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11. How is the grading practice changing in elementary schools?

The new trend for elementary schools is to not use the traditional grading system because it does not actively represent young students' capabilities and achievement level well enough. The new form of assessment is to informally grade on a daily basis the overall achievement level of the students. One of the biggest questions that is asked is how are music teachers supposed to prepare their elementary students on the standards-based assessment? Some of the tools that are used to grade elementary students are rubrics and checklists for quick assessments of skills. Teachers can also grade participation when choir is a separate class. They are not given regular letter grades, because justifying their grade at their young age is hard to do, and not necessary. Instead the grades of O= Outstanding, S= Satisfactory, and U=Unsatisfactory are used. It is also advised to use informal tests, given in small or large groups. Since the main goal of a music educator is to teach all students to sing, have these young students sing in front of their peers or just in front of the teacher, then have them sit right back down, is a highly recommended thing. This gets the students used to singing in front of the teacher and peers, and makes it seem like a normal thing. Elementary music teachers have to change the way they grade to fit the age of their students, and know their capability levels. By using these many strategies, teachers will be successful in grading students quickly and giving them grades that reflect their overall achievement at this young age.