



## Mr. Barge's Instructional Tip of the Week! – Meaningful MC

At some point in our nation's history, the conversation surrounding education seemed to have gone from "What did you learn?" to "What did you get?" There is no doubt that exams have a place in education. However, as educators we sometimes need to look beyond the red number on the top of the exam to determine what, and if, students are learning. I am sure most of us examine the obvious line analysis data to reflect on our practice and plan accordingly. For example, if more than half of the students are getting a particular multiple choice question wrong, then perhaps we should examine what it is that our students don't understand, reflect on how it was taught, and determine if, and how, it needs to be retaught. Also, if a significant number of students in the class fail an exam/assessment, then it is important that we really ask ourselves "why?" It's easy for us to simply say, "They didn't study so of course they failed." But we know that it can go well beyond just knowing that we covered the material and why ongoing daily assessment is so important in our lesson planning.

Multiple choice is a reality in the world of education. Regents, ACTs, SATs, etc. all have multiple choice questions. But how do we know if the students are guessing on some of those answers? This year I'm exploring ways to assess student learning through multiple choice that goes beyond students' one letter answers. For example, I have students answer the Regents style multiple choice question(s) and then have them explain why they chose that answer (see sample assessment below and sample student responses on the next page). Looking beyond the grades of the exam, the explanations that the class provided for their multiple choice answers helped me to realize that I had to clear up some misconceptions that they had. It also provided me with some invaluable information to show their understanding of the topic/unit. Keep in mind that using this technique is just one method of making assessments more meaningful, and purposeful, in your instruction. Please continue your efforts to make purposeful assessments part of your instruction.

### Sample assessment:

**World War I Assessment**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Below you will find a political cartoon. In the writing section provided, please explain the meaning of the cartoon as well as the cartoonist's purpose.

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Part B: You will find a series of multiple choice questions. Please answer each question by circling the correct response. In the right column, explain why you chose that answer. Be sure to thoroughly explain.

1. What was the major reason for the United States entry into WWI? (1) Overthrow the czarist government of Russia. (2) To keep Latin America from being attacked by Germany. (3) To maintain freedom of the seas (4) To break up the colonial empires of the Allies	_____
2. What was President Woodrow Wilson's stated policy toward the warring nations of Europe prior to US entry into WWI? (1) Neutrality (2) Internationalism (3) Containment (4) Dollar diplomacy	_____
3. Which event most influenced President Wilson's decision to enter WWI? (1) Defeat of Russia by Germany (2) Assassination of Archduke Ferdinand (3) Raids by Mexico on the southwestern United States. (4) Renewal of unrestricted submarine warfare by Germany.	_____
4. The "clear and present danger" principle stated by the Supreme Court in <i>Schenck v. United States</i> (1919) had the effect of (1) prohibiting the president from implementing a military draft (2) preventing the wartime internment of citizens (3) restricting the formation of defense alliances (4) limiting freedom of speech during wartime	_____
5. During World War I, what was President Woodrow Wilson's purpose in outlining the Fourteen Points? (1) asking Congress for additional funding for the war effort (2) suggesting a peace plan to prevent future wars (3) proposing war crimes trials for leaders of enemy nations (4) calling for military alliances against aggressor nations	_____

... because at Edward R. Murrow High School, we **CARE** about our students!

**Samples of student exams:**

1. What was the major reason for the United States entry into WWI? <input type="checkbox"/> (1) Overthrow the czarist government of Russia. <input type="checkbox"/> (2) To keep Latin America from being attacked by Germany. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (3) To maintain freedom of the seas <input type="checkbox"/> (4) To break up the colonial empires of the Allies	United States wanted the seas to be free so merchant ships can freely roam and keep trade to improve American economy, also to trade with allies
2. What was President Woodrow Wilson's stated policy toward the warring nations of Europe prior to US entry into WWI? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (1) Neutrality <input type="checkbox"/> (2) Internationalism <input type="checkbox"/> (3) Containment <input type="checkbox"/> (4) Dollar diplomacy	At the start of Wilson's campaign he was all about neutrality to protect his re-election for presidency
3. Which event most influenced President Wilson's decision to enter WWI? <input type="checkbox"/> (1) Defeat of Russia by Germany <input type="checkbox"/> (2) Assassination of Archduke Ferdinand <input type="checkbox"/> (3) Raids by Mexico on the southwestern United States. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (4) Renewal of unrestricted submarine warfare by Germany.	Germany attacking American passenger ships was most influential to President Wilson's decision to enter. Wilson was killing American is unacceptable and as a declaration of war
4. The "clear and present danger" principle stated by the Supreme Court in Schenk v. United States (1919) had the effect of <input type="checkbox"/> (1) prohibiting the president from implementing a military draft <input type="checkbox"/> (2) preventing the wartime internment of citizens <input type="checkbox"/> (3) restricting the formation of defense alliances <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (4) limiting freedom of speech during wartime	In wartime the U.S. government didn't want any influence into people wanting to be anti-war and stopping wartime plans
5. During World War I, what was President Woodrow Wilson's purpose in outlining the Fourteen Points? <input type="checkbox"/> (1) asking Congress for additional funding for the war effort <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (2) suggesting a peace plan to prevent future wars <input type="checkbox"/> (3) proposing war crimes trials for leaders of enemy nations <input type="checkbox"/> (4) calling for military alliances against aggressor nations	Wilson's purpose of the Fourteen Points was to create world peace and make a world alliance called League of Nations saying to dispute problems by diplomatic matters.

Student below decided to explain why the other answers were incorrect.



<p>We intend to begin on the first of February unrestricted submarine warfare. We shall endeavor in spite of this to keep the United States of America neutral. In the event of this not succeeding, we make Mexico a proposal or alliance on the following basis: make war together, make peace together, generous financial support and an understanding on our part that Mexico is to reconquer the lost territory in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona.</p> <p>— Zimmerman telegram, 1917</p> <p>6. The disclosure of this document contributed to  <input type="checkbox"/> (1) a declaration of war against Mexico  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (2) the entry of the United States into World War I  <input type="checkbox"/> (3) the passage of the Treaty of Versailles  <input type="checkbox"/> (4) a restriction on immigration from Latin America</p>	<p>1: Didn't happen                  3: Happened later</p>
<p>Base your answer on the quotation below and on your knowledge of social studies.</p> <p>"I object in the strongest possible way to having the United States agree, directly or indirectly, to be controlled by a league [of nations] which may at any time ... be drawn in to deal with internal conflicts in other countries. ... We should never allow the United States to be involved in any internal conflict in another country."</p> <p>— Senator Henry Cabot Lodge</p> <p>7. Senator Lodge was expressing support for a foreign policy of  <input type="checkbox"/> (1) Containment  <input type="checkbox"/> (2) Interventionism  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (3) Isolationism  <input type="checkbox"/> (4) Imperialism</p>	<p>1: Has nothing to do with WWI, it's about communism                  2: He's literally discouraging this                  4: This speech has nothing to do with taking colonies, which is what imperialism is</p>
<p>8. This poster was used during the administration of President Woodrow Wilson to  <input type="checkbox"/> (1) convince men to enlist in the military services  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (2) help finance the war effort  <input type="checkbox"/> (3) support membership in the League of Nations  <input type="checkbox"/> (4) emphasize the goals of the Fourteen Points</p>	<p>Liberty Bonds were bonds that existed so citizens can give money to the military. These advertisements were made to encourage citizens to purchase these bonds, which would financially benefit our military for WWI.</p>

1. What was the major reason for the United States entry into WWI? <input type="checkbox"/> (1) Overthrow the czarist government of Russia. <input type="checkbox"/> (2) To keep Latin America from being attacked by Germany. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (3) To maintain freedom of the seas <input type="checkbox"/> (4) To break up the colonial empires of the Allies	After Germany declared that all sinks bearing them will be sunk and then sank the Lusitania, the US felt angry because they could no longer travel freely + trade
2. What was President Woodrow Wilson's stated policy toward the warring nations of Europe prior to US entry into WWI? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (1) Neutrality <input type="checkbox"/> (2) Internationalism <input type="checkbox"/> (3) Containment <input type="checkbox"/> (4) Dollar diplomacy	Wilson did not want to get involved in the war in the beginning. He only wanted to trade with those countries.
3. Which event most influenced President Wilson's decision to enter WWI? <input type="checkbox"/> (1) Defeat of Russia by Germany <input type="checkbox"/> (2) Assassination of Archduke Ferdinand <input type="checkbox"/> (3) Raids by Mexico on the southwestern United States. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (4) Renewal of unrestricted submarine warfare by Germany.	Wilson doesn't care about Russia's defeat or Ferdinand's assassination because he didn't want to be part of the war in the first place. The third thing that happened was Schenck was arrested for handing out pamphlets that supported not being in the war. He went to the Supreme Court and lost but case his freedom to promote an effort against President Woodrow.
4. The "clear and present danger" principle stated by the Supreme Court in Schenk v. United States (1919) had the effect of <input type="checkbox"/> (1) prohibiting the president from implementing a military draft <input type="checkbox"/> (2) preventing the wartime internment of citizens <input type="checkbox"/> (3) restricting the formation of defense alliances <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (4) limiting freedom of speech during wartime	Wilson was limited because many of the 14 points were at Wilson's action.
5. During World War I, what was President Woodrow Wilson's purpose in outlining the Fourteen Points? <input type="checkbox"/> (1) asking Congress for additional funding for the war effort <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (2) suggesting a peace plan to prevent future wars <input type="checkbox"/> (3) proposing war crimes trials for leaders of enemy nations <input type="checkbox"/> (4) calling for military alliances against aggressor nations	Wilson approached the treaty making with a no leaders attitude. He wanted to prevent future wars. He tried to create the League of Nations to achieve this.