

Instructional Impact

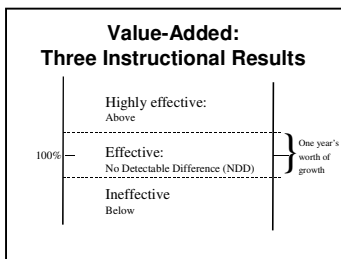
Using a value-added analysis, educators can determine their instructional impact – how effective they have been in providing students with a year's worth of growth from where they began the year. To describe the impact of instruction on student learning, value-added assessment calculates three-year running averages for the value-added gains made by all students in individual classrooms. These data can then be aggregated so that impact can be determined as well for grades, schools and districts.

We refer to these instructional results as:

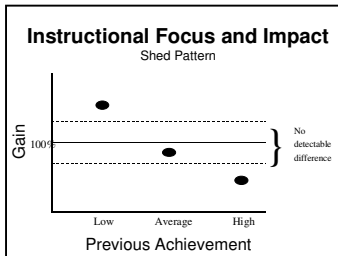
Highly effective - Students are "stretched" so that their performance significantly exceeded their records of past achievement;

Effective - Students received a year's worth of growth from where they began the year; or

Ineffective - Student performance consistently and significantly fell below the level of achievement they demonstrated in past years.



When the data from these patterns are combined, educators can see simultaneously the focus and impact of their instruction.



Here, we can see that the focus of instruction has been with the previously low-achievers in this class and the impact is that they exceeded their year's worth of growth.

Through this information, teachers, principals, district administrators, and school board leaders can learn whether high achievers, middle achievers, or low-achievers are making the most progress, and the extent to which schools and classroom teachers are effective in raising performance.

This research proves particularly important, because identifying the focus and impact of instruction is one thing – improving instruction to significantly increase student achievement is quite another. The data can help teachers better understand the effectiveness of their instruction and reveal how they may be focusing on some students to the detriment of others.

Not differentiating instruction, limiting problem-solving opportunities in the curriculum, or failing to communicate with colleagues who taught their students in previous years, thus spending too much time reviewing what students have already learned — all of these practices deprive students of gains they are capable of making and to which they are entitled.

By the same token, teachers must be able to see where and why they are effective so that they can share best practices with their colleagues. Good teachers may be highly effective with some of their students and quite ineffective with others. Understanding areas of strength can help correct areas of weakness.

Value-added assessment by itself does not improve student achievement. But if educators are committed to analyzing the uniquely valuable data it provides and use what they learn to guide instruction and professional development, and if administrators create an environment that encourages these