

SHALLOW METRICS VS. DEEP MEASUREMENT

*When the value of depth is hard to measure, shallow behaviors go unchallenged.
Your gradebook is precise. That doesn't mean it's telling the truth.*

THE TEACHING DECISION

What does your gradebook actually tell you about a student's learning — and what does it hide?

CONVENTIONAL APPROACH

- Track points, percentages, and weighted averages
- Treat the overall grade as a meaningful summary of learning
- Use the same number to represent wildly different students
- Measure what's easy to quantify: completion, scores, participation
- Assume precision equals accuracy
- Spend time entering scores and generating reports (shallow work)

DEEP MEASUREMENT

- Track mastery by standard, not by aggregate score
- Distinguish between students who know 75% of everything vs. 100% of 75% of topics
- Measure growth over time, not just snapshots
- Identify specific gaps — what does each student still need?
- Apply the 80/20 rule: find the 20% of standards driving 80% of struggle
- Spend time analyzing understanding and adjusting instruction (deep work)

MONDAY MORNING ACTION

Do a Gradebook Audit. Print one student's grade report. Write "What the Gradebook Says" in one column and "What I Actually Know" in the other. The gap is the lie.

Based on **Deep Work** by Cal Newport

THE GRADEBOOK AUDIT

What the numbers say vs. what you actually know.

STUDENT NAME: _____

CLASS / PERIOD: _____

WHAT MY GRADEBOOK SAYS	WHAT I ACTUALLY KNOW
Overall grade: _____	What does this student truly understand?
Highest scoring unit/standard: _____	Strongest standard or skill: _____
Lowest scoring unit/standard: _____	Weakest standard or biggest gap: _____
Number of missing assignments: _____	Is this student improving? How do I know?
Trend: rising / flat / declining	What did they master this month?
Grade category breakdown: _____	What do they still need to learn next?
Participation / effort score: _____	What would change my instruction for this student?

THE GAP

Compare your two columns. What does the right column reveal that the left column completely misses? Write the biggest insight below.

Remember: The most precise-looking tool in your classroom might be the one telling you the least about actual learning. Precision is not accuracy. If your gradebook can't answer "What does this student need next?" — it's measuring the wrong thing.