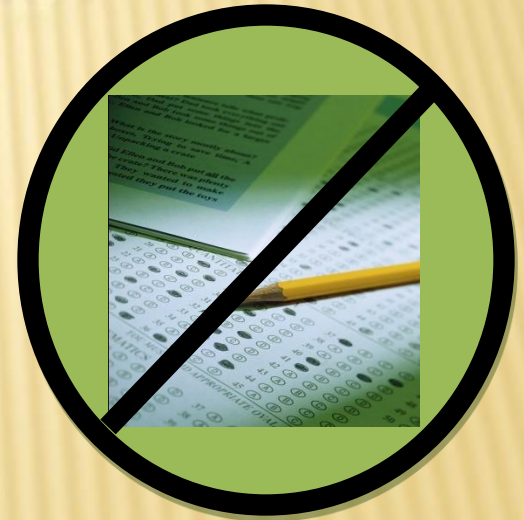


WHAT'S COMMON ABOUT COMMON LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT?

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS!

New York, New York

January 22, 2010



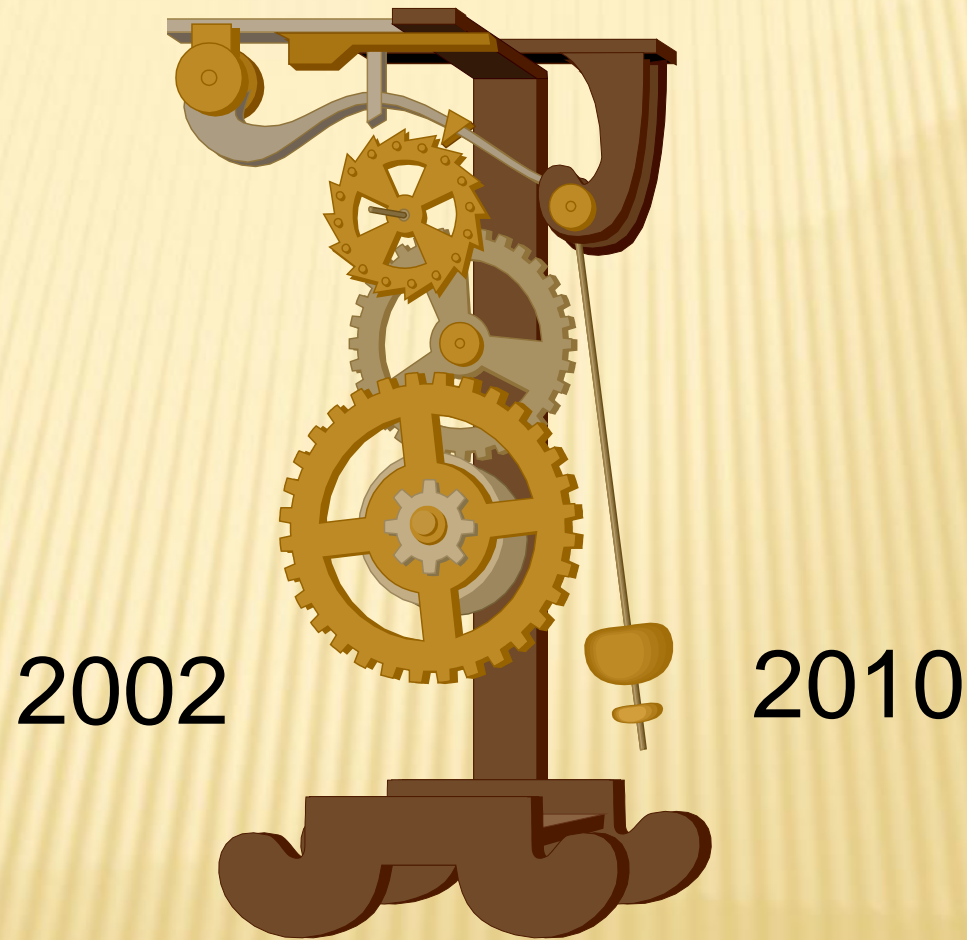
Margo Gottlieb, Ph.D.
Illinois Resource Center and
World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment Consortium

TODAY'S QUESTIONS

- ✗ What is common assessment and how is it distinguished from other forms?
- ✗ What is common language assessment and why is it necessary?
- ✗ What are some types of common language assessment and associated language tasks?
- ✗ How might you begin building common language assessment?

-
1. What is common assessment and how is it distinguished from other forms?

The assessment pendulum is swinging. WHY?



Common assessments
emerge from a team-
building process
amongst teachers and
school leaders,
supported by
administrators and
other stakeholders.



What's **common** about **common** assessment?

It's built on consensus!

There is unanimous agreement on:

- ✗ The purpose for the assessment
- ✗ The data collection window(s)
- ✗ The type of assessment & documentation
- ✗ How data are gathered
- ✗ The way data are interpreted & reported
- ✗ How the information from assessment is used.

An Assessment Audit....

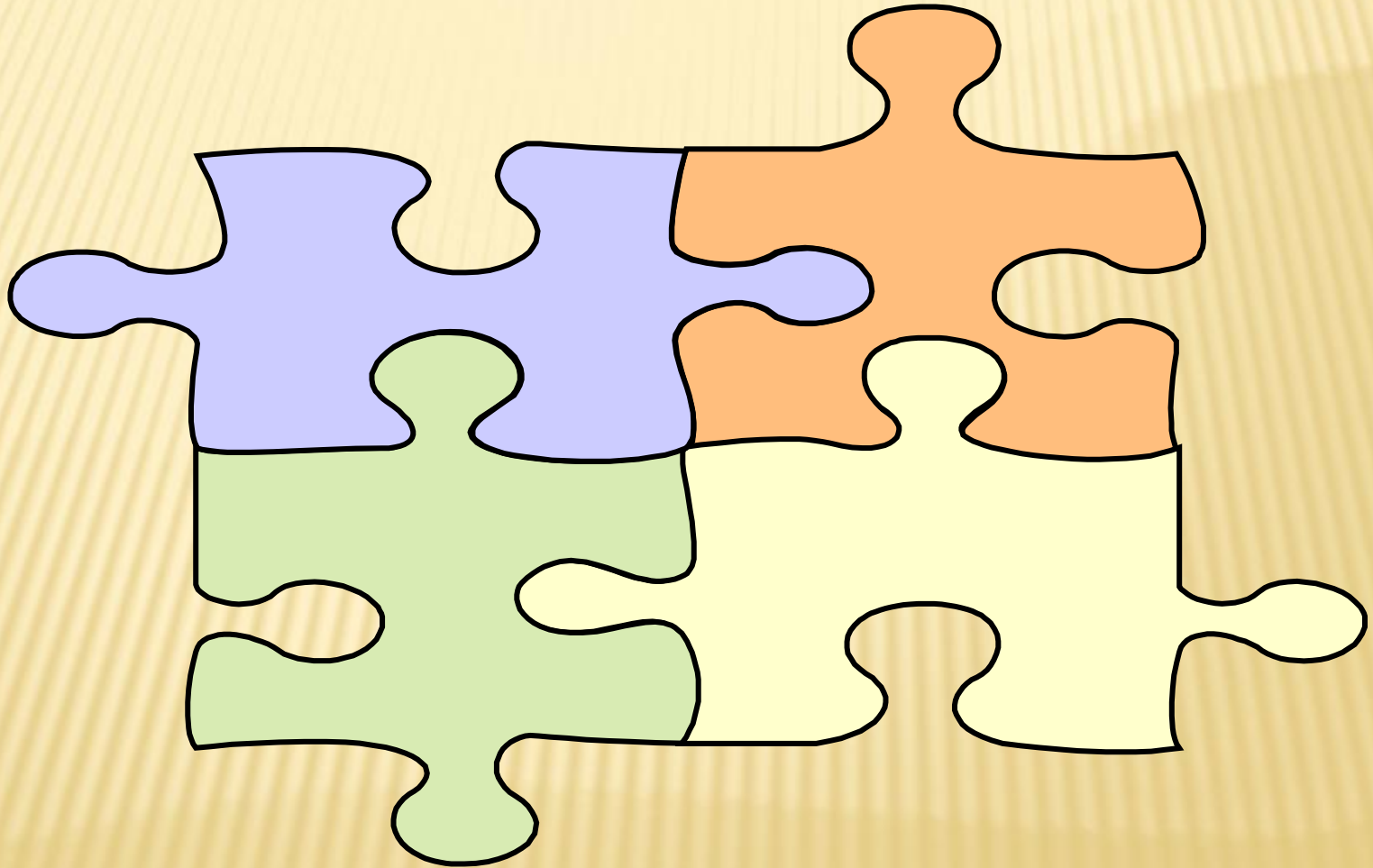
Turn to **page 2 of the handout**. With a partner, list **all** the assessments given to English language learners from classrooms to the state.

Underline those that deal with assessment of academic achievement.

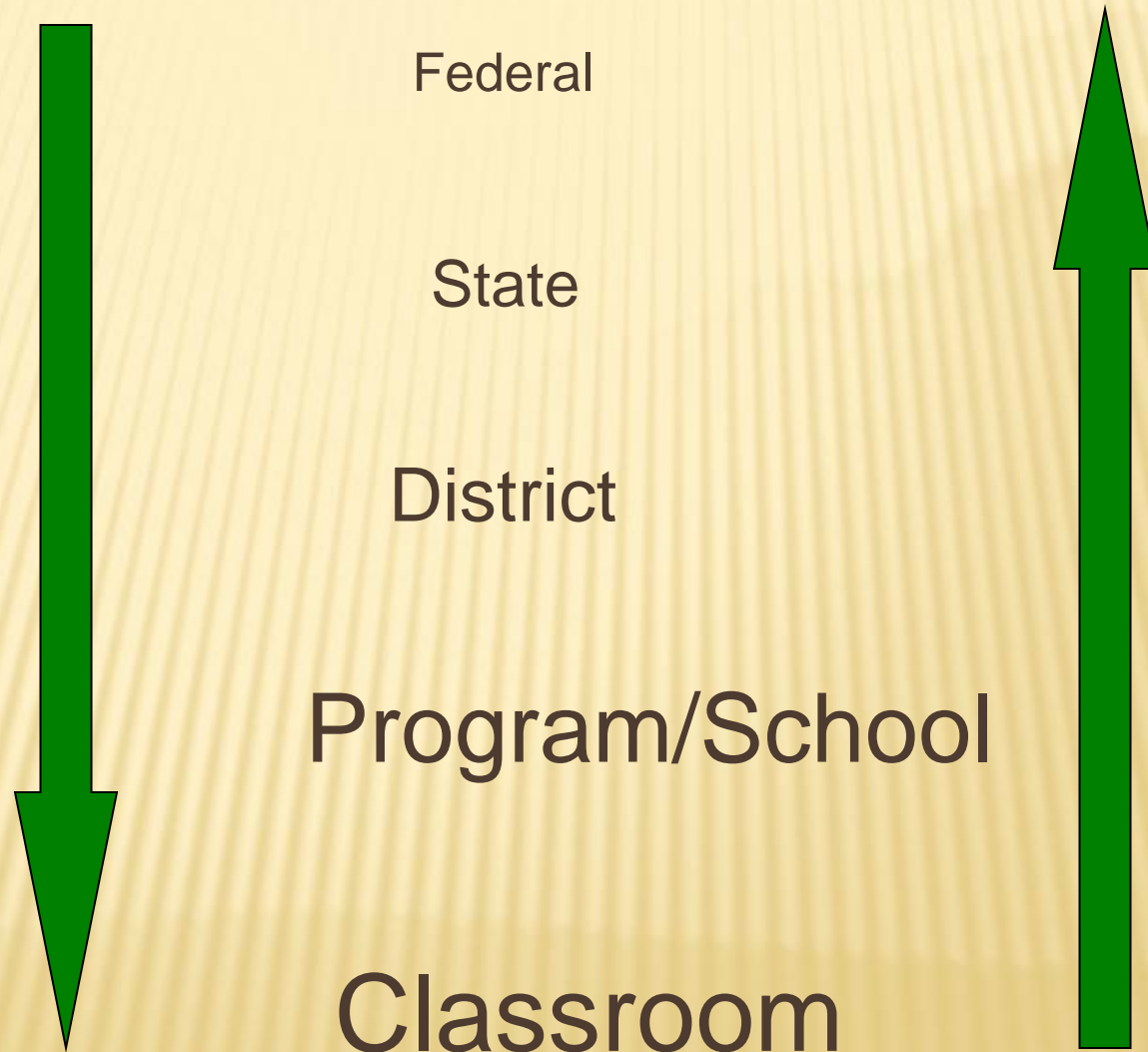
Put a star in front of those administered in L1.

Circle those that address language proficiency.

ANOTHER PIECE OF THE ASSESSMENT PUZZLE...



Assessment Operates at Different Levels of Implementation



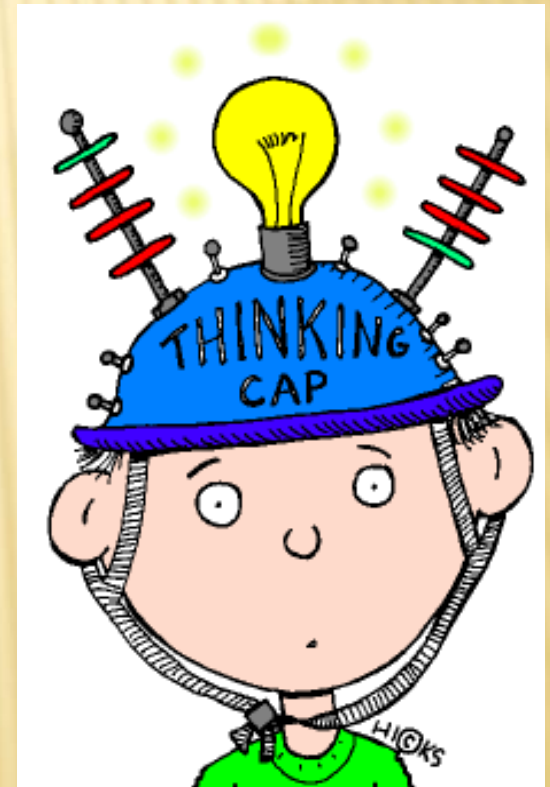
Now, let's sort the measures according to their level of implementation- classroom, school, language education program, and New York City Public Schools/ state (on page 3 of your handout).

What are your findings?

What conclusion do you draw from your findings?

Moreover, do you....

- need additional data to make language or content-related decisions (e.g., grouping)?
- need additional data to differentiate curriculum and instruction?
- have data that you value?



Let's debrief ...

- ✗ To what extent are you documenting the progress of your English language learners' English **language** development?
- ✗ To what extent are you documenting the students' **native language** proficiency (initially, sporadically, and/or continuously)?
- ✗ Is there systematic documentation of students' **language** development (across levels of implementation) in your list of assessments?

GET 2 EXAMINE THE FORMS OF APPETIZERS

[illegible]

FORMS OF ASSESSMENT

A continuum from least to most restrictive measures



Idiosyncratic Common Interim Standardized

Individualized
measures

**Standard
measures**

Commercial
measures

Criterion or norm-
referenced
measures

Three forms of assessment provide formative information:

- ✗ **Idiosyncratic...** measures designed by individual teachers used to make student, group, or classroom level decisions
- ✗ **Common...** standard measures used across classrooms to make grade/ department, school, program, or district decisions
- ✗ **Interim....** benchmark measures administered periodically that, in large part, are externally developed to make program or district decisions

Time for Activity 2, **page 4 of your handout...**

Let's return to your list of assessments. We're going to categorize them by their form.

- ✗ Write **I (idiosyncratic)**, **C (common)**, or **IN (interim)** next to measures that yield formative information.
- ✗ Write **ST (standardized)** next to the remaining measures that offer **summative information**.
- ✗ Then, complete the bar graph with your results.

FOR EXAMPLE, WHICH FORM OF ASSESSMENT IS...

- ✗ The Spanish LAB?
- ✗ ELL Periodic Assessments?
- ✗ The NYSESLAT?
- ✗ El Sol?

An Example Bar Graph of Types of Assessments for ELLs

| N of measures | I | C | IN | ST |
|---------------|---|---|----|----|
| 6 | | | | |
| 5 | | | | |
| 4 | | | | |
| 3 | | | | |
| 2 | | | | |
| 1 | | | | |

DIFFERENT FORMS OF ASSESSMENT ARE DESIGNED FOR DIFFERENT PURPOSES AND YIELD RESULTS THAT ARE USED IN DIFFERENT WAYS

Formative information

Summative information

Idiosyncratic **Common** Interim Standardized

Benchmarks

EXAMPLES OF **COMMON** ASSESSMENT THAT PROVIDES

Summative information:

A graduation portfolio

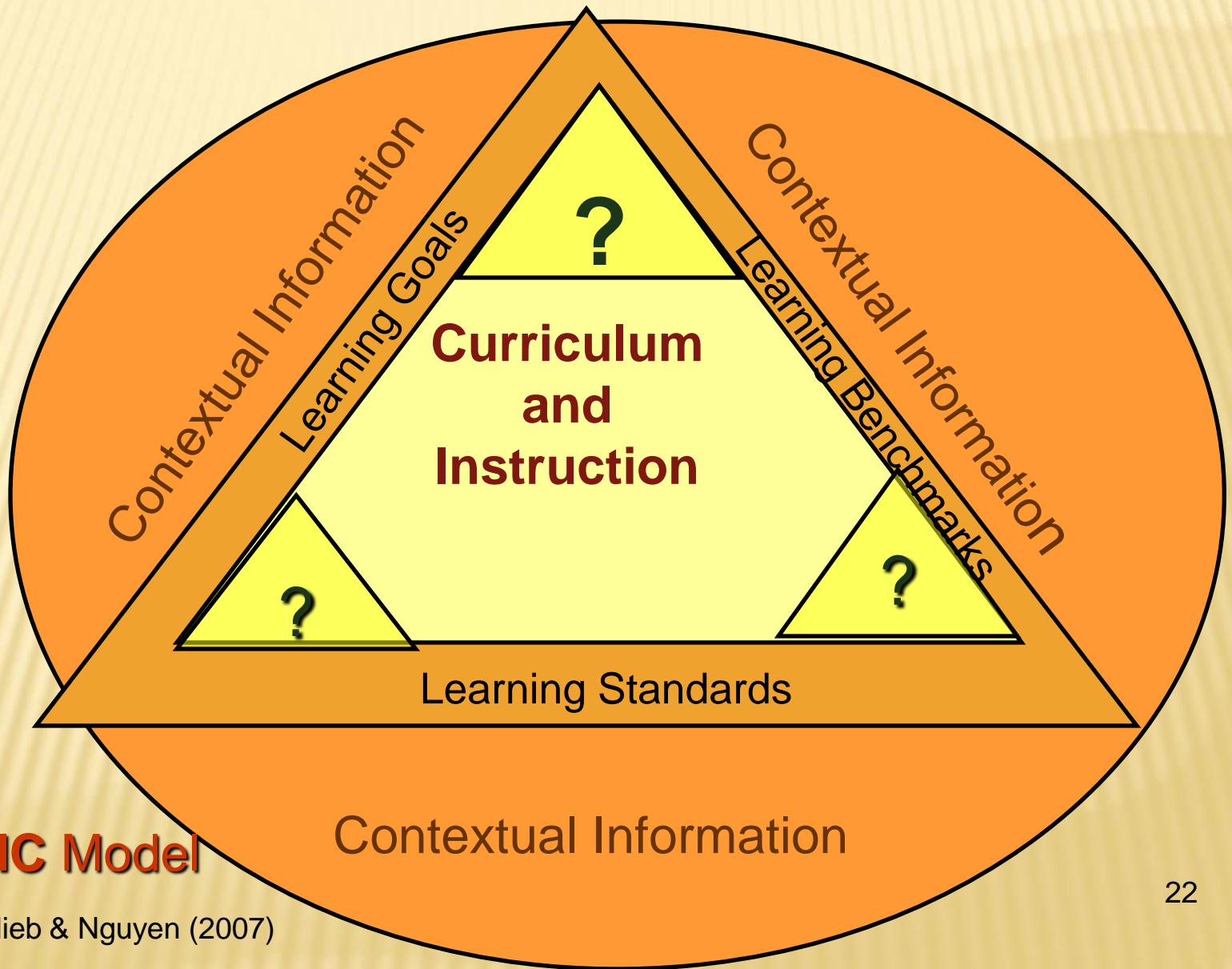
Formative information:

A required portfolio entry for a specific grade or grade level cluster

Benchmarked information:

A portfolio geared to academic achievement of English language learners (in L1 or L2) at designated levels of language proficiency

Think about the forms of assessment across the levels of implementation. What is missing in your assessment system to make it balanced?



The **BASIC** Model

Gottlieb & Nguyen (2007)

2. WHAT IS LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT?

Think Pair Share

Name 3 features of **language** assessment and share your ideas with a partner.



LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

- ✗ Targets a **language** domain- listening, speaking, reading, or writing
- ✗ Reflects **language** proficiency standards
- ✗ Is differentiated according to students' **language** proficiency levels
- ✗ Measures students' **language** proficiency

WHAT IS THE FOCUS OF COMMON LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT?

Common language assessment allows English language learners to demonstrate the extent to which they have the language requisite for accessing grade-level content.

PRINCIPLES FOR COMMON LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

1. **Common language** assessment, anchored in **language** proficiency standards, is a tool for empowerment of English **language** learners and their teachers, with both collaborating and sharing responsibility in the **language** learning process.
2. **Common language** assessment is developed from a plan that accentuates what English **language** learners CAN DO at every step of **language** development.
3. **Common language** assessment is based on **language** tasks that English **language** learners have been prepared to perform, where every task and the criteria used to interpret student performance are clear.

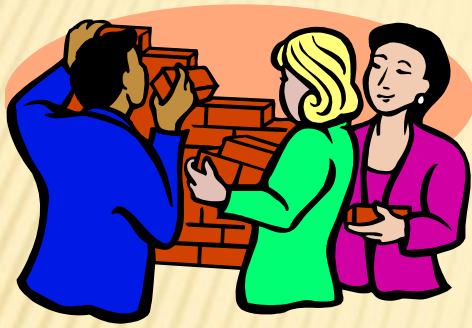
FEATURES OF COMMON LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

- ✗ Teacher-developed language tasks and projects supported by school and district leaders
- ✗ Focus on student language goals with input from and feedback for students
- ✗ Engaging, performance activities embedded within the instructional cycle
- ✗ A consensus-building process implemented uniformly across classrooms

FEATURES OF COMMON LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

- ✗ Mutually agreed upon procedures for planning, collecting, interpreting, reporting, and using language data, including....
 - ✓ the same window for data collection
 - ✓ the same directions for administration
 - ✓ the same rubric or scoring guide
 - ✓ the same interpretation of student work
 - ✓ the same use of the results for the same kinds of decisions.

WHO IS INVOLVED IN DEVELOPING AND USING COMMON LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT?



Educators working with and advocating for English **language** learners, including:

- Professional Learning Communities
- Instructional Assessment Teams
- Collaborative **language** teachers, content teachers, and administrators

So, **why** is **common language**
assessment necessary?

Why is common language assessment necessary?

To:

- ✘ Provide multiple perspectives, including students
- ✘ Gather evidence from multiple sources...to corroborate or refute other data
- ✘ Make informed instructional decisions directly tied to curriculum
- ✘ Honor what teachers do and bring them into the accountability process

Why is common language assessment necessary?

- To monitor students' growth in language proficiency
- To inform language instruction
- To balance assessment practices for English language learners
- To better understand the relationship between the students' language proficiency and academic achievement

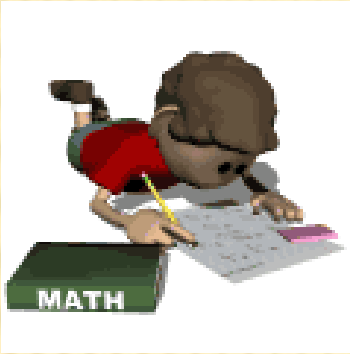
MORE REASONS FOR COMMON LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT, IN CASE YOU ARE NOT CONVINCED

- ✗ To offer valid data for decision-making
- ✗ To contribute to school, language education program, or district accountability
- ✗ To bring equity into classrooms serving English language learners

A Sampling of Possible Common Language Measures

| Measure | Dual language | TBE | ESL |
|-------------------------------|---|---------|-----|
| L2 learning rating scales | English, Spanish, Russian, Haitian-Creole | L2 | L2 |
| Language observation matrices | L1 & L2 | L1 & L2 | L2 |
| Writing prompts & rubric | L1 & L2 | L1 & L2 | L2 |
| Informal reading inventories | L1 & L2 | L1 & L2 | L2 |
| | | | |
| Pivotal language portfolios | L1 & L2 | L1 & L2 | L2 |

HOW MIGHT YOU DISTINGUISH EXAMPLES FROM NON-EXAMPLES OF COMMON LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT ?



Non- examples of common language assessment generally....

- do not use language in context (aka, the spelling test, the vocabulary test)
- do not differentiate language for English language learners (ELLs)
- do not integrate characteristics of ELLs into rubrics used to interpret student work

YOUR TURN!

- ✗ Look at the non-examples of **common language** assessment **on page 5 of your handout.**
- ✗ Choose one or two non-examples and convert them to true examples that exemplify **common language** assessment for your English **language** learners.

EXAMPLE TASKS OF COMMON LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

At the elementary school level

- ✗ use **comparative language** to evaluate a series of objects
- ✗ use **sequential language** to order events on a timeline

At the middle school level

- ✗ use **transition words and phrases** to explain cause and effect of major historical events in a multi-media presentation
- ✗ use **descriptive language** to differentiate different species of plants or animals

EXAMPLES TASKS FOR COMMON LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

At the high school level

- ✗ use **persuasive language** in a debate
- ✗ use **parallel language** in a Venn diagram to compare two events, processes, or characters
- ✗ use **complex sentences** to explain key likenesses and differences from a T chart that compares two events, processes, or characters.

WHERE MIGHT YOU BEGIN TO EXPLORE COMMON LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT?

What is the commitment of your school or language education program to this initiative?

What is the glue that is going to bind your instructional assessment team or PLC?



THE INITIAL PLANNING PHASE FOR COMMON ASSESSMENT

- ✗ Who are your students?
- ✗ What type of assessment do you plan to design or use?
- ✗ Which language domain(s) do you want to tackle?

DEMOGRAPHICS...THE VARIABILITY AMONG ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

- ✗ Students with Interrupted Formal Education
- ✗ Long-term English language learners
- ✗ English language learners with considerations for special education
- ✗ Dual language learners
- ✗ English language learners with strong L1 literacy
- ✗ Young English language learners

TYPES OF ASSESSMENTS

- ✖ Screeners
- ✖ Diagnostic Tools
- ✖ Surveys
- ✖ Observations
- ✖ **Performance Tasks with Rubrics**
- ✖ Tests

Before starting the development of **common language** assessment....

- ✗ Form a team of teachers and teacher leaders at a grade, grade level cluster, department, or school level.
- ✗ Decide on the purpose for the **common language** assessment based on the information from an assessment audit.

THINKING ABOUT BUILDING A **COMMON** **LANGUAGE** ASSESSMENT...THE FOUNDATION

Turn to page 6 of your handout.

- ✘ First, identify the group of English language learners for whom you plan to design or use **common language** assessment.
- ✘ Next, select the **language** domain(s) you wish to assess.
- ✘ Finally, choose a type of assessment that will help you monitor your students' **language** progress.

BUILDING **COMMON LANGUAGE** ASSESSMENT FOR YOUR STUDENTS



A Six-Step Process

Step 1. Common *language* assessment needs to be reflective of the English *language* learners for which it is designed.

Turn to page 7 of the handout and answer the following questions about the students:

- ✘ Which grade or grade level cluster?
- ✘ Which language and cultural groups?
- ✘ What levels of language proficiency?
- ✘ What kinds of educational experiences?

Step 2. Common *language* assessment needs to be standards-referenced tied to a specific type of assessment.

Which of New York's ESL/Native Language Standards are going to be the basis for your common *language* assessment for your English *language* learners?

Does it correspond with the type of assessment you selected in Activity 4?

Complete Step 2 on page 7 of your handout.

JUST IN CASE....NY'S ESL STANDARDS

Standard 1: English for **information and understanding** refers to the competencies and knowledge of English that students must obtain in order to communicate effectively in social and academic settings.

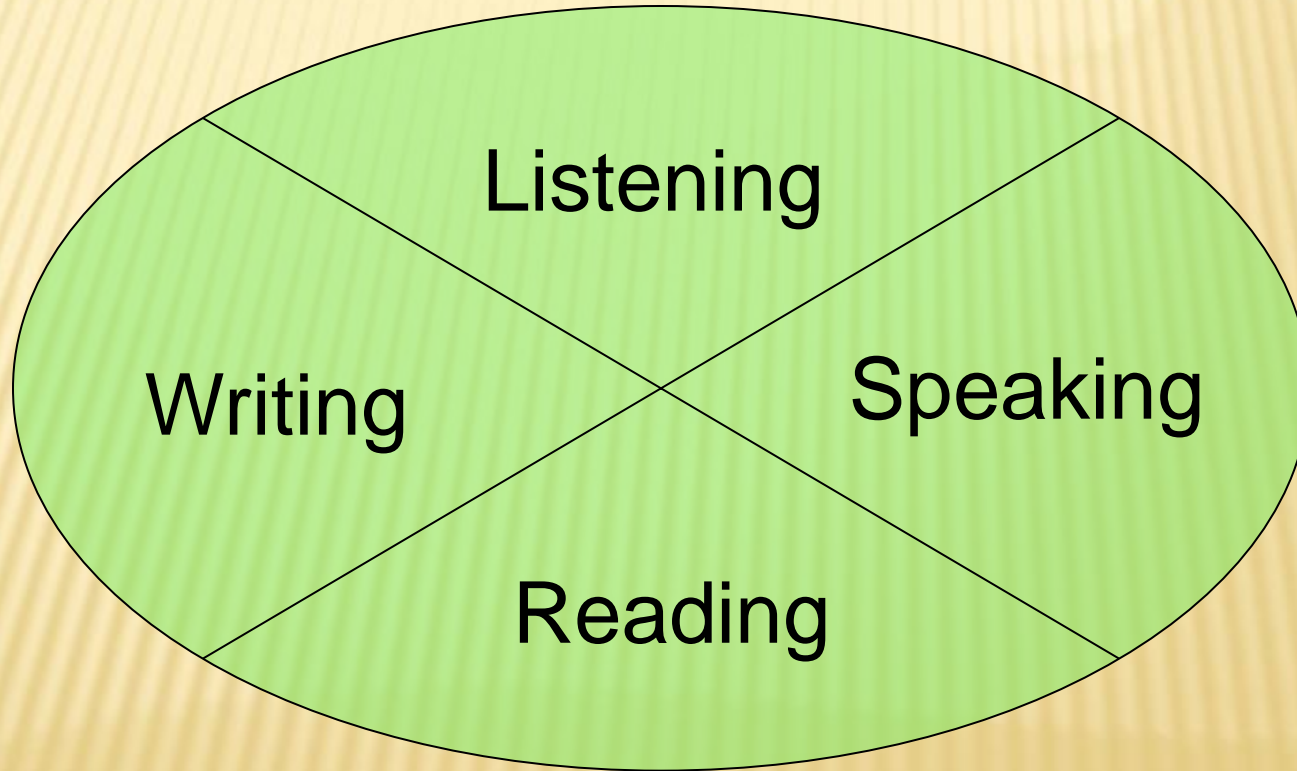
Standard 2: English for **literary response, enjoyment, and expression** requires that students develop the knowledge and skills in English to read and understand rich literature that ranges from classical to contemporary, and includes works representing a variety of cultures.

Standard 3: English for **critical analysis and evaluation** develops students' abilities to read, write, listen and speak in English to analyze and evaluate complex texts and issues.

Standard 4: English for **social and classroom interaction** outlines strategies, both in and out of school, that ELLs must master to communicate effectively in English.

Standard 5: English for **cross-cultural knowledge and understanding** articulates the components of acquiring a “second culture” in both social and academic contexts.

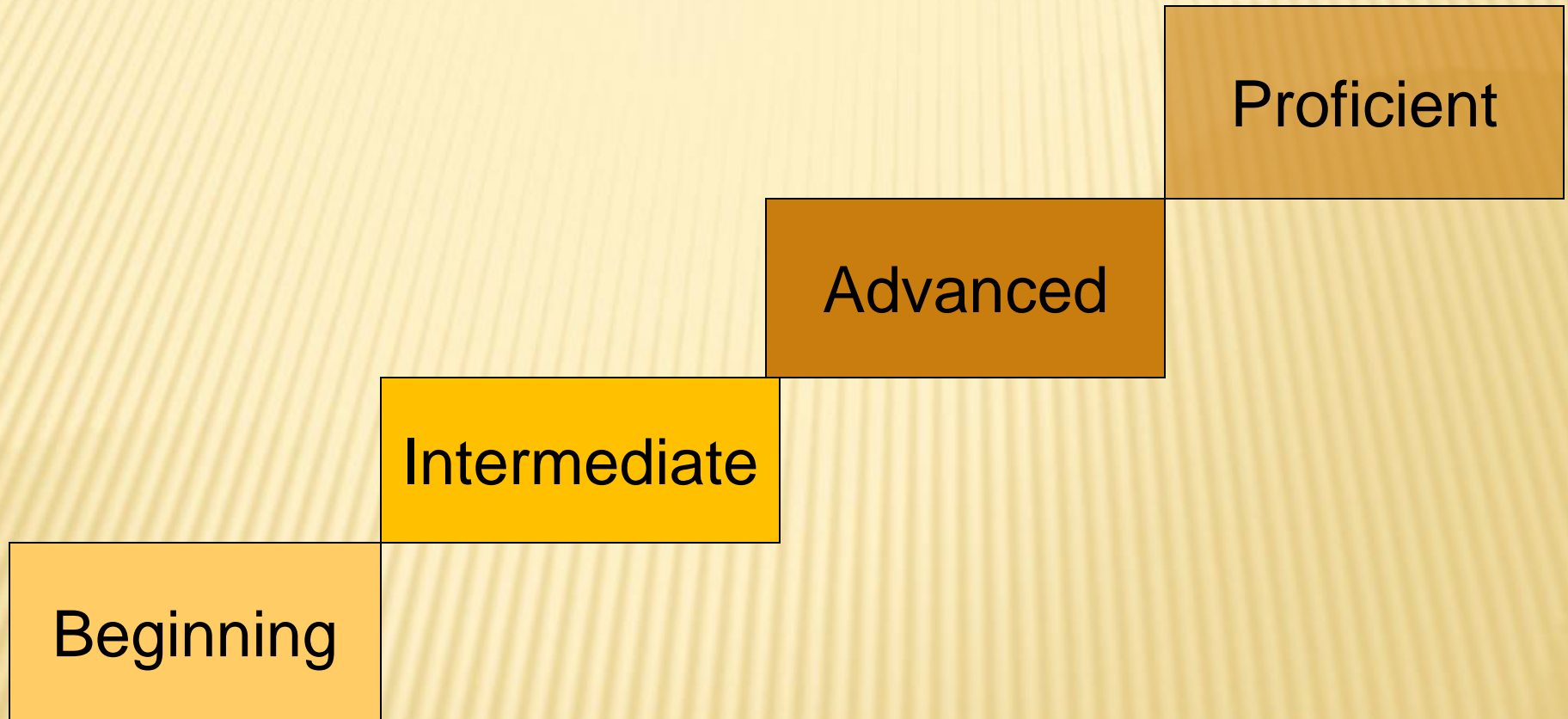
Step 3. Common language assessment needs to be focused on a **language** domain, **language** target, and then differentiated by the students' levels of English or native **language** proficiency.



LANGUAGE TARGETS...

- ✘ The **language** English language learners need to access grade-level content.
- ✘ Specifically, the **language** patterns and vocabulary (words, phrases, expressions) required by English language learners to negotiate curriculum, according to their level of **language** proficiency.

NY ESL STANDARDS...LEVELS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY



COMMON LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

- ✗ What is your preferred language domain to start thinking about building common language assessment?
- ✗ How might you express a language target important for your instruction of English language learners?

Turn to page 8 of your handout and do Step 3.

Step 4. **Common** *language* assessment needs to be based on valued *language* activities and tasks reflective of the *language* target.

- ✘ Pick 1 of the following activities or tasks from each *language* domain, based on the students' level of *language* proficiency, and write it in your handout **on page 8**.

LISTENING ACTIVITIES AND TASKS

Students process oral language to:

- ✘ Construct diagrams, models, maps, timelines, and figures
- ✘ Sort content-related pictures or match pictures according to oral instructions
- ✘ Sequence illustrations or cartoons according to narrative or expository discourse
- ✘ Follow oral commands or follow multi-step directions
- ✘ Fill in graphic organizers per instructions

SPEAKING ACTIVITIES AND TASKS

Students engage in:

- ✗ Discussions among peers on social or academic topics
- ✗ Interviews between students or between students and adults pertaining to content or social action
- ✗ Presentations/ reports on content-related assignments
- ✗ (Re) tellings from illustrations or personal experiences
- ✗ Think-alouds about articles, stories, or literature
- ✗ Question-answer rounds

READING ACTIVITIES AND TASKS

Students process written language to:

- ✗ Categorize, classify, or sort content-related words, phrases, or sentences into groups
- ✗ Draw or produce diagrams or models in response to text
- ✗ Match words with pictures, words, phrases, sentences; match sentences with paragraphs
- ✗ Sequence content-related pictures, sentences, or paragraphs
- ✗ Interpret text from a variety of sources (e.g., web-based and original documents)

WRITING ACTIVITIES AND TASKS

Students produce:

- ✗ Descriptions of places, people, objects, events
- ✗ Editorials/ critiques in response to reading (e.g., from newspapers or the internet)
- ✗ Interactive journal entries/ content-related learning logs
- ✗ Lists within authentic contexts
- ✗ Multi-media presentations
- ✗ Structured reports (e.g., science lab experiments)
- ✗ Summaries of oral presentations, stories, or articles
- ✗ Survey questionnaires or interview forms

Step 5. Common *language* assessment needs to be have a documentation form, rubric, or scoring guide that best captures the task and student performance.

Examples of rubrics...

- Checklists
- Rating scales
- Holistic scales
- Analytic scales
- Task/project-specific scales

Step 6. Common *language* assessment needs to be grounded in what English *language* learners CAN DO and interpreted in light of the ESL standard and *language* target.

Questions to ask:

- ✘ What criteria are used to interpret student work?
- ✘ To what extent are students meeting the language targets according to their level of English *language* proficiency?
- ✘ What decisions are made based on the data?
- ✘ Do the data help inform teaching and learning?

POR FIN!

Finish the template by adding steps 5 and 6 in your handout on **page 9**.

ONE POSSIBILITY FOR **COMMON LANGUAGE** ASSESSMENT....

Step 1: Select the students:

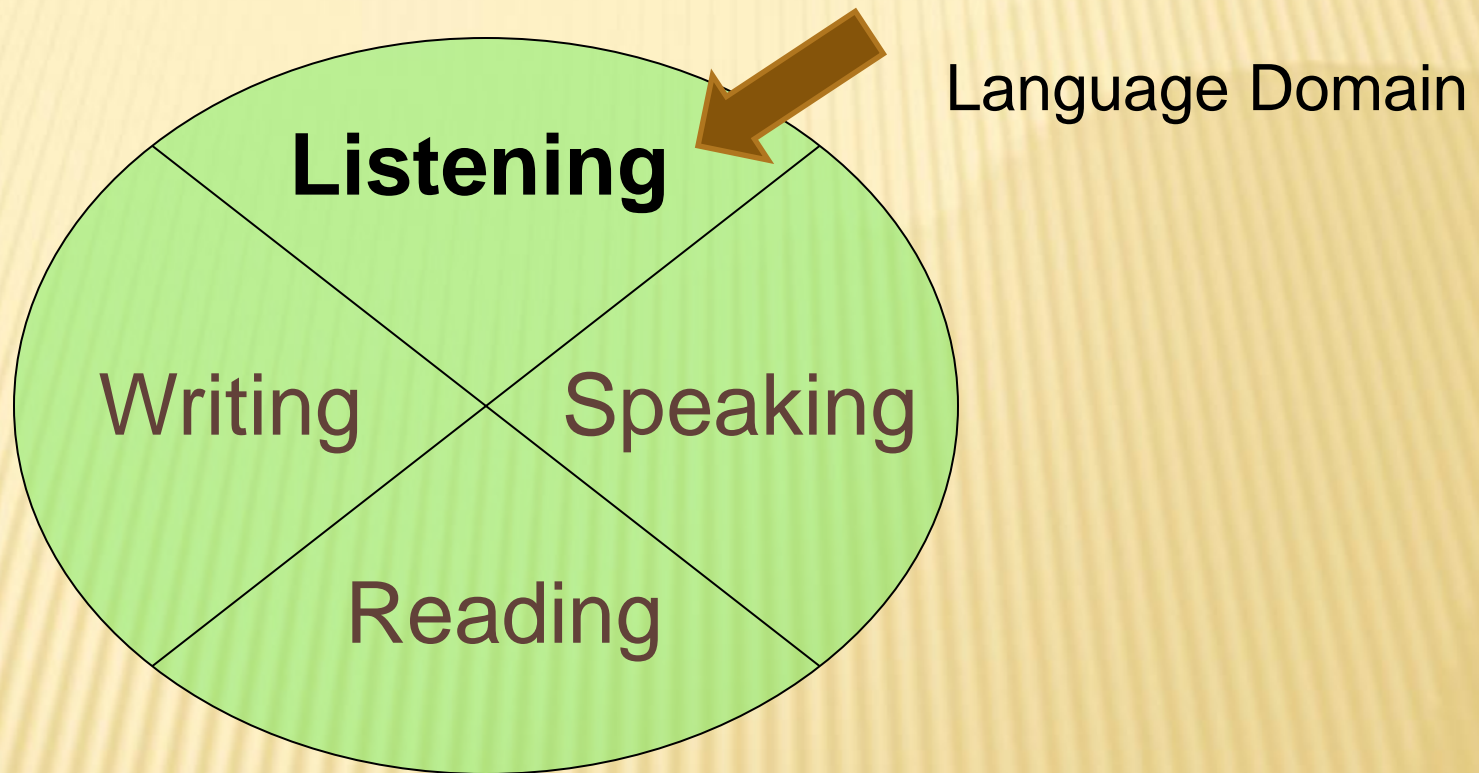
- ✗ Grade level cluster: PreK-1
- ✗ All language & cultural groups
- ✗ Language proficiency level: Beginning

Step 2: Choose a **language** standard and type of assessment

ESL Standard 1: English for information and understanding refers to the competencies and knowledge of English that students must obtain in order to communicate effectively in **social and academic settings**.

Type of Assessment: Performance activity

Step 3: Design **common language** assessment for:



Language target: Beginning English language learners will follow one-step, content-related oral commands.

Step 4: Brainstorm sample instructional assessment commands.

- ✖ First, stand up. Then, push your chair under the table.
- ✖ First, open your book. Then turn to the next page.
- ✖ First, go to the calendar. Then, show me a sunny day.
- ✖ First, walk to the globe. Then, point to the water.

Step 5. Selection of a rubric....

A standards-referenced checklist

| STUDENT | ESL Standard 1 | ESL Standard 2 | ESL Standard 3 | ESL Standard 4 | ESL Standard 5 |
|---------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Maria | 1-21-10 | | | | |
| Amir | 1-12-10 | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

or a standards-referenced rating scale by language domain

Quarter _____ Language Domain: Listening

At the given level of English language proficiency, there is:

| STUDENT | Level of English Language Proficiency | Inconsistent demonstration in all ELP standards | Consistent demonstration in ESL standard 1 | Consistent demonstration in multiple ESL standards | Consistent demonstration in all ESL standards |
|---------|--|---|---|---|--|
| Maria | 2 | | | | |
| Amir | 3 | | | | |
| | | | | | |

Step 6. Interpretation of student behavior.

Use dated observations and video clips, coupled with the checklist, as evidence for listening comprehension

Use of Information:

Monitor students' progress in listening comprehension

Contribute to student report cards

Share results with family members

BUILDING BLOCKS FOR **COMMON** ASSESSMENT

V. MAINTAINENCE
PHASE

IV. INSPECTION PHASE

III. CONSTRUCTION PHASE

II. DESIGN PHASE

I. PLANNING PHASE

‘High achievement always takes place
in the framework of high expectations.’

....Charles F. Kettering

