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## **Traditional vs. Alternative Assessment Methodology in Iowa's Secondary Social Science Classroom**

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TRADITIONAL VS. ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY IN IOWA'S  
SECONDARY SOCIAL SCIENCE CLASSROOM

A Thesis  
Submitted  
In Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements for the Designation  
University Honors with Distinction

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University of Northern Iowa  
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TRADITIONAL VS. ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT

This Study by:

Jake Hoversten


Entitled:

TRADITIONAL VS. ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY IN IOWA'S  
SECONDARY SOCIAL SCIENCE CLASSROOM

has been approved as meeting the thesis requirement for the Designation University Honors with  
Distinction.

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Date

  
Barry Wilson, Honors Thesis Advisor

5/6/11

Date

  
Jessica Moon, Director, University Honors Program

## **Introduction**

This thesis is a product of an interest I had in classroom assessment as a future educator of Iowa. I wanted to know which types of assessments were being used in order to direct my own teaching practices. The purpose of this project is to determine the extent that alternative assessment is used compared to traditional assessment in Iowa's secondary social science classrooms. This project draws information from current educators and an array of other resources in order to determine the frequency of each method of assessment and the reasons behind any potential trends in methodology. This project reveals current trends in assessment within the context of secondary social science classrooms as well as points the way to the future of classroom assessment in the state of Iowa. Educators can use this project to be informed what techniques their colleagues are using. While I will not submit the results of this project to any outside source, other researchers can still use this study to replicate it in other areas to get a broader glimpse of current assessment methods in the classroom.

## **Literature Review**

Assessment is an important part of every classroom. The term assessment originated from the root word *assidere*, which is Latin and means to sit beside (New Horizons, 2002). Teachers today are called to "sit beside" students in order to measure progress, but there is more than one way to assess a student's understanding and progress. Two broad categories of classroom assessment are traditional and alternative assessment.

### **Traditional Assessment**

The method of assessment most recognizable is the traditional assessment, which is commonly known as the paper and pencil test method. This traditional assessment type can be applied in multiple variations, one being the large-scale standardized test which has become

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commonplace in Iowa schools, such as the Iowa Test of Basic Skills or Iowa Test of Educational Development. Large-scale standardized tests generally employ this method of assessment, but average students will encounter more instances of traditional assessment from their teachers in the form of worksheets, quizzes, and tests, than from those large-scale mediums of assessment. As with all methods there are positives and negatives associated with each, and the case of large-scale standardized tests is an example of these accompanying pros and cons. These standardized tests can be distributed to a much larger group of students and more readily allow for comparison across a wide and diverse group; however this may lead to “teaching to the test” and becomes score focused (Green & Johnson, 2010).

Traditional assessments come in a variety of formats, but there are a few that have received widespread use. For the most part, today’s worksheets, quizzes, and tests all employ a few of the same basic styles to assess whether students have achieved mastery level of the given subject or skill, which has always been the main objective behind classroom assessment (McGraw-Hill, 2007). McCormick and Pressley (1997) describe the characteristic traditional assessment test: “Typical kinds of test questions are essay questions, multiple-choice questions, matching items, true/false items, and completion items” (p. 373). These are all common test options for teachers of today as well as generations past, which is why they are designated “traditional” assessments.

### **Alternative Assessment**

Opposite traditional assessment is the method which is often referred to as the alternative assessment. New Horizons for Learning (2002) provided an explanation and gave examples of what alternative assessment is: “An alternative assessment might require students to answer an open-ended question, work out a solution to a problem, perform a demonstration of a skill, or in

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some way produce work rather than select an answer from choices on a sheet of paper” (p. 7).

The creation of a product is a common feature of alternative assessment. Project-based or product-based assessment techniques are a major part of alternative assessment, where the main goal is for the students to create something using the skills and knowledge they have learned instead of recalling that information on a traditional style test. In existence are nearly endless examples of this method. Examples of alternative assessment include experiments, creating a display or presentation, as well as performing or delivering a speech. According to McGraw-Hill (2007) a variety of performance, authentic, and portfolio-based assessments are used in the classroom and fall into the group of alternative assessment methods.

### **Assessment in the Classroom**

Mertler (1999) conducted a study exploring assessment practices in order to determine the extent of traditional and alternative methods that teachers used, but the study is limited in scope by only focusing on Ohio teachers. One interesting result the study revealed was that teachers with fewer years of experience had the tendency to use alternative assessments more frequently, while more experienced teachers had more of an emphasis on traditional methods. A similar study of Iowa’s teachers would be valuable for comparison, which is why it is incorporated as a vital component of this study.

Teachers support a variety of assessment techniques in their classrooms for different reasons and justify them in different ways. Chickering and Gamson (1987) provided seven principles for good educational practice, one of them being that good practice “Encourages active learning” (p. 4). This principle would seem to support reasoning for alternative assessment within the classroom, where students must talk about, write reflectively, relate and apply

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knowledge to their daily lives (Frye, 1999). Alternative assessments include essays or projects where reflective writing and application can occur (Sanders & Horn, 1995).

The main argument of researchers in favor of alternative assessment who reject traditional methods is that they “measure only recall and other lower-order thinking skills whereas alternative methods of assessment require students to exhibit the higher-order skills such as critical thinking, analysis, synthesis, reasoning, and problem solving” (Sanders & Horn, 1995, p. 8). They go on to say that “if this were true, it would be a very damning argument indeed, but neither assertion is altogether accurate” (Sanders & Horn, 1995, p. 8). Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (2001) wrote about the benefits that alternative assessment techniques, such as performance assessment, display and that they “have great potential for engaging students actively in their learning and in taking pride in their accomplishments, for helping them gain deeper insight into academic content, and for providing a context for real-life situations beyond school” (p. 139). It has been argued that alternative, authentic assessment shows what students know, but also shows what they can do in the real world (Maurer, 1996).

Teachers may cite that they use traditional methods because it best fits their method of instruction. Many agree that when considering lectures on factual information, a traditional objective test would be a more appropriate form of assessment (Anderson, 1998). Not all teachers and scholars are in agreement as to which method of assessment to use in classrooms, and there is a lack of research on what current teachers are using today and their reasoning behind these choices. Very little data exists which explain the frequency that traditional and alternative assessments are being used in the classroom. This study examines these two assessment approaches in some detail, and an analysis can be found in the survey results.

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### **Student Preference**

Another area of interest is student preference of assessment. There have been few studies that measure this and have come to conclusive results. A study by Brookhart and Durkin (2003) revealed that students had lower expectations for an administered conventional test when compared to alternative assessment methods. Students clearly preferred not to be given the traditional assessment in this case, but one cannot generalize for all students based on this piece of evidence. The same study concluded that students in social studies classrooms were more likely to have higher self-efficacy when given performance assessments. A separate study also found students favored an alternative assessment over a traditional assessment. "Results of the study indicated the majority of the students preferred the differentiated, alternative assessment model to solely traditional assessment" (Waters, Smeaton, & Burns, 2004, p. 89). None of these studies produced concrete answers for which method of assessment is preferred by students. It would be particularly beneficial to determine what assessment methods students have preference for as understood by teachers, and whether teachers alter their assessments because of this understood preference. Student preference is another example of a perceived research gap that needs to be studied more thoroughly.

### **Research Questions to Be Answered**

This research project was primarily directed at answering one question, but there are a variety of secondary goals I also had for this project. The question I was most focused on through this thesis project was: to what degree was each assessment approach being put into effect by area educators in the secondary social science classroom in Iowa? This was the central idea for this project, but I was also interested in determining a number of secondary questions to guide this project, such as: what were the causes behind any discovered assessment trends?



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Another area I wanted my research to address was: which methods of assessment did students respond best to according to their teacher? In essence, did students prefer alternative assessments or traditional assessments? These were the primary and secondary goals for this project, but this project led to additional discoveries and insights that this research did not originally intend.

### **Methodology**

Like all research projects this one began with the work of other scholars and researchers who have contributed to the topic of classroom assessment in general and specifically within the secondary social sciences. The bulk of my effort in the early weeks of this project was focused on finding and categorizing the information I gathered from various books, articles, journals, and other sources. This evidence I gathered continued to evolve and formulate this project as the weeks progressed.

The information collected from previous scholars' research was very useful to this project, but another tool I utilized was in the form of a teacher survey (see Appendix A). I worked with my advisor on plans to submit a research approval request to the Institutional Review Board by the end of the fall semester. I experienced difficulty on this phase of the project, and I was not able to finish the necessary training that the Institutional Review Board demanded until several weeks into the spring semester of 2011. During these early weeks I created my survey using the SurveyMonkey website. Once I had my survey completed I filled out the IRB application and submitted it along with the finished survey. The approval process took several more weeks and it was necessary for me to make several changes and clarifications for final approval of this research project.

On approval from the Institutional Review Board which became effective February 23, 2011, I was able to utilize Chad Christopher, my academic advisor, as a resource for potential

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contacts. He assisted in creating a contact list and was useful in the portion of the project which entailed sending the survey to Iowa educators. The survey link was sent via my UNI email account to nearly one hundred secondary social science educators in the area. I allowed the survey to remain open for several weeks so educators would have sufficient time to fill out the survey. I sent a reminder one week before I closed the survey and was able to collect a few more responses during this time.

### **Survey Background**

Now the specific survey questions and structure will be mentioned as well as some of the general background information for the survey. Further analysis and conclusions based on the research and the survey results will be discussed in the subsequent section of the project (see Appendix B). The survey was sent to 90 of Iowa's secondary social science educators serving in school districts in and around the Cedar Valley region in northeastern Iowa. By the end of the survey period I had collected 29 responses. I understood the significance of this sample size number as well as the location of respondents to the survey. After looking at several other honors theses, I concluded that my sample size was fairly large compared to some of these other projects. Despite this comparison, I also realized that my sample size potentially might not be large enough to make absolute conclusions regarding contemporary classroom assessment practice in Iowa's secondary social studies classrooms, but could still make a significant contribution to research in this field.

For the beginning of the survey I decided to include a number of very useful demographic characteristics questions which would assist in the analysis and categorization of resulting information. I did not include any questions that would directly identify individuals, but rather facts about the educators own age, education, and classes taught. The only information

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given to participants about the survey's goals was that, "The purpose of this research study is to determine the extent that alternative assessment is used compared to traditional assessment in Iowa's secondary social science classrooms." I did not tell them what my expected results were, so as not to skew their answers and outcomes of the survey.

### **Survey Demographic Questions**

The entire survey included a total of 15 questions, which I required the participants to answer. Every survey question required a response, so that I did not receive incomplete surveys which were missing crucial information. The first question asked participants what their ages were. The participants did not list their ages, but rather selected the appropriate age bracket. I used grouping brackets for several questions in this survey in order to better analyze results and determine larger trends more readily. I broke up the age groups for this question into five categories: under 25, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, and above 54. The second question asked simply for the gender of the participants. This information proved useful while cross-analyzing survey responses.

The third question was included to figure out the educational background of the participants. I provided three categories to choose from: bachelors, masters, and doctorate degrees. As with a number of other questions, I provided a place for participants to write in alternative responses to those which I specifically provided. One participant wrote in an educational specialist degree, which is above a master's degree but not a doctorate. The fourth question asked participants how long they have been an educator in the classroom. I broke up the years into six different categories. The six categories for the question were: Less than 5, 5-9, 10-14, 15-19, 20-24, and 25 or more. This grouping style allowed for an even way to group participants' responses and determine any existing trends in teacher retention.

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The fifth question was directed at discovering what subjects educators have taught within the social studies. I included the big seven subjects within social studies for available selections, which are: economics, geography, government, psychology, sociology, United States History, and world history. There were a number of write-in responses, but most of them referred to various history or contemporary issues courses. The sixth item asked educators approximately how many students are in their classes. I chose four categories for this particular survey question. The four categories for number of students were: less than 10, 10-19, 20-29, and 30 or more. Providing four available groupings allowed for easy determination of the average school classroom size. The seventh question was the final question dealing with teacher demographics and their classrooms. It was directed at finding out what type of schools educators were from. The only two options for this question were public or private.

### **Survey Assessment Questions**

The next portion of the survey pertained more to the topic of assessment. Question eight had educators specify to what extent they used given assessments in their classrooms. For each assessment type given there were five categories to select from to determine use. The five categories of use for an assessment were: almost always, most of the time, half of the time, sometimes, and never. This question enabled educators to rate the frequency in which they use each assessment approach in their classrooms, which gets to the center of the primary research question for this thesis project. The sample of assessments for teachers to rate was quite large, but no matter how large the sample there are other types I wish I could have included. The types of assessment used include: performance, authentic, portfolio, multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, true/false, matching, memorization, debate, team projects, peer critique, self evaluation, essay, traditional, alternative, oral presentation, journal, and product. This sample was not a mutually

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exclusive list. I included traditional and alternative in the list but the other options fit into either of these two groups. This assessment sample group is used on all but one of the remaining questions in the survey.

The ninth and tenth questions asked participants of the survey which form of assessment they most comfortable and most uncomfortable using in their classroom, respectively. These questions are used as another way to interpret teacher preference and implementation of various assessments. The eleventh question asked educators which assessment they believed best prepared students for real world situations. This is an interesting question which correlated to some of the research discussed in the literature review.

The next two questions related to thinking skills. Question 12 asked educators which form of assessment they believed best encouraged higher order thinking skills, while question 13 asked educators which form of assessment they believed best encouraged higher order thinking skills. These two questions were important because they could either confirm or deny the trend established by the academic community.

Question 14 focused on teacher preference of assessment style by asking educators if they preferred to use traditional or alternative forms of assessment in their classroom. This question was designed to provide insight into the heart of the thesis topic, because educators who preferred one choice or the other had the authority to implement that style within their own classrooms. I believed analysis of this question provided an important viewpoint on the current trend of classroom assessment in Iowa's secondary social science classrooms.

The fifteenth and final question on the survey asked educators which forms of assessment they believed students responded best to. Provided is the same list of assessment types used in the previous questions. The educator had three choices, or votes, to pick the assessments that

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students most preferred. This question addressed a secondary goal of this research project which was determining student preference in classroom assessment style. This study offered a unique way to analyze student preference through the educator. Comparing it to previously discussed research on student preference was of great value to further knowledge in this area.

### **Anticipated Results**

In certain aspects of this project I had a general idea of what the outcome might be, and other areas where I just had to let the research and evidence speak for themselves. In regards to my primary research question, I expected to find that alternative assessment is more prevalent than traditional assessment in Iowa's secondary social science classrooms and is the current trend in practiced assessment methodology. I believed that perhaps in this educational age where educators and administrators are recognizing the diversity of learning in students, alternative or performance-based assessments where students choose how they will be tested will become commonplace and eliminate the traditional, or paper and pencil testing of the past generations.

While I entertained the idea of a possible trend toward alternative assessment, I had my own view of what was truly happening in Iowa's schools. In reality, what I expected my research and survey to illuminate was that both types of assessment methodology were in use in Iowa's classrooms and had a future in secondary social studies classrooms. I anticipated a heightened emphasis and occurrence of alternative assessment in classrooms, especially those assessments which were project-based. I expected most teachers to still utilize the traditional assessment methods; however, as with certain teacher purposes, the traditional assessment would remain as a necessary method. I fully anticipated and hoped that this research project would sufficiently answer my research questions as well as open other avenues of revelation that I had not

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mentioned or even considered. The actual research results from the survey and answers to many of my questions are included in the following sections.

### **Results**

The survey sent to Iowa's secondary social science educators revealed many things about the participant sample in this survey, some of which can be transferred to the population as a whole. Twenty-nine educators took part in this research and useful information was attained through their feedback. In this section of the project I will summarize responses and highlight relevant trends and their significance to this research project.

#### **Demographic Results**

Beginning with the demographic information portion of the survey, an interesting fact was learned about this sample of educators in that nearly fifty percent fit into the single age group of 25-34. Another statistic was that seventy percent of the sample was male, leaving thirty percent female. I was not surprised by this statistic, because the social sciences are often regarded as a male-dominated subject area regardless of the level of education. One of the most interesting things about this sample size was that over fifty percent had at least a master's degree. The majority of secondary level educators do not have an advanced degree, so the fact that the majority of participants have such a high level of education could skew the average and make conclusions difficult.

In this sample, over fifty percent of educators have taught from 5-14 years. Also worth mentioning is that half of educators responded as teaching ten years or more. Since there is a fairly equal distribution of experience among educators' age and experience, it may suggest a blend of ideas on assessment methods among the various age groups.

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Based on feedback from question five regarding which courses educators had taught, it can be determined which social science courses are most commonly taught by survey participants in secondary schools. United States history, government, world history, and geography were the most common subjects taught by those participating in this survey, and I believe that trend continues for the rest of Iowa educators as well.

The final two demographic questions received overwhelmingly one-sided responses. Nearly ninety percent of educators said they had 20-29 students in their class. In my current teacher preparation course we learn to expect an average of 24 students in the classroom, so this result fits right in with my expectations. Secondly, all but one of the twenty-nine educators reported working in a public school. This statistic was expected as the vast majority of educators who received the survey were from public schools.

### **Assessment Results**

The eighth question of the survey revealed just how often educators used any given assessment type in their classroom. After analysis of the list and responses, I was able to determine which types of assessment are being put into practice by these educators, and which assessments were not. Some of those most commonly used by this sample of secondary social science educators were: multiple choice, matching, essay, and product assessment. Some of the assessments least commonly used by educators were: portfolio, true/false, debate, peer critique, and oral presentation. When combined, nearly fifty percent of educators use multiple choice almost always or most of the time. In comparison, fifty percent of educators never use the portfolio assessment. The most commonly used assessment, multiple choice, is a traditional form of assessment, while the least commonly used assessment, portfolio, is an alternative form of assessment. This traditional form may be the most common, but at least one form of the



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opposing assessment style can be found on the separate lists of most common and least common assessments.

The ninth question asked about teacher comfort with assessment. Respondents ranked multiple choice highest followed by essay and authentic assessment as those assessments teachers are most comfortable using in the classroom. Those they were least comfortable with were self evaluation, followed by portfolio, true/false, and peer critique. Many of these assessment styles, which educators were more comfortable using, were also the ones most commonly used, and vice versa.

In terms of preparing students for the situations of the real world, educators most frequently pointed to team projects, authentic, and product assessment in their survey responses. These are all alternative types of assessment which seems to support the claims of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (2001) and those of Maurer (1996) that alternative types of assessment provide the best measure of a student's readiness for the world beyond school.

The results of the next two questions strengthen the ideology of traditional assessment as a medium of lower order thinking skills, and alternative assessment as a means for higher order thinking skills. The top three choices for higher order thinking skills were authentic, debate, and both product and essay tied for the third spot. The top three choices for lower order thinking skills were memorization, true/false, and multiple choice. Sanders and Horn (1995) also recognized this trend among current educators that alternative assessment leads to higher order thinking skills, but also argued that this is not always the case. The level of thinking skills is becoming an increasingly important issue as educators continue to push their students toward higher order thinking skills. If the majority of educators believe alternative assessment promotes

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higher order thinking skills, then we could see an increase in alternative assessment in the near future.

Teacher preference is the topic for the fourteenth question of the survey, and it is one which requires careful analysis. There is a fairly even split among educators who favored traditional assessment and those who favored alternative assessment. Only one more person chose traditional over alternative assessment as their preference. I cross-examined this question with several other factors from the survey as well. Men who completed the survey leaned slightly toward traditional assessment, while female preferences leaned slightly toward alternative assessment. Age and experience proved to not be significant factors for teacher preference as I thought they might. Preference within each age group was nearly equal. Mertler's (1999) study of Ohio teachers concluded that experienced teachers used traditional assessment methods more frequently, and less experienced teachers used alternative assessment methods more frequently. The results of this Iowa survey did not precisely contradict the previous study, but certainly did not support Mertler's (1999) research since there were no age or experience trends within this study.

Student preference was the focus of the final question of the survey. According to educators, students respond best to multiple choice, followed by team projects, product assessment, and matching. In a study by Brookhart and Durkin (2003) and another study by Waters, Smeaton, and Burns (2004), alternative assessment was identified as the preferred method of assessment by students. While this study of Iowa's secondary social science educators lists several alternative methods toward the top, the research cannot support the conclusions of these two previous studies. Educators in this study perceive multiple choice to be the number one preferred method by students and matching to be the fourth most preferred. These two

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assessments fall into the traditional category, which means no absolute conclusion can be adopted based on the fact that various forms of traditional and alternative assessment can be found among the most preferred choices

### **Conclusion**

Based on the overall analysis of this study I come to the conclusion that this survey of secondary social science educators in Iowa supports my anticipated results for this project mentioned above, but with some exceptions. It is clear that although educators believe alternative assessment supports higher order thinking skills and is more useful in preparing students for real life situations, traditional methods of assessment are being practiced just as often in classrooms as alternative methods. In fact, educators rarely rely on one form of assessment. Certain types of both traditional and alternative assessment exist which tend to be overly common or uncommon. This difference in occurrence is due to the individual nature of each assessment and not because they are traditional or alternative in origin. For example, portfolio and true/false are the most uncommon forms of assessment in this study. One is considered alternative and the other is considered traditional. The same trend goes for common forms of assessment. Widely used examples exist of both alternative and traditional assessments.

The results of this research did not meet my expectation of an emphasis in alternative forms of assessment, especially those project-based such as product, portfolio, and others. If anything, this project slightly supports traditional methods such as multiple choice assessments. The survey results contradict previous scholarship about assessment, because key demographic factors such as age and teaching experience seemingly had no effect on the results and preferences of educators. Regarding my secondary goal about student preference for this project, I can make no absolute argument for traditional or alternative assessment based on my findings.

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Asking educators about their perception of student-preferred assessment was an interesting idea, but it did not yield conclusive evidence for or against either of the assessment methodologies in this research project.

This project attempted to fill the void in this area of educational research. Several things can be taken away from this project for the future, such as the information discussed in the results section, but significant factors existed in the project which limited overall influence. For instance, the sample size was too small and regionally located to make any absolute conclusions about the assessment practices of teachers throughout the entire state of Iowa. The participants in the survey did not represent the entire population based on a number of demographic factors. Although the sample was not perfect, it provided an excellent regional sample of Iowa, which similar projects in the future can build on. Follow-up studies could be performed in order to capture a better glimpse of assessment in the state by focusing on other regions in Iowa. Although the picture is not complete, valuable information was gained through this research project about the preferences and frequency of traditional and alternative assessment in Iowa's secondary social science classrooms. Both groups of assessment methodology are currently used by educators in this study and neither shows a trend of disappearing from Iowa's classrooms.

### Appendix A

This survey is being conducted by persons affiliated with the University of Northern Iowa. This purpose of this research study is to determine the extent that alternative assessment is used compared to traditional assessment in Iowa's secondary social science classrooms. Research will be conducted during the spring of 2011. Participants will answer each question in the survey to best of their ability before they can submit their survey answers. This study involves minimal risk to you which entails no risks to your physical or mental health beyond those encountered in the normal course of everyday life. There are no direct benefits for the participation in this study. The survey will be sent and returned electronically. Your confidentiality will be maintained to the degree permitted by the technology used. Specifically, no guarantees can be made regarding the interception of data sent via the internet by any third parties. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Participants may refuse to participate or may discontinue participation at any time during the survey. For questions about the research contact principal investigator Jake Hoversten ([hoverstj@uni.edu](mailto:hoverstj@uni.edu)), or Barry Wilson ([barry.wilson@uni.edu](mailto:barry.wilson@uni.edu)). For questions regarding research participants' rights contact Anita Gordon, UNI IRB Administrator, 319-273-6148, ([anita.gordon@uni.edu](mailto:anita.gordon@uni.edu)).

1. What is your current age?  
(Under 25, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, Above 54)
2. What is your gender?  
(Male, Female)
3. What is your current degree?  
(Bachelor's, Master's, Doctorate, Other)
4. How many total years have you been an educator in the classroom?  
(Less than 5, 5-9, 10-14, 15-19, 20-24, 25 or More)
5. Which type(s) of social science classes have you taught?  
(U.S. History, World History, Sociology, Geography, Economics, Psychology, Government, Other)
6. How many students are in your classroom?  
(Less than 10, 10-19, 20-29, 30 or More)

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7. In what type of school do you teach?

(Public, Private, Other)

8. Please specify to what extent you use the following assessments in your classroom.  
[List of assessment types used for later questions, with exception of traditional and alternative choices]

(Assessment Type)	Almost Always	Most of the Time	Half of the Time	Sometimes	Never
Journal					
Performance					
Essay					
Fill in the Blank					
Authentic					
Traditional					
Memorization					
Multiple Choice					
Debate					
Product					
Team Projects					
Peer Critique					
Matching					
Oral Presentation					
True/False					
Portfolio					
Self Evaluation					
Alternative					

9. Which form of assessment are you most comfortable using in your classroom?

(Choose one assessment type)

10. Which type of assessment are you least comfortable using in your classroom?

(Choose one assessment type)

11. Which form of assessment do you believe best prepares students for real world situations?

(Choose one assessment type)

12. Which form of assessment do you believe best encourages higher order thinking skills?

(Choose one assessment type)

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13. Which form of assessment do you believe best encourages lower order thinking skills?

(Choose one assessment type)

14. Do you prefer employing traditional or alternative forms of assessment in your classroom?

(Traditional, Alternative)

15. Which three forms of assessment do you believe students respond best to?

Choice #1 (Choose one assessment type)

Choice #2 (Choose one assessment type)

Choice #3 (Choose one assessment type)

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**Appendix B**

1. What is your current age?

Under 25	25-34	35-44	45-54	Above 54
3.4%	48.3%	24.1%	6.9%	17.2%

2. What is your gender?

Male	Female
69%	31%

3. What is your current degree?

Bachelor's	Master's	Doctorate
44.8%	55.2%	0%

4. How many total years have you been an educator in the classroom?

Less than 5	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25 or More
14.3%	35.7%	17.9%	10.7%	10.7%	10.7%

5. Which type(s) of social science classes have you taught?

U.S. History	World History	Sociology	Geography	Economics	Psychology	Government	Other
85.7%	64.3%	25%	60.7%	42.9%	35.7%	67.9%	25%

6. How many students are in your classroom?

Less than 10	10-19	20-29	30 or More
0%	0%	89.3%	10.7%

7. In what type of school do you teach?

Public	Private	Other
96.4%	3.6%	0%



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8. Please specify to what extent you use the following assessments in your classroom.

(Assessment Type)	Almost Always	Most of the Time	Half of the Time	Sometimes	Never
Journal	11.5%	7.7%	15.4%	38.5%	26.9%
Performance	12%	4%	28%	52%	4%
Essay	14.3%	17.9%	21.4%	46.4%	0%
Fill in the Blank	3.7%	14.8%	18.5%	51.9%	11.1%
Authentic	8%	8%	12%	68%	4%
Traditional	4.2%	25%	25%	41.7%	4.2%
Memorization	7.7%	19.2%	23.1%	42.3%	7.7%
Multiple Choice	14.3%	32.1%	21.4%	32.1%	0%
Debate	3.7%	7.4%	14.8%	55.6%	18.5%
Product	11.5%	15.4%	15.4%	57.7%	0%
Team Projects	0%	11.1%	33.3%	51.9%	3.7%
Peer Critique	0%	7.7%	7.7%	69.2%	15.4%
Matching	7.4%	33.3%	14.8%	37%	7.4%
Oral Presentation	0%	0%	29.6%	63%	7.4%
True/False	0%	10.7%	3.6%	64.3%	21.4%
Portfolio	0%	4.2%	12.5%	33.3%	50%
Self Evaluation	7.7%	11.5%	11.5%	53.8%	15.4%
Alternative	4.2%	12.5%	12.5%	54.2%	16.7%

9. Which form of assessment are you most comfortable using in your classroom?

Performance	Multiple Choice	Authentic	Portfolio	Fill in the blank	True/False	Matching	Memorization	Debate	Team Projects	Peer Critique	Self Evaluation	Essay	Oral Presentation	Journal	Product
0%	37%	14.8%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3.7%	0%	3.7%	3.7%	0%	22.2%	7.4%	0%	7.4%

10. Which type of assessment are you least comfortable using in your classroom?

3.7%	Performance
0%	Multiple Choice
3.7%	Authentic
14.8%	Portfolio
3.7%	Fill in the blank
14.8%	True/False
3.7%	Matching
7.4%	Memorization
3.7%	Debate
3.7%	Team Projects
14.8%	Peer Critique
18.5%	Self Evaluation
0%	Essay
0%	Oral Presentation
3.7%	Journal
3.7%	Product

11. Which form of assessment do you believe best prepares students for real world situations?

3.7%	Performance
0%	Multiple Choice
29.6%	Authentic
0%	Portfolio
0%	Fill in the blank
0%	True/False
0%	Matching
0%	Memorization
0%	Debate
33.3%	Team Projects
3.7%	Peer Critique
0%	Self Evaluation
3.7%	Essay
11.1%	Oral Presentation
0%	Journal
14.8%	Product

12. Which form of assessment do you believe best encourages higher order thinking skills?

3.7%	Performance
0%	Multiple Choice
29.6%	Authentic
3.7%	Portfolio
0%	Fill in the blank
0%	True/False
0%	Matching
0%	Memorization
18,5%	Debate
11.1%	Team Projects
0%	Peer Critique
3.7%	Self Evaluation
14.8%	Essay
0%	Oral Presentation
0%	Journal
14.8%	Product

13. Which form of assessment do you believe best encourages lower order thinking skills?

0%	Performance
14.8%	Multiple Choice
0%	Authentic
3.7%	Portfolio
3.7%	Fill in the blank
18.5%	True/False
11.1%	Matching
44.4%	Memorization
0%	Debate
0%	Team Projects
0%	Peer Critique
0%	Self Evaluation
0%	Essay
0%	Oral Presentation
3.7%	Journal
0%	Product

## TRADITIONAL VS. ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT

14. Do you prefer employing traditional or alternative forms of assessment in your classroom?

Traditional	Alternative
51.9%	48.1%

15. Which three forms of assessment do you believe students respond best to?

	Choice #1	Choice #2	Choice #3
Performance	14.8%	0%	3.8%
Multiple Choice	44.4%	3.7%	0%
Authentic	15.8%	3.7%	0%
Portfolio	0%	0%	3.8%
Fill in the Blank	0%	0%	7.7%
True/False	0%	7.4%	7.7%
Matching	0%	18.5%	7.7%
Memorization	0%	0%	0%
Debate	3.7%	7.4%	7.7%
Team Projects	3.7%	22.2%	19.2%
Peer Critique	0%	3.7%	0%
Self Evaluation	0%	3.7%	3.8%
Essay	11.1%	7.4%	7.7%
Oral Presentation	0%	3.7%	15.4%
Journal	0%	7.4%	3.8%
Product	7.4%	11.1%	11.5%

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