics/general/).

The chart shown on the last page is another rubric maker that you can use to develop performance assessments for creative projects.

Remember assessment and evaluation should be a *celebration* of what students know and *demonstration* of what they have learned. If we keep those two elements in mind students will gladly participate in the process and be proud to show what they know.

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In addition to Dr. Harper's comments, I would like to encourage teachers to recognize that there are several areas in which students can be evaluated and grades assigned:

- Participation in class discussion and the recap activity in Phase One
- Effort in Research and Reporting Project and participation in the Vocabulary & Timeline exercises in Phase Two
- Participation in the Hands-On Activities in Phase Three
- Effort in the Creative Expression in Phase Four

Each of these could have their own rubric to determine

point values. These point values would be used to determine letter grades.

In addition, teachers might choose to create a final summative assessment. For instance, they might give a final essay test on the Key Concepts, giving students the opportunity to each choose one concept and relate what they have learned and how this knowledge is applicable to their lives. Or, a teacher might choose to give an open-ended essay test, allowing students to pick two of the most important people or events of the Unit and describe their significance; or they could choose to compare and contrast some aspect of what has been studied (for instance, comparing and contrasting two men named Charles: Charles Darwin & Charles Spurgeon); or look at how some events or people of the past Unit influenced events or people of this Unit. A teacher might also choose to include identifications, listing several names or events from the Unit and asking the students to select two or three to identify. These are the types of tests that allow students to show what they know rather than what they don't know, so teachers need to clearly express the required length of response, the extent of the information, and the nature of the content a student is expected to present in order to attain a certain grade.

As you are creating your system, please keep in mind that this curriculum encourages students to select areas of research, projects, and creative expressions that are interesting to them, which results in students learning dissimilar areas of information—all within the overarching framework of a particular period in history. It is all legitimate history, and the expression of what has been learned will be legitimate, though perhaps slightly unorthodox. Also, since we approach history with the knowledge that it is a vast, nearly limitless subject, we would be unreasonable to demand that every student know every aspect of what every other student learns. **Therefore, a standard history test of names, dates, and places will not be adequate for this curriculum, nor will it display the particulars and the depth of what each student has learned.** For this reason, we have created questions in the Unit tests, which allow the student to choose areas with which he or she is familiar. Teachers may also want to create their own systems of formative and summative assessments, based on the needs and structures of their own classrooms.

—Diana Waring

# Valley View Christian School

## **Unit 1: Napoleon & Early Missions Team Research Project**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: Mrs. Smith

Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_ Title of Work: \_\_\_\_\_

| Criteria                         |  |  |  |   | Points |
|----------------------------------|--|--|--|---|--------|
| Total                            | 4  | 3  | 2  | 1   |        |
| Introduction                     | All questions were answered completely and rationales for the answers were clearly stated.   | All questions were answered completely, but rationales for all the answers were not clearly stated.                  | Not all questions were answered completely, or greater than 2 rationales for all the answers were not clearly stated.      | All questions were not answered completely.   |        |
| Task                             | All areas of the task were addressed and handled with a high degree of sophistication. The plan followed by the team demonstrated a great deal of thought. | At least one area of the task was not addressed. The plan followed by the team demonstrated a great deal of thought. | At least two areas of the task were not addressed. The plan followed by the team demonstrated a moderate level of thought. | The task is incomplete and/or it is apparent that little effort went into the development of the task.        |        |
| Process:<br>Teamwork             | It is evident that a mutual effort and cohesive unit created the final product.  | The team worked well together, but could have utilized each other's skills to a better degree.                       | The team had problems working together. Little collaboration occurred.   | The final product is not the result of a collaborative effort. The group showed no evidence of collaboration. |        |
| Process:<br>Originality          | The ideas expressed by the body of work demonstrate a high degree of originality.  | The ideas expressed by the body of work are mostly original. The group may have improved upon a previous idea.       | The ideas expressed by the body of work demonstrate a low degree of originality.   | There were no original ideas expressed in this project.   |        |
| Grammar, Format,<br>and Spelling | The final body of work was free of grammar, spelling, and formatting errors.   | The final body of work had 1 error related to either grammar, spelling, and formatting errors.                       | The final body of work had 3-5 grammar, spelling, and formatting errors.   | The final body of work had major grammar, spelling, and formatting errors.                                    |        |
|                                  |  |  |  | <b>Total</b>  |        |

# Traditional Weekly Schedule for Each Unit

Teachers can choose to have students do one or two activities, rather than the entire week's schedule. Please use what works for you in your unique setting.

|           | <b>Week 1: Feeler</b>   | <b>Week 2: Thinker</b>  | <b>Week 3: Sensor</b>   | <b>Week 4: Intuitor</b>   |
|-----------|---|---|---|---|
|           | Students will be introduced to the time period and to the Scriptures relating to the Unit.        | Students will explore topics of interest through research and reporting, learn new vocabulary, and construct a timeline relating to the Unit. | Students will gain cultural understanding through sensory activities as they explore interrelated subject areas pertaining to the Unit. | Students, through creative self-expression, using one or more creative activities, will present some aspect of what they have learned in the past three weeks. Areas of expression include linguistics, art, music, drama, movement, and conceptual design. |
| Monday    | Informally discuss the Key Concepts<br>Listen to the <i>What in the World?</i> audio recording(s) | Choose topic and begin research   | Create a map and discuss the issues in teams  | Choose an area of expression and begin work either individually or in teams   |
| Tuesday   | Read the article<br>Listen to the other audio recording(s)<br>Read the Scriptures                 |   | Examine and discuss art masterpieces & architectural structures   |   |
| Wednesday | Recap the material with an activity<br>Talk together  | Construct the timeline  | Do an art project*  |   |
| Thursday  | Conduct class discussion  | Practice vocabulary   | Do a science project or field trip**  |   |
| Friday    | Choose books of interest/Internet search<br>Conduct a review and evaluation                       | Complete research projects and share in class or hand in<br>Conduct a review and evaluation   | Listen to and discuss the music<br>Cook the food listed in the recipe, if desired<br>Conduct a review and evaluation                    |   |

\*Art project will need to be planned ahead of time to acquire materials.

\*\* Field trip will require extra planning time.

# Charlotte Mason Method Schedule

Charlotte Mason parents will immediately see compatibility between the teaching approach of *History Revealed* and many of the elements with which they are already familiar.

There are two elements to education: “how” to teach and “what” to cover.

*History Revealed* does the work for you and gives you everything you’ll need in the way of “what” to study and even provides much of the information. Both the Charlotte Mason method and Diana Waring’s approach incorporate chronological order, original eyewitness

accounts, art, field trips, plays and costume-making, student illustrations, time lines, map work, and the always-important springboard to literary books. Both approaches use hands-on learning, avoid boredom, and make history come alive.

## 🕒 Week 1

### MONDAY

Listen to Audio Recording

Select one child to narrate verbally

Identify age appropriate yet challenging spelling words to study from tomorrow’s reading. Look for three words for children who are ten to eleven years old. Select eight words for students over the age of twelve. These will be tested in Week Three.

Locate painting of the period for Thursday’s Art Appreciation or a book of the architecture of the period. Other valuable suggestions are provided in Phase Three in the Art Appreciation or Architecture section.

### TUESDAY

Read the article

Read the Scriptures

Make Book of the Centuries entries from daily reading and/or consider an entry from the Key People list and Key Events list provided in Phase One.

Create a simple Charlotte Mason style time-line to fill in as you go or follow the timeline format provided in Phase Two Timeline, which includes Key Events.

### WEDNESDAY

Group narration of all material covered so far or choose a group activity from the many ideas provided in Phase One of the Teacher’s Guide listed under Recap Activity.

Decide whether to have a play including costumes or plan field trip if suitable. Several other creative ideas are included in Phase Four.

### THURSDAY

Study spelling words. Allow five minutes.

Art study. Student looks at print (of a masterpiece painting selected on Monday) and describes it verbally or in written form after print is removed from sight. Sketching of print is suggested for children over the age of thirteen. This is also done from memory. Many other useful suggestions are found in Phase Three in the Art Appreciation or Architecture section.

### FRIDAY

Use a written (or video) current travel log of the area and/or a current geography book with high quality photography. Consider the useful map work provided in Phase Three under Maps & Mapping.

## 🕒 Week 2

### MONDAY

Springboard time. Many worthwhile suggestions for digging deeper and allowing time to pursue interesting side topics relating to primary material are provided in Phase Two under Research & Reporting. Have students locate original sources e.g. plays, architectural books, essays, letters of the period from the library or book stores. Suggestions provided in the Recommended Resources in Phase One.

### TUESDAY

Study spelling words. Allow five minutes. Continue digging deeper and pursuing interesting side topics.

### WEDNESDAY

Read original sources (library materials).

Older students work on written narration of reading material or use alternative methods and creative variations of reporting found in Phase Two under Motivating Suggestions in the Teacher’s Guide.

Fill in simple time-line or make Book of Centuries entries

### THURSDAY

Map work with tracing paper. Phase Three provides many other creative activities for map work. See Maps & Mapping suggestions.

Study spelling words. Allow five minutes.

### FRIDAY

Group Narration of material covered. Creative alternatives are provided in Phase Two under Motivating Suggestions in the Teacher’s Guide.

Art study. Student views, then describes. Other methods for art and architecture are suggested in Phase Three in Art Appreciation and Architecture.

Work on costumes if needed

Continue reading independently from spring boarding material acquired on Monday. Older students work on written narrations from the original sources, plays, essays and letters of interest.

**Week 3****MONDAY**

Study spelling words. Allow five minutes.

Map work with tracing paper. Phase Three provides many other creative activities for map work. See Maps & Mapping suggestions.

Locate painting of the period for Wednesday's Art Appreciation or a book of the architecture of the period. Other valuable suggestions are provided in Phase Three in the Art Appreciation or Architecture section.

**TUESDAY**

Use a written (or video) current travel log of the area and/or a current geography

book with high quality photography. Consider the useful map work provided in Phase Three under Maps & Mapping.

Optional: Draw or create art project based on geography.

Older students work on written narration.

**WEDNESDAY**

Spelling test of words selected during first week.

Art study of art located on Monday. View and describe. Many other useful suggestions are found in Phase Three in the Art Appreciation or Architecture section.

Work on costumes for play if applicable.

**THURSDAY**

Field trip, if suitable.

Or read from original source books and make notations in Book of the Centuries/Time Line.

**FRIDAY**

Listen to music of the period, suggestions listed in Phase Three under Music.

Cook the food listed in the recipe in Phase Three.

Older students complete written narration and turn in.

**Week 4****MONDAY**

Get Creative time. Practice play. If no play was planned consider creating a board game or choose some other valuable ideas located in Phase Four.

Read from original accounts/travel logs or finish viewing travel videos.

From reading select age appropriate passage for dictation preparation. Choose one or two paragraphs for children who are ten or eleven. Select up to five paragraphs for students twelve and older. Select two or three pages for high school aged students.

Identify spelling words from dictation passage for study. Look for three words for children who are ten to eleven years old. Select eight words for students over the age of twelve. If too many spelling words are found, choose a shorter and easier passage.

Locate art for Thursday.

**TUESDAY**

Transcribe the dictation passage.

Practice play, or work on other idea from Phase Four.

**WEDNESDAY**

Prepare for dictation.

Work on spelling words from passage and test.

Map work with tracing paper. Phase Three provides many other creative activities for map work. See Maps & Mapping suggestions.

**THURSDAY**

Read prepared dictation passage and have students write it while you dictate to them.

Art study. View and describe

**FRIDAY**

Grand Finale: Have play. If not having play, have final verbal narrations, or present selected piece from Phase Four.

**Further explanation:**

Charlotte Mason parents will immediately see compatibility in many of the elements in which they are already familiar. The schedule will show how to easily incorporate the Charlotte Mason method while using the short lesson approach.

To review, short lessons are designed to be diverse and to bring variety to each day. By short we mean the entire lesson is approximately 15 minutes per day for children between six and

ten. For students between eleven and fourteen the short lesson time frame is increased to 30 minutes and the older student spends about 45 minutes at each subject.

Art Appreciation in the Charlotte Mason method is enjoyable and brief. The parent will locate a piece of art that correlates to one of the key people or the time period. These can often be found in large art books borrowed from the library. When

the schedule calls for Art Study have each student look intently at the art. It is that simple. No need to lecture or in any way explain or prepare. Remove the art from the student and have them describe what they saw. The parent may look at the art while listening to the description.

Charlotte Mason families are familiar with the Book of the Centuries and simple time lines which are both homemade. They are also familiar



with CM's unique spelling technique, the use of eyewitness accounts and narration. To quickly review the easily applicable narration technique simply cover the material and ask the student to tell you, in his own words, what he now knows about the topic. One student per narration is the way in homeschool. The classroom teacher may call upon several students per narration by starting and stopping each narrator in order to get four or five contributions. Verbal narrations are for any student who is six to eighteen. Written narrations are used for children ten and older. This practice helps to prepare students for essay

work ordinarily required for college applications and in other academic pursuits.

History Revealed recommends the key idea of doing your mathematics and other core subjects in the morning and leaving this history lesson for the end of the day's time table. This works well with the CM method two ways. First is that by using the schedule here you will be able to incorporate Art Study, spelling, narration (and much more) into your history lesson. The second reason is the ability to have history study spill over into the daily "free time" that is so vital in a CM

home. If the children are excited and engaged with some of the hands-on projects then taking further time with them would work well. This would be an extremely good use of time as many families struggle to find wholesome activities in the afternoons, evenings and weekends. It would be a simple matter to select an age appropriate section from the reading material for dictation practice for one of the four weeks. It would be equally simple to add that to the schedule and allow a small amount of time each day for preparation and have the dictation exercise on Friday.

# University Schedule for Each Unit

|                | 9:00–10:00  | 10:30–12:30   | AFTERNOON    |                               |
|----------------|---|---|--------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>M, W, F</b> | <b>Math</b> (using math manipulatives & story problems, making sure that students really understand the concepts) | <b>History Revealed</b> (longer time frames encourage art projects, mapping, creating scenery, strategizing action games, reading great books, having in-depth discussions) | <b>LUNCH</b> | Whatever else you want to do! |
| <b>T, R</b>    | <b>Language Arts</b> (playing with grammar, brainstorming ideas for poetry, etc.)                                 | <b>Science</b> (time for science projects, field trips, and more)   | <b>LUNCH</b> |                               |

Be sure to include several quick breaks/drink water/have snack/do a few stretches during this time!

Reverse the schedule for second semester.