

## Answers to Exercise 5.1

**Record Keeping in the Four Approaches**

1. *While using approach 1, a particular student exhibits the following pattern of formative scores for a particular learning goal: 2.0, 2.5, 3.0, 3.5, and 2.5. Describe how you would determine the student's summative score. Make sure to explain your reasoning.*

Because this pattern of scores does not show a smooth upward trend, a teacher might reasonably sit down with the student and ask him or her about the variations and which score value he or she feels is appropriate. To provide evidence for the suggested summative score, the student might be asked to engage in a probing discussion and/or propose a student-generated assessment.

2. *Explain why the 100-point scale can be used with approach 3 but not with approach 1 or 2.*

In approach 3, assessments focus on one level of content only—score 2.0, 3.0, or 4.0 content. Thus, the problem of different weights being applied to items that address different levels of content is alleviated, at least in part. As long as the teacher designs an assessment with a defined cut point or cut score that represents mastery of the content, the 100-point scale can be applied. If students' scores are higher than the cut point, the teacher can infer that the students have mastered the level of content (score 2.0, 3.0, or 4.0 content) for which the test was designed.

In approaches 1 and 2, assessments will typically address all levels of the scale. As illustrated in the section in chapter 3 titled "The 100-Point Scale," when an assessment includes items at different levels of complexity regarding the scale content, the 100-point scale cannot appropriately reflect those differences.

3. *Explain why it is not a good idea to automatically use the last score in a set of formative scores as the summative score, even if the final score comes from a final examination.*

Using the last score in a set of formative scores as the summative score ignores the inaccuracy inherent in any single assessment. Even if the final score comes from a final examination, error will still be present. The best way to eliminate or diminish error is to gather as much data from as many assessments as necessary to make a reasoned judgment about a student's true score.

4. *Explain why it is inappropriate to enter a score of 0 if a student misses an assessment or does not complete an assignment.*

A student can be assigned a score of 0 only if he or she demonstrates no knowledge of a goal even with help from the teacher. In this case, a 0 would represent the student's true status. Missing or incomplete assignments are not evidence of knowledge or skill (or lack thereof), and so should not be treated as such.