

Preface

Get the Data Right
Get the Right Data
Get the Data the Right Way
Get the Data Right Away
Get the Right Data Management

U.S. Department of Education

Referencing the adage that during his or her lifetime every person should accomplish three important tasks: plant a tree, have a child, and write a book, Ralph Tyler certainly achieved the last of the three. Ralph Tyler's book, *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction* (1949), laid the groundwork for a cycle of continual, ongoing, and ever-present assessments by delineating a simple and lasting set of principles that included the following:

1. Defining appropriate learning objectives
2. Establishing useful learning experiences
3. Organizing learning experiences to have a maximum cumulative effect
4. Evaluating the curriculum and revising those aspects that do not prove to be effective

Tyler also believed that evaluation of student behaviors would be a highly appropriate means for determining educational success or failure. In fact, he first coined the term *evaluation* as it pertained to an evidence collection process that aligned to the teaching and learning process. In retrospect, the formative assessment movement has roots reaching as far back as 1949. Thus, the saying that,



“There’s nothing new in education,” rings true. Yet the advancement in our understanding of the concepts of formative assessment—assessment *for* learning and assessments that inform practice—is evolving rapidly as the writers, researchers, and practitioners continue the investigations. The stage is set, the players are poised and the theater patrons await the opening lines. Let the curtain rise on the play of the current day, “Informative Assessment: When It’s Not About a Grade.”

There’s nothing new in education.

