

About learning outcomes

Part 4

Assessing outcomes

Session outcomes

- Participants can:

- identify relevant criteria for assessment tasks
- match assessment tasks with outcomes

Assessing outcomes

In an outcomes based curriculum assessment;

- is a learning opportunity and used to inform future learning (assessment for learning)
- is criteria referenced
- measures how well the student achieved against the outcome (assessment of learning)

Activity 10

A secondary Design and Technology teacher told his/her Grade 9 students that their main assessment task for the term was a **research assignment**. The topic for the assignment was **Houses**.

- *Billy – copied three pages of notes from a book in the library about architecture*
- *Kala – wrote a long poem about her house*
- *Seri – made a model of a coastal house*
- *Kopi – drew pictures of three different houses*

Activity 10 (continued)

Think – pair – share

Consider the following questions and share your responses with a partner

1. Who would you give the best mark?
Why?
2. Can you see any problems with this assessment task?

Activity 10 - problems

- The topic is not clearly defined – what were the students supposed to learn or find out – OUTCOME?
- The teacher may have wanted the students to learn about
 - how houses are constructed
 - styles of houses in different countries
 - houses that suit the environmentbut the teacher did not tell the students what was required.

Assessment criteria

- Assessment tasks must have clear guidelines and instructions. These help students meet the outcome and help the teacher when marking.
- Assessment criteria are statements that are used to judge the quality of student performance. They are the standards or conditions set to demonstrate what has been achieved.

Assessment task – Research assignment

Outcome: Students can identify and describe characteristics of houses in different parts of the world

Use your text book, library resources and your own observations to describe the characteristics (size, materials, structure) of three different types of PNG houses. Your project should include coloured, labelled diagrams and should be no more than three pages.

Assessment criteria

The teacher is looking for

- Use of different resources
- Clear description of characteristics
- Comparison of different houses
- Use of appropriate diagrams
- Specific number of items
- Set size for assignment

and the students know what they must do.

Activity 11

Think – pair – share

Pair up with a different partner to discuss the following questions.

1. What would the teacher have to consider when deciding how to mark the task?
2. Did the task assess the learning outcome? (Students can identify and describe characteristics of houses in different parts of the world)

Linking learning outcomes to assessment

- The assessment methods and related tasks must be closely linked to the unit learning outcomes and topics, and the skills and knowledge being taught.

Activity 12

Topic:	Basketball
Outcome:	Students can play basketball
Strategies:	Copy rules of game, draw and label court, play basketball
Assessment:	Multiple choice test

1. Is this assessment task appropriate? Why?
2. What other methods and/or tasks could be used to assess this outcome?

Activity 13

- In small groups, develop a task to assess student achievement of the following learning outcome
- Write clear instructions for students and list 4-5 criteria which you will use to mark the task
- Display your task for the whole group to consider later in the session

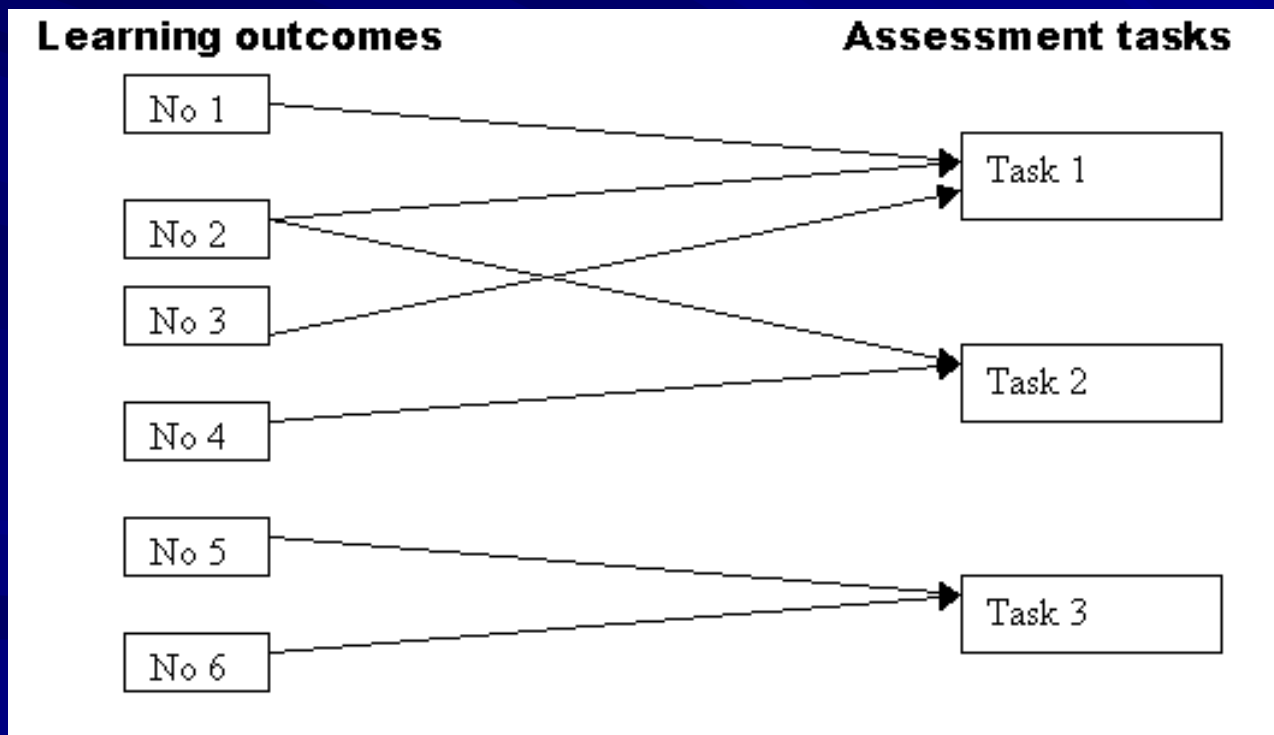
Linking learning outcomes to assessment

- Each outcome must be assessed.
- This does not mean that you need the same number of assessment tasks as learning outcomes – for example, the one assessment task may measure the level of attainment of a number of related learning outcomes.

Linking learning outcomes to assessment

- Teachers can construct a simple table to map the links between learning outcomes and assessment tasks. This may not only reveal where they might be under assessing, but also highlight where they may be over assessing a particular learning outcome.

Linking learning outcomes to assessment



Developing independent learners

The practice of formative assessment must be closely integrated with curriculum and pedagogy and is central to good quality teaching

- Formative assessment has been described as: “**assessment for learning**”. It helps teachers and students identify strengths and weaknesses and plan for improvement learning
- Summative assessment has been described as: “**assessment of learning**”. It is for review, transfer, and certification and for accountability to the public

Planning for assessment

When teachers plan to assess, whether formally or informally, formatively or summatively, these are just some of the questions that need to be considered.

- which outcome(s) will this task assess?
- is the task appropriate for the outcome(s)?
- does the task enable all students to demonstrate their learning?
- does the task allow the students to demonstrate what's required?

Planning for assessment

- are the instructions clear and precise?
- is the task big enough to allow students to demonstrate what's required?
- have you set criteria for assessing the task? Can they be applied consistently?
- do the criteria reflect how important the different aspects of the task are?

Activity 14

- Study two or three of the sample assessment tasks developed for Activity 13.
- Do the tasks meet the ‘planning for assessment’ criteria listed on the previous two slides?

Part 5

What is outcomes-based education?

As a result of completing this session, you can

- Identify and discuss the principles of outcomes-based education
- Compare traditional and OBE practices

Outcome-Based Education (OBE)

“Outcome-based education means clearly focusing and organizing everything in an educational system around what is essential for all students to be able to do successfully at the end of their learning experiences.....

OBE (continued)

This means starting with a clear picture of what is important for students to be able to do, then organizing the curriculum, instruction, and assessment to make sure this learning actually happens.” (Spady, 1994:p.1)

Practices of Outcomes-based education (OBE)

1. Clear goals
2. Standards-referenced
3. Learning for all
4. Designing down

1. Clear goals

Teaching and learning is more focussed towards those aspects identified as essential through identified outcomes.

Clear goals ... (continued)

- OBE helps teachers to ask questions such as:
 - Why am I doing this? Why these outcomes? Why these skills?
 - Is this worth doing this way?
 - Is this the best learning activity in terms of meeting the desired outcomes?
 - What content is the most appropriate to help students achieve the outcomes?

2. Standards Referenced

- Students are placed on a continuum of progress against the learning outcome
- Student comparisons are made against the progress towards the achievement of the outcome (criteria–referenced)
- Students demonstrate learning in a variety of contexts, not just one
- Students are assessed against criteria set for assessment tasks
- Comparisons between students (norm referencing) is still possible for selection purposes.

3. Learning for all

1. Every student can learn and succeed...given sufficient time, materials and appropriate methods.
2. Success breeds success...students who experience success are more likely to successfully pursue a task at the next level of difficulty.
3. Teachers control the conditions of success ... by adjusting their practices to enable students to achieve success in desired learning experiences.

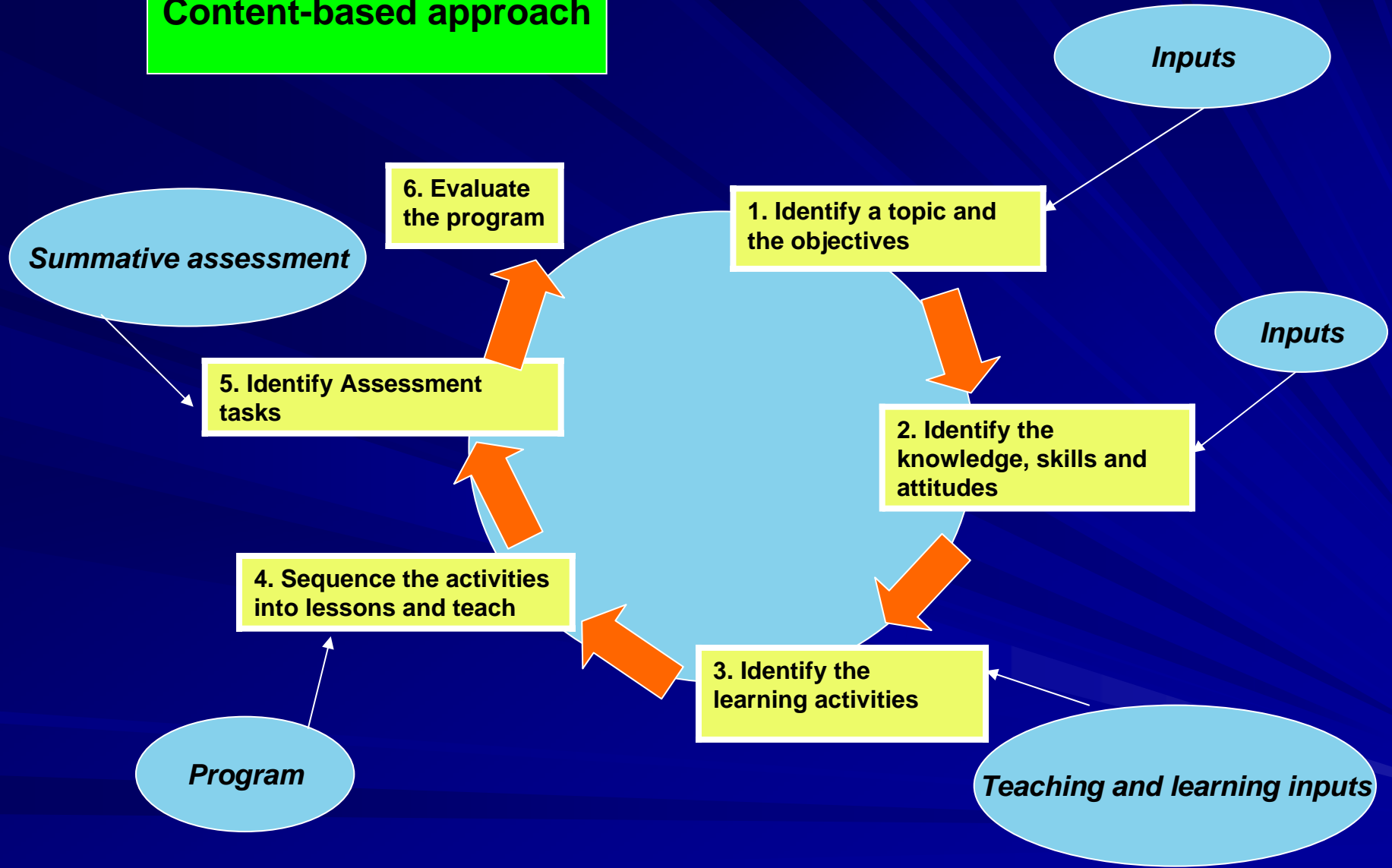
4. Designing down

Units and lessons are designed down from where we want the students to end up – i.e., starting with the end point (outcome) - **the destination** and then determining the teaching/assessment program - **routes to get there**

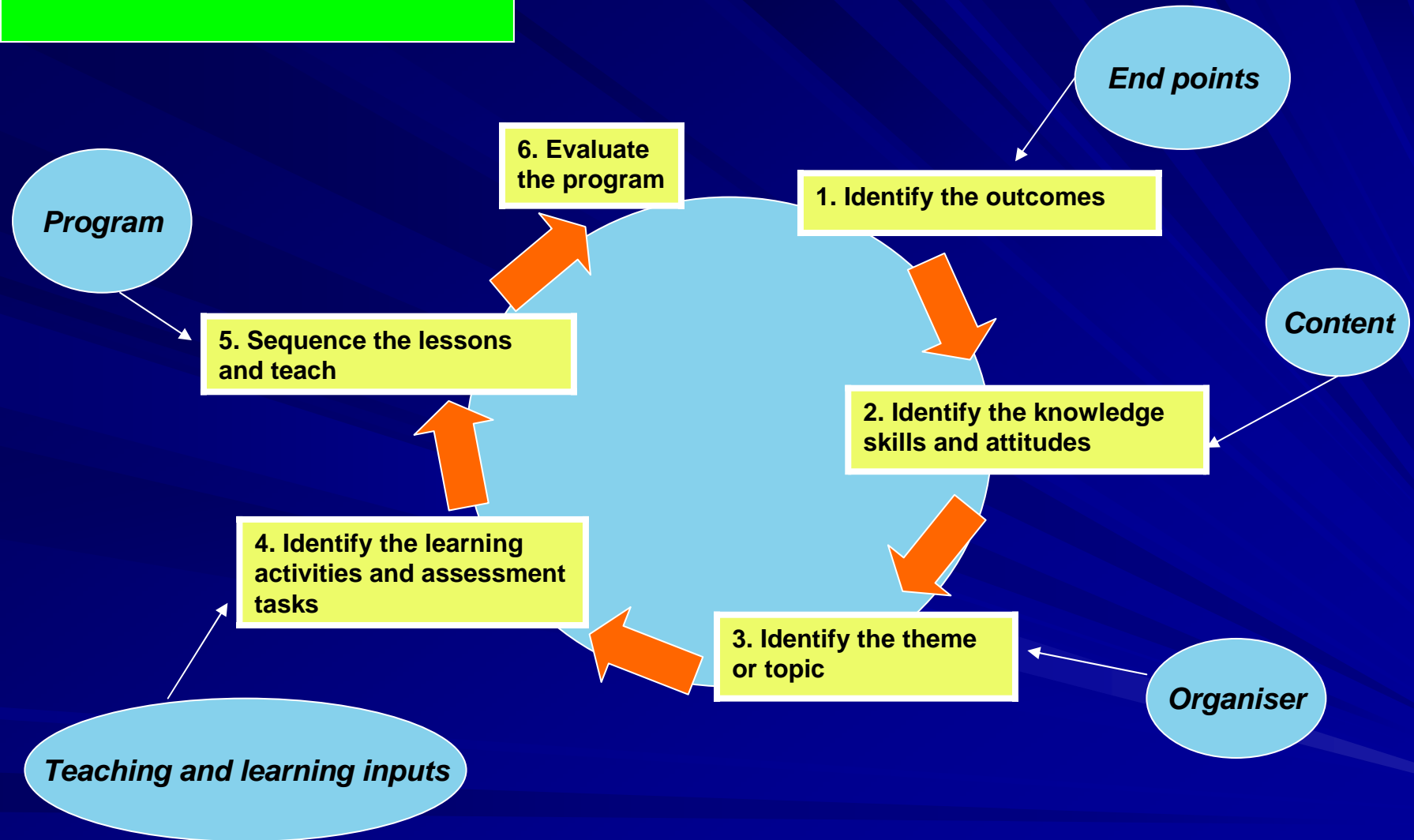
Why outcomes-based education?

- A shift from education as a process which focuses on the inputs of teaching (content) to what students have learned - the outputs (activities) or results of learning
- Accountability in terms of student outcomes rather than in terms of hours of instruction, buildings, equipment or support services

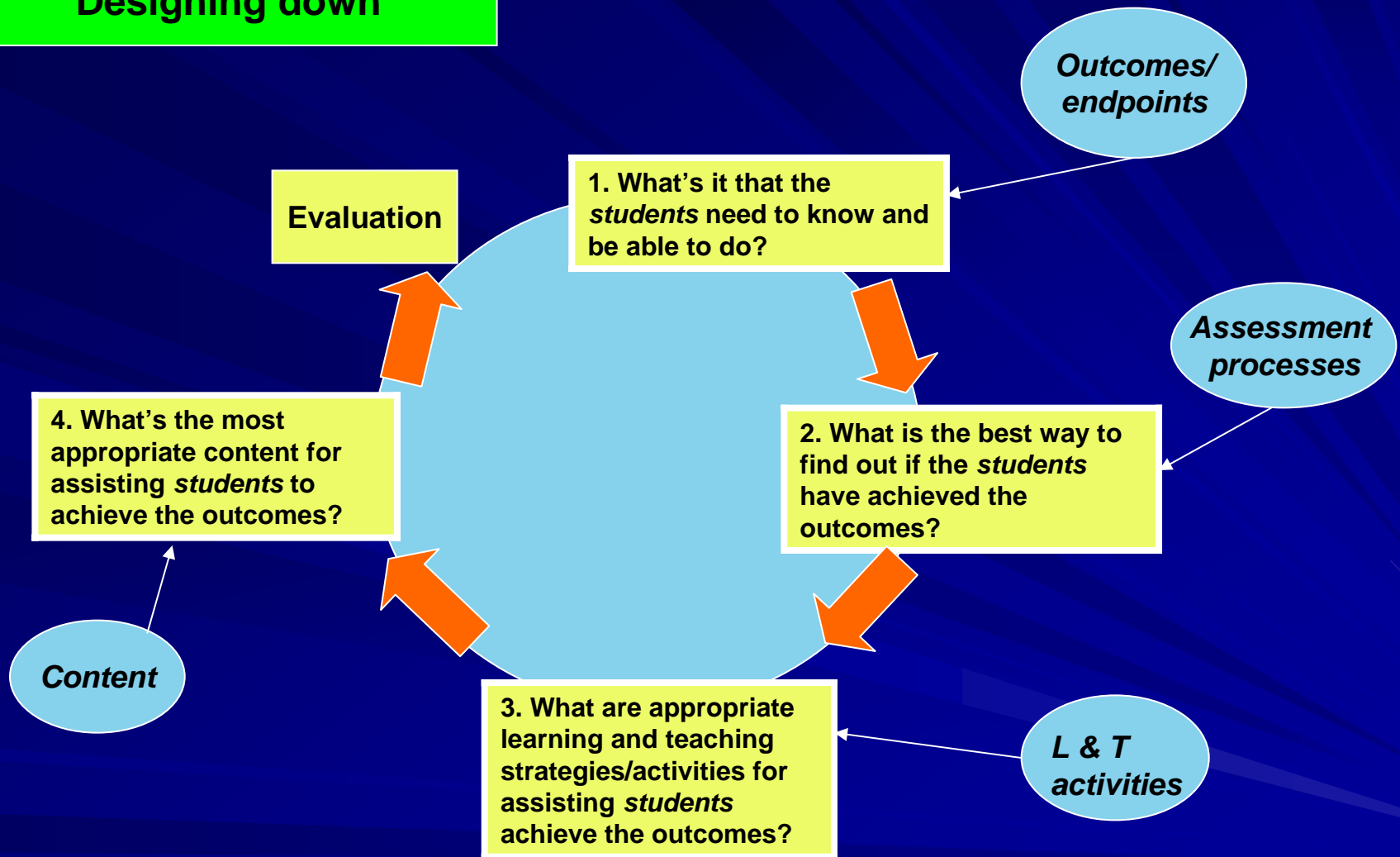
Content-based approach



Outcomes-based approach



Outcomes-based approach Designing down



Activity 15

Re-consider the responses you gave to the questions in Activity 1, Part 1

- Were your answers consistent with what was presented?
- Make any necessary changes to your answers.

The challenge

- If we adopt the practices of OBE:

1. Clear goals
2. Standards referenced
3. Learning for all
4. Designing down

And

- We re-think the role of assessment in our teaching

THEN

- The standard of education and the performance of students at all levels will increase significantly

Research evidence: www.assessment-reform-group.org.uk