

Pigeonhole Questions and Comments
Paper 8. Hill

Q: I would question the assumption that a teacher who has been teaching a class for 7 years is the best person to assess all their students fairly and objectively? Can you explain?

A: In contrast to one-off standardized assessments, classroom teachers can build up a picture of students' abilities over time (7 years, in this case) using multiple sources of data. Moreover, teachers are in a position to judge if performance on a standardized assessment is consistent with their knowledge of the student 'as a whole' and to provide insight into the factors (e.g., illness or anxiety) which may have impacted on that performance. CBA can also be more valid than external assessment to the extent it is likely to more closely align with instruction. The question about whether this teacher is the "best person" then goes to the quality of CBA practices and how well they capture the constructs of interest.