

## **I have a dream about assessment**

**Roger Farr**

*The following is an adaptation of a speech that was delivered by Roger Farr at the 1995 International Reading Association Convention as part of his featured speaker address, but it can be applied to all content areas.*

I have a dream that assessment...

...will be accepted as a means to help teachers plan instruction rather than a contrivance to force teachers to jump through hoops;

...will be based on trust in a teacher's judgment as much as numbers on a page are trusted;

...will become a helpful means to guide children to identify their own literacy strengths rather than a means to conveniently label them;

...will support each child in becoming the best he or she can be rather than merely sort children into groups of the best and the worst;

...will emphasize what children can do rather than simply what they know.

And I have a dream that assessment will be put to use honoring what children can do rather than destroying them for what they can't do.

If we work together we can make such dreams a reality as we work to help each child.

*A past president of IRA, Farr directs the Center for Reading and Language Studies at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, USA.*