

## Anecdotal Observations

Taking notes on student behavior while students work on projects or other activities can reveal important information about students' content knowledge and 21st century skills. The following guidelines can ensure that useful and relevant information is collected:

- Set up a schedule to ensure each student is observed.
- Develop a record-keeping system that allows you to look at individual and group records. Technology, if available, can help with retrieval and organization.
- Keep observational notes brief, focused, and concrete.
- Record both student strengths and weaknesses.
- Refrain from drawing conclusions or making inferences in observational notes.
- Take notes under varied circumstances, such as time of day, subject, or type of activity.
- Develop your own shorthand to facilitate accurate note-taking.

Remember that taking notes is only the first half of the assessment process. Set aside time to analyze your notes in conjunction with other assessment information, and plan instruction based on what you learn.