Nurse Educator Assessment

In order to better prepare students for clinical practice, clinical reasoning must be embraced as a transformational paradigm shift in your program. This assessment tool will help you identify your strengths as well as your current weaknesses or challenges that need to be addressed in order to strengthen student learning.

There are five sequential steps in your journey to see this transformational vision realized.
These steps are:

- Step 1: Transforming the EDUCATOR
- Step 2: Transforming the CONTENT
- Step 3: Transforming the CLASSROOM
- Step 4: Transforming the CLINICAL
- Step 5: Transforming the PROFESSION

To get started on your journey answer each question below. Review the directions at the end to help you take the NEXT step to help bring transformational change that will help your students think like a nurse so they are better prepared for real-world clinical practice!

Step 1: Transforming the EDUCATOR

1. **Yes** **No** Is teaching a personal passion of yours?
2. **Yes** **No** Do you enjoy serving others, including your students?
3. **Yes** **No** If you are a new educator, do you have a mentor who you meet with regularly and who is available to guide you?
4. **Yes** **No** Have you developed a personal mission or vision statement to define what you want to accomplish and achieve as an educator?
5. **Yes** **No** Do you create "margin" in your life to bring balance and relieve stress to avoid the "tyranny of the urgent?"
6. **Yes** **No** Do you have clearly established boundaries between work and your personal life to prevent job creep?
7. **Yes** **No** Have you used reflection to determine if you are experiencing any stage of burnout that affects your effectiveness as an educator?
8. **Yes** **No** Do you have unrealistic expectations of students or colleagues that steal your joy?
9. **Yes** **No** Do you address conflict or disagreement with other colleagues directly?

TOTAL: YES_____NO _____

Step 2: Transforming the CONTENT
Teaching the "art"

1. **Yes** **No** Do you teach students the totality of nursing history and WHY caring and compassion is foundational to professional nursing practice?
2. **Yes** **No** Do you ask questions in clinical that incorporate caring behaviors/interventions that students are expected to reflect upon?
3. **Yes** **No** Do you teach students the importance of touch and use of presence to communicate caring?
4. **Yes** **No** Do you teach students how to provide spiritual care and use specific questions to perform a spiritual assessment?

Teaching the applied sciences

1. **Yes** **No** Do you consistently review pathophysiology in your classroom content lectures?
2. **Yes** **No** Do you identify the MOST important medications that need to be mastered in your classroom or clinical setting?
3. **Yes** **No** Do you expect your students to communicate the mechanism of action of the most important medications in their own words?
4. **Yes** **No** Do you identify the most important specific labs that need to be mastered in your classroom or clinical setting?
5. **Yes** **No** Do you expect your students to identify the physiology or clinical significance of the most important specific labs?
6. **Yes** **No** Do you teach your students to identify essential nursing assessments for abnormal relevant labs?
7. **Yes** **No** Does your program assign levels to the essential content of specific medications and lab values that are most important throughout the curriculum?

TOTAL: YES_____NO _____

Teaching the thinking

1. **Yes** **No** Do you allow students to use other language besides NANDA-I to establish a nursing care priority?
2. **Yes** **No** Do you teach your students how to identify clinical patterns or relationships of clinical data?
3. **Yes** **No** Do your students have a clear understanding/definition of clinical reasoning? Are they able to apply clinical reasoning to their practice?
4. **Yes** **No** Do your students know the "five rights" of clinical reasoning that are needed to think more like a nurse?
5. **Yes** **No** Do you break down clinical reasoning step-by-step so that students have a predictable template to use and ensure that they think more like a nurse?
6. **Yes** **No** Do you expect your students to state in their own words the pathophysiology of the primary problem of each patient in their care?
7. **Yes** **No** Does your clinical paperwork expect students to identify relevant clinical data that needs to be trended to determine the trajectory of patient status?
8. **Yes** **No** Do you teach your students focused physical assessment and the need to identify specific body systems that are a priority based on the patient's primary problem?
9. **Yes** **No** Do you expect your students to identify the worst possible or most likely complication to anticipate in the clinical setting?
10. **Yes** **No** Do you expect your students to identify early physical assessment findings of possible complications and resultant nursing interventions if a patient undergoes a change in status?
11. **Yes** **No** Do you review the primary care provider's note and the rationale for any new orders with each student each time in the clinical setting?
12. **Yes** **No** Does your clinical paperwork require students to identify educational priorities with each patient in their care?

TOTAL: YES_____NO _____

Step 3: Transforming the CLASSROOM

1. **Yes** **No** Do you begin each classroom lecture with a relevant story?
2. **Yes** **No** Do you intentionally filter the content (textbook readings, etc.) that you teach and identify specific components that are need to know versus nice to know?
3. **Yes** **No** Do you incorporate a consistent structure or template to identify the most important components of your content so that students acquire a deep learning of the subject?
4. **Yes** **No** Do you have a working understanding of the most important learning theories (adult, cognitive, novice to expert, etc.) and do you incorporate this knowledge into your teaching practice?
5. **Yes** **No** Do you lecture the majority of your classroom time?
6. **Yes** **No** If you lecture in class do you limit your content presentation to no more than 20 to 25 minutes?
7. **Yes** **No** Do you consistently use case studies or other types of active learning each time you teach in the classroom?
8. **Yes** **No** Do you have students create their own case studies as an active learning exercise to create knowledge?
9. **Yes** **No** Do you create your own case studies to present in class based on scenarios that you have seen in clinical practice?
10. **Yes** **No** Do you utilize case studies that emphasize clinical reasoning vs. content application?
11. **Yes** **No** Do you expect your students to come to class prepared by having read the textbook and having worked through other forms of active learning as a "ticket" to class?
12. **Yes** **No** Have you identified specific fears or barriers that hold you back from implementing transformational change in your classroom?
13. **Yes** **No** Does your department leadership support the use of active learning in the classroom even if students resist and are not satisfied with this approach?
14. **Yes** **No** Have you communicated to your students why active learning will better prepare them for clinical practice?

TOTAL: YES_____NO _____

Step 4: Transforming the CLINICAL

1. **Yes** **No** Do you utilize personal reflection questions early in the nursing program to determine personal weaknesses/strengths for each student?
2. **Yes** **No** Do you utilize a caring theory to teach the relevance and importance of caring to nursing practice in the clinical setting?
3. **Yes** **No** Do you identify specific professional behaviors that students are held to in the clinical setting?
4. **Yes** **No** Do you have your students write a personal mission statement that defines and describes what they want to be and accomplish as a professional nurse?
5. **Yes** **No** Do you identify the specific and most important content that students must use in your specific clinical setting? This includes medications, lab values, most common illnesses, common complications, and nursing skills.
6. **Yes** **No** Do you have a working understanding of Benner's novice-to-expert theory of how students progress and develop as nurses?
7. **Yes** **No** Do you have a clear definition of what constitutes safe and unsafe nursing practice that students are held accountable to?
8. **Yes** **No** Do you evaluate emotional patient safety by dialoguing with each patient and the primary nurse each clinical day?
9. **Yes** **No** Have you identified any assumptions you may have toward students that may influence your evaluation?
10. **Yes** **No** Do you communicate and create a culture of feedback so that students expect both affirming as well as constructive feedback?
11. **Yes** **No** Do you incorporate a brief preconference before students assume care on the floor?
12. **Yes** **No** Do you ask questions of each student throughout the clinical to develop the thinking that is required for practice?

13. **Yes   No**   Do you utilize specific tools and supplemental worksheets that develop the nurse thinking skill of clinical reasoning in the clinical setting?
14. **Yes   No**   Have you reviewed the clinical paperwork to ensure that it is concise, relevant, and need to know to strengthen student learning?
15. **Yes   No**   Do you encourage reflection and development of clinical judgment through journaling?
16. **Yes   No**   Do you emphasize student reflection on practice in post conference and make this a safe space to honestly reflect?

TOTAL: YES_____NO _____

Step 5: Transforming the PROFESSION

1. **Yes   No**   Do you teach students about incivility and bullying in the clinical setting so students are able to recognize when it is instigated by other nurses?
2. **Yes   No**   Do you teach students how to respond directly and respectfully to incivility in the nursing profession using cognitive rehearsal?
3. **Yes   No**   Do you define uncivil behaviors that occur in the classroom and enforce a zero-tolerance policy?
4. **Yes   No**   Do you or your colleagues demonstrate any uncivil behavior toward students that may create a dance of incivility and disrespect?
5. **Yes   No**   Is a culture of incivility and bullying present in your nursing department?
6. **Yes   No**   Do you need to forgive or offer forgiveness to a colleague in your department to bring healing to a broken relationship?
7. **Yes   No**   Do you communicate to your students the value and significance of what a professional nurse provides to health care?
8. **Yes   No**   Do you communicate to students how nurses can make a lasting difference not only on what they do but in the spirit that they do it?
9. **Yes   No**   Do you have a sense of urgency to bring about needed change?

TOTAL: YES_____NO _____

How did you do?

Every YES response is a current strength. Well done and keep doing what you're doing! Look at each individual topic, and each section as a whole. What sections overall were a strength?

Every NO response is a current struggle or challenge. What specific areas and categories are you struggling with? Make it a priority to address challenges to strengthen student learning.

Use the same standard that you apply to your students…80% or greater is passing, but don't settle. Adopt the motto of the Home Depot and "never stop improving"!

As you look at each step that requires transformation, which areas had the greatest number of no responses?

This is your current pain point that needs to be addressed ASAP.

As you review your responses, are you encouraged or overwhelmed?

If you identified areas that need to change, help is available, but you need to be willing to take the next step…

Next Steps

Nothing will change unless something changes. If you would like to take the next step to do things differently so that student learning is strengthened, I have a resource that can help you right now.

Are you ready to take the next step? I will be introducing an all-inclusive membership site shortly that will provide the tools as well as teaching to strengthen your practice as an educator.

Best yet, when you enroll in the membership you will get a FREE copy of these two books that can help better prepare your students for practice and the NCLEX!

## EDUCATOR resource! FREE with Think Like a Nurse Membership!
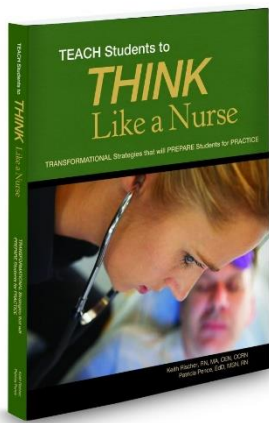
The framework for this assessment is derived from my new book for nurse educators TEACH Students to THINK Like a Nurse that provides practical strategies to bring about change and transformation in each of these five areas so that students are empowered to think like a nurse and be better prepared for practice.

Learn More:
TEACH Students to THINK Like a Nurse
KeithRN.com/teach

STUDENT Resource! FREE with Think Like a Nurse Membership!

There is a companion textbook for students titled THINK Like a Nurse: Practical Preparation for Professional Practice.
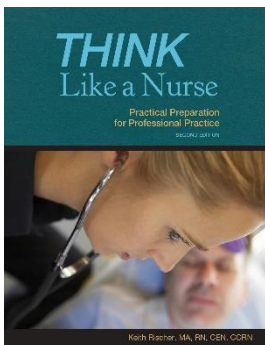
It emphasizes the importance of the art of nursing, identifies most important content that must be understood, how to apply clinical reasoning to the bedside, and practical strategies to successfully transition to real-world clinical practice.

It has been successfully adopted by programs across the country and has been endorsed by Dr. Patricia Benner.
Interested?

Learn More:
THINK Like a Nurse: Practical Preparation for Professional Practice
KeithRN.com/strengthen-student-transition