Diagnostic, Formative, & Summative Assessments

Purposes and Differences

Diagnostic Assessment

- Assessment at either:
  - the beginning of a school year *or*
  - a new unit
- Provides the teacher with information about what students already know and are able to do
- Completed **BEFORE** teaching

Formative Assessment

- Monitoring student progress
- Includes feedback
- Includes opportunities for students to use feedback and make improvements
- Student performance on formative assessments should **not** be used for grading purposes
- Examples: homework, ungraded quizzes, ungraded classroom assignments
- Completed **DURING** instruction

Summative Assessment

- A summing up of what students have learned
- Examples: exams, projects, papers
- Summative assessments are graded
- Completed **AFTER** instruction