

# 12:10 start time. While we wait...

Feel free to share in the chat:

- Introduce yourself (name, department, role)
- What interested you in this topic?





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Assessment of Learning Series:

# A Brief History of Educational Assessment

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**Amanda Brijmohan (she/her), PhD**

Educational Developer

Assessment and Scholarship of Teaching and Learning,

Robert Gillespie Academic Skills Centre

Institute for the Study of University Pedagogy

University of Toronto, Mississauga

# Land Acknowledgement



Art by Christi Belcourt

<https://www.instagram.com/p/Cia4T9euYUu/>

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island, and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

# Access Check

Encourage you to check, identify, and question your learning environment for any of the following and welcome comments if there are elements that we can support to reduce barriers.

- Technology
- Resources
- Pace
- Sound



# Assessment of Learning Series

This series has two main goals:

- To engage instructors in critical discussions about their current educational assessment practices
- To connect educational assessment scholarship with current teaching and learning practices in support of evidence-based pedagogy





“Traditionally understood as the systematic evaluation of student learning, assessment spans a continuum from gauging knowledge and skill acquisition to understanding changes in attitudes and beliefs; in short, assessment drives learning”

- (Rust 2002 as cited in Chan and Colloton, 2024).

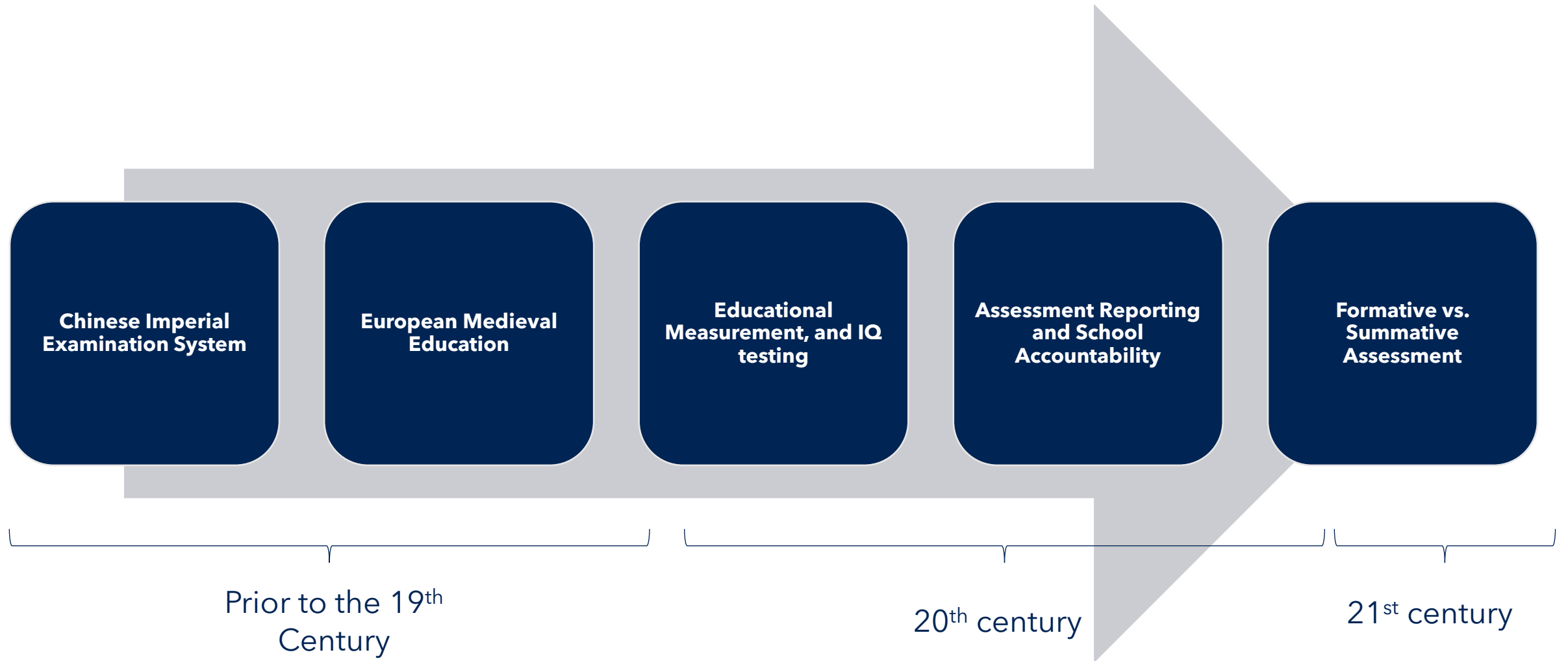


# Defining Educational Assessment

## Purposes of Educational Assessment (Chan, 2023)



# Educational Assessment Through Time





# The Imperial Chinese Examinations

- Earliest records of exams were seen in Imperial China
  - Western Zhou Dynasty (1027-771 BC)
  - Han Dynasty (206 BC - 220 AD)
  - Ming Dynasty (1368-1644 AD)
  - Qing Dynasty (1644 -199 AD)
- Examinations were used for selection purposes for government officials
- Goal was to have an educated bureaucracy that could meet the needs of society
- Government officials who were selected were given high status and public recognition in society

(Min & Xiuwen, 2001; Brown, 2022)

# European Medieval Education

## Religious Training:

- Education was enmeshed with religious training, and was based out of cathedrals, monasteries, and episcopal schools
- The goal was to learn sacred texts through:
  - Learning Latin grammar to learn Latin texts
  - Recitation of religious texts (memorization)
- Assessment was in the form of students recitation, answering questions, or questioning each other

(Wilbrink, 1997; Brown, 2022)

# European Medieval Education

- European Universities in the 1100s used public disputations/debates as the main form of assessment
- Public dispute participation was necessary for fulfilling exam requirements, creating new knowledge, and to test students argumentation

(Wilbrink, 1997; Brown, 2022)



The University of Bologna, the oldest university in the Western world, opening in 1088 AD.

[https://www.bologna-experience.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/IMG\\_2262.jpg](https://www.bologna-experience.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/IMG_2262.jpg)

## Assessment and Increased Access to Education

- With educational expansion in the 1800s, more ways of collecting assessment information efficiently were needed
- Assessments of student learning would incorporate **a leaving written exam** for students who entered the professions (teaching, civil service, further studies)

(Brown, 2022)

# The Development of Multiple Choice Questions

- The beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the development of Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ) formats
  - In 1914, Frederick J. Kelly, an American psychologist developed the *Kansas Silent Reading Tests*
- Goals of MCQ formats were to increase consistency in scoring, optimizing administration, cost efficiencies and more objective assessments (Croft & Beard, 2022; Brown, 2022)

## Directions for Giving the Tests.

After telling the children not to open the papers, ask those on the front seats to distribute the papers, placing one upon the desk of each pupil in the class. Have each child fill in the blank spaces at the top of this page. Then make clear the following:

## Instructions to be Read by Teacher and Pupils Together.

This little five-minute game is given to see how quickly and accurately pupils can read silently. To show what sort of game it is, let us read this:

Below are given the names of four animals. Draw a line around the name of each animal that is useful on the farm:

cow      tiger      rat      wolf

This exercise tells us to draw a line around the word cow. No other answer is right. Even if a line is drawn *under* the word cow, the exercise is wrong, and counts nothing. The game consists of a lot of just such exercises, so it is wise to study each exercise carefully enough to be sure that you know exactly what you are asked to do. The number of exercises which you can finish thus in five minutes will make your score, so do them as fast as you can, being sure to do them right. Stop at once when time is called. Do not open the papers until told, so that all may begin at the same time.

The teacher should then be sure that each pupil has a good pencil or pen. Note the minute and second by the watch, and say, BEGIN.

# Educational Measurement and IQ testing

- Late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and early 20<sup>th</sup> saw the development of IQ testing:

1860s-  
1870s

- Francis Galton argued that there is a biological/genetic connection to human intelligence
- Built off of Darwin's Theory of Natural Selection in Evolutionary Biology

1904

- Alfred Binet and Theodore Simon commissioned in Paris to develop an intelligence test
- test was used to identify school children (age 3-13) who would not benefit from learning in the regular school system

1940s

- World war II ends
- Eugenics Movement, and IQ testing for sorting and selection of the population fallen out of favor; seen as a precursory logic to scientific racism

(Rust & Golombok, 2009; Kline, 2005)

# Reporting and School Accountability

- **End of the 1970s:** increasing political pressure to assess the quality of education systems through assessment of student learning
  - More predominant in the US at the higher education level (with ETS)
  - Canada's standardized testing occurs more so at the K-12 level (EQAO)
- **2000:** Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)
  - Run in OECD countries, goal is to give participating countries data on how to improve their educational policies and outcomes.

(Shavelson, 2009)

# Reporting and School Accountability

- Critiques of standardized testing to assess educational quality, are that students are being “taught to the test” (Brown, 2022)
- Unclear as to whether the test is bringing value to the students, or if they are learning for the long term (Nichols and Harris, 2016).
- These were often summative assessments completed after a learning period; what did **the learning process** look like?



# Formative and Summative Assessments

- Scriven's work on formative evaluation in program evaluation (1967s) influenced the development of formative assessments in education.

## Assessment of Learning

- Summative
- At the end of a learning period
- Final exams/papers/projects

## Assessment for Learning

- Formative
- Throughout the course
- Feedback from instructor or TA's on assignments

## Assessment as Learning

- Students monitoring their own learning through getting feedback
- Peer assessment
- Self reflection

# Defining Educational Assessment

## Purposes of Educational Assessment (Chan, 2023)



# Reflection question:

What can we learn from the past, what makes sense to keep for our assessment purposes today, and what can be re-imagined?





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**Thank you!**

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