

Running Head: TWO-STEP TEST FOR GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION

Two-Step Test for Graphic Representation  
of Collaborative Action Research Project

Elizabeth Alvarado, Kimberly Luksa, and Rocklin Harvey

Walden University

## Two-Step Test for Graphic Representation of Collaborative Action Research Project

Dr. Richard Sagor, in both his video series (2005) and text (2000), provides a detailed description of a process he terms “*the Two-Step Test* (p. 69-72).” During the formulation of a problem statement through which to focus a collaborative action research project, one needs to limit the depth of investigation. Through collaborative interview, brainstorming, and eventually constructing a graphic representation of the area under consideration for research, many ideas surface that could potentially restrict the effectiveness of one’s study. The *Two-Step Test* (1) “makes the research process manageable in scope,” and (2) “provides focuses for the (research) inquiry (p.72).”

We set out to determine whether one diagnostic tool could be used in all Northside Independent School District (NISD) secondary schools’ Local Curriculum (LC) Math programs to determine initial student placement and on-going progress. A number of questions immediately became apparent. Some concerns were relatively obvious, others somewhat obscure. Dr. Sagor suggests using “*Post-it Notes*” (p.65) to arrange data while constructing a graphic representation of ideas for research. We opted to organize our thoughts using *Inspiration* (Version 7.6, 2005) software. Due to work schedules and personal commitments, we are seldom able to meet in person for collaboration and information sharing. Telephone conferencing and e-mail allows us to exchange significant amounts of information, and *Inspiration* helps us keep key concepts organized.

From the beginning, we realized that the scope of our potential research could easily balloon without putting limiting factors into place. As ideas plastered the *Inspiration* page, we began changing the shapes of some ideas from circles to squares and clouds. Then we added rectangles, stars, and a few other distinctive shapes. When the page was full, we moved the

shapes around in an effort to organize the data into cohesive concepts. Finally, the *Two-Step Test* was applied. The following charts depict the evolution from initial patchwork quilt array to a more comprehensive attempt towards organized chaos. Figure 4 shows the three key areas on which our research is based.

Figure 1. Initial Ideas Deemed Important for Research

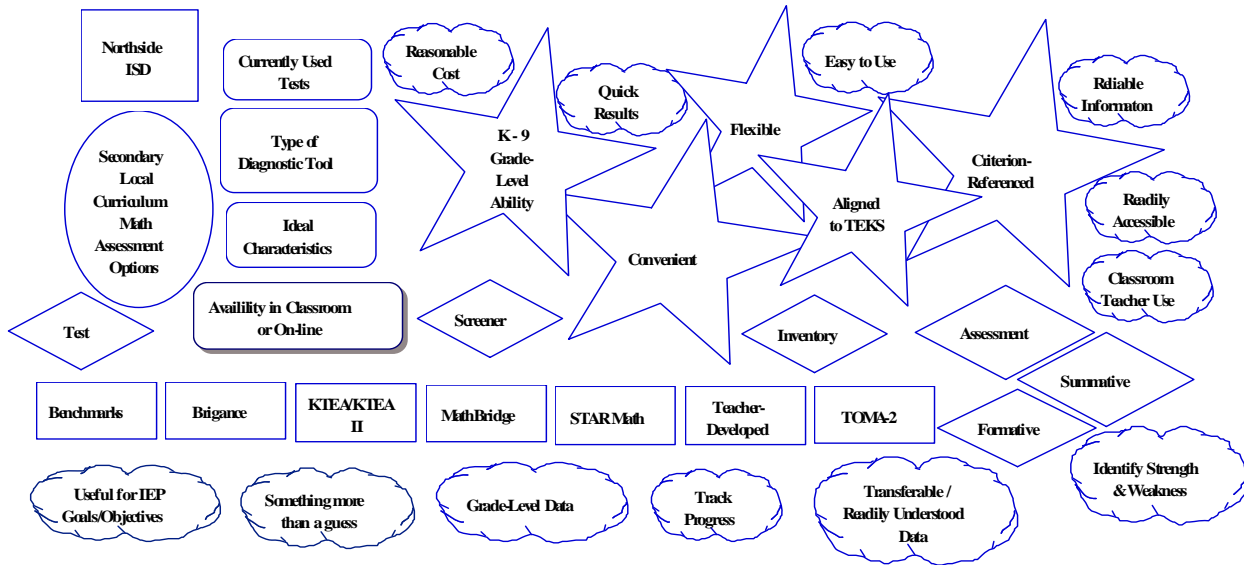


Figure 2. Key Concepts for Collaborative Research Project

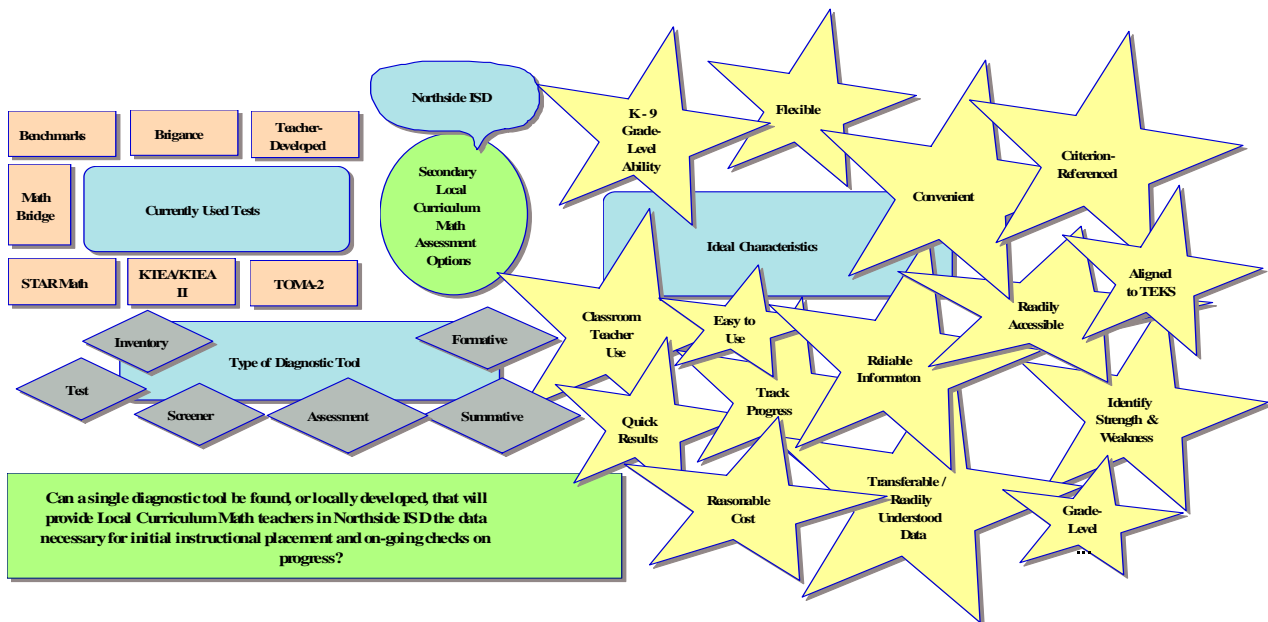


Figure 3. Data Relevant to Collaborative Action Research.

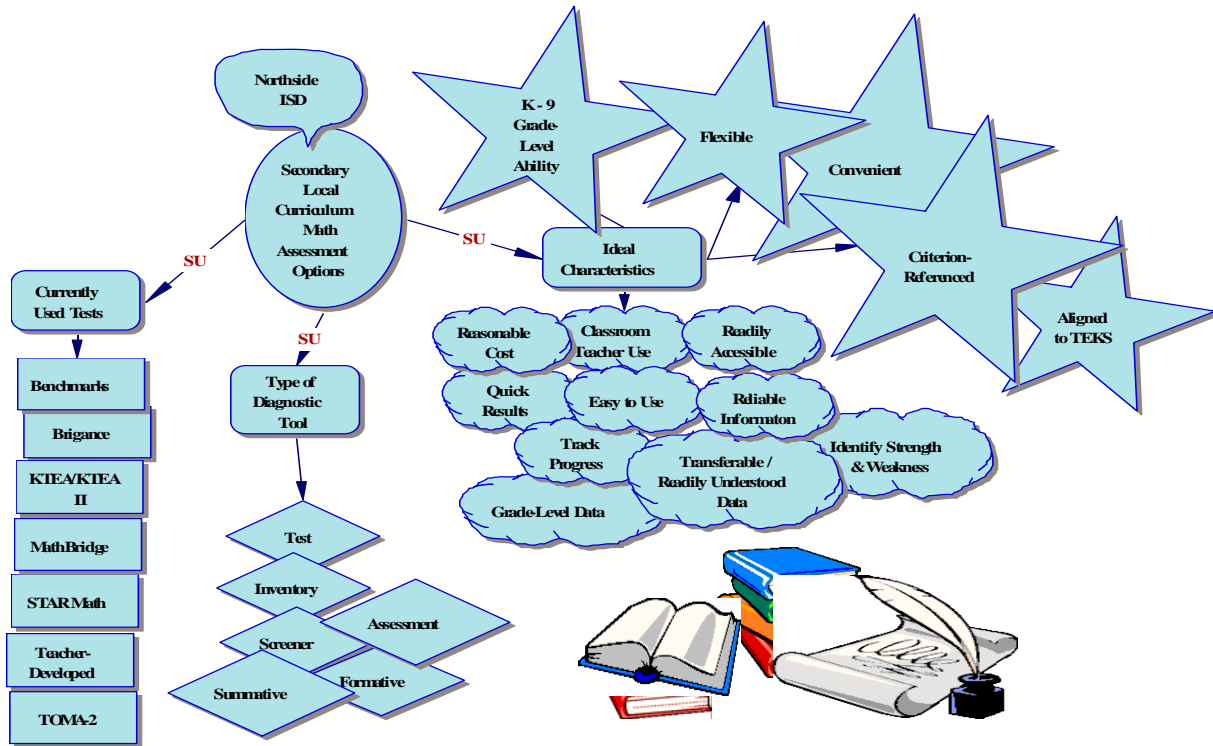
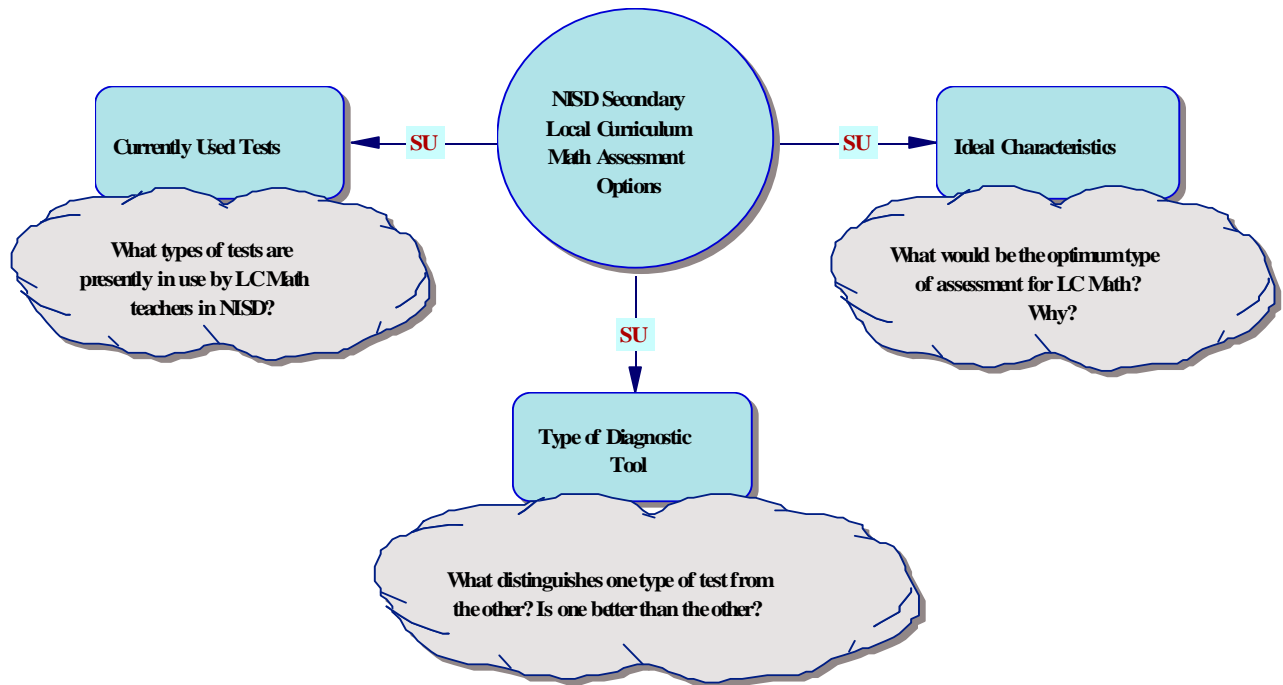


Figure 4. Key Concepts Fitting *The Two-Step Test* for Significance and Uncertainty



The focus of our research into whether an assessment tool currently exists that can be used for Local Curriculum Math classes at all levels within the Northside ISD school system will center around the three ideas depicted in Figure 4. We feel it is important to know what tests are currently in use, what distinguishes one type of assessment from another, and what would be the distinguishing characteristics of such a test. Some answers have already been determined through initial research. As we sort through the data, however, we find that further research is needed to resolve these key issues.

Resources

Laureate Education, Inc. (Executive Producer). (2005). *Problem formulation, part two*. Presentation software video program three: Dr. R. Sagor. Los Angeles: Author.

Sagor, R. (2000). *How to conduct collaborative action research*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.