



# How to Design Questions and Tasks to Assess Student Thinking

By Susan M. Brookhart



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With new standards emphasizing higher-order thinking skills, students will have to demonstrate their ability to do far more than simply remember facts and procedures. But what's the best way for teachers to ensure that students have such skills? In this highly accessible guide, author Susan M. Brookhart shows how to do just that, by providing specific guidelines for designing targeted questions and tasks that align with standards and assess students' ability to think at higher levels.

Aided by dozens of examples across grade levels and subject areas, readers will learn how to

- \* Take a student perspective and view assessment questions and tasks as "problems to solve."
- \* Design multiple-choice questions that require higher-order thinking.
- \* Understand the difference between "open" and "closed" questions and how to use open questions effectively.
- \* Vary and control the features of performance assessment tasks, including cognitive level and difficulty, to target different thinking skills.
- \* Manage the assessment of higher-order thinking within the larger context of teaching and learning.

Brookhart also provides an "idea bank" that teachers can use to jump-start their own thinking as they create assessments.

Timely and practical, *How to Design Questions and Tasks to Assess Student Thinking* is essential reading for 21st century teachers who want their students to excel in the classroom and beyond.

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### Editorial Review

From the Inside Flap

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About the Author

Susan M. Brookhart is an independent educational consultant based in Helena, Montana, and senior research associate at the Center for Advancing the Study of Teaching and Learning in the School of Education at Duquesne University. She is the author or coauthor of several books and many articles on classroom assessment, including ASCD's *How to Give Effective Feedback to Your Students*, *How to Assess Higher-Order Thinking Skills in Your Classroom*, and *How to Create and Use Rubrics for Formative Assessment and Grading*.

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