

What is an authentic task?

Traditional Test	Authentic Task	What makes it authentic?
Only “correct” responses count	Quality product/performance is the expectation	The task determines that students can explain or justify answers, not just give pat answers
To be valid, there must be no knowledge in advance about assessment	Students should know as much as possible in advance about expectations	Tasks, criteria and standards by which the product will be judged are known in advance
Not connected to a real context	“Real world” application is required	The problem is one likely to be encountered by a professional or citizen
Items require use of known answers or skills	A challenge in which knowledge must be used in creative ways to answer a problem	The answer is not routine, nor necessarily arrived at in a single way
Made simple to facilitate scoring	Complex tasks, criteria and standards	Though not easily scored, requires use of core knowledge and skills
One-time event	Iterative	Designed to tell whether the student “understands” rather than is familiar due to rote practice
Provides a score and limited feedback to the student & teacher	Provides evidence judged against core roles and discipline-based challenges	Task is valid and fair, evokes student interest, and is challenging