

## The Backward Design Process:

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<http://www.ascd.org/readingroom/books/wiggins98book.html>

*Understanding by Design*. Wiggins & McTighe

- The backward approach to curricular design also departs from another common practice: thinking about assessment as something we do at the end, once teaching is completed. Rather than creating assessments near the conclusion of a unit of study (or relying on the tests provided by textbook publishers, which may not completely or appropriately assess our standards), backward design calls for us to operationalize our goals or standards in terms of assessment evidence as we begin to plan a unit or course. It reminds us to begin with the question, *What would we accept as evidence that students have attained the desired understandings and proficiencies—before proceeding to plan teaching and learning experiences?*
- Many teachers who have adopted this design approach report
  - that the process of "thinking like an assessor" about evidence of learning not only helps them to clarify their goals but also results in a more sharply defined teaching and learning target, so that students perform better knowing their goal. Greater coherence among desired results, key performances, and teaching and learning experiences leads to better student performance—the purpose of design. (p.8-9)