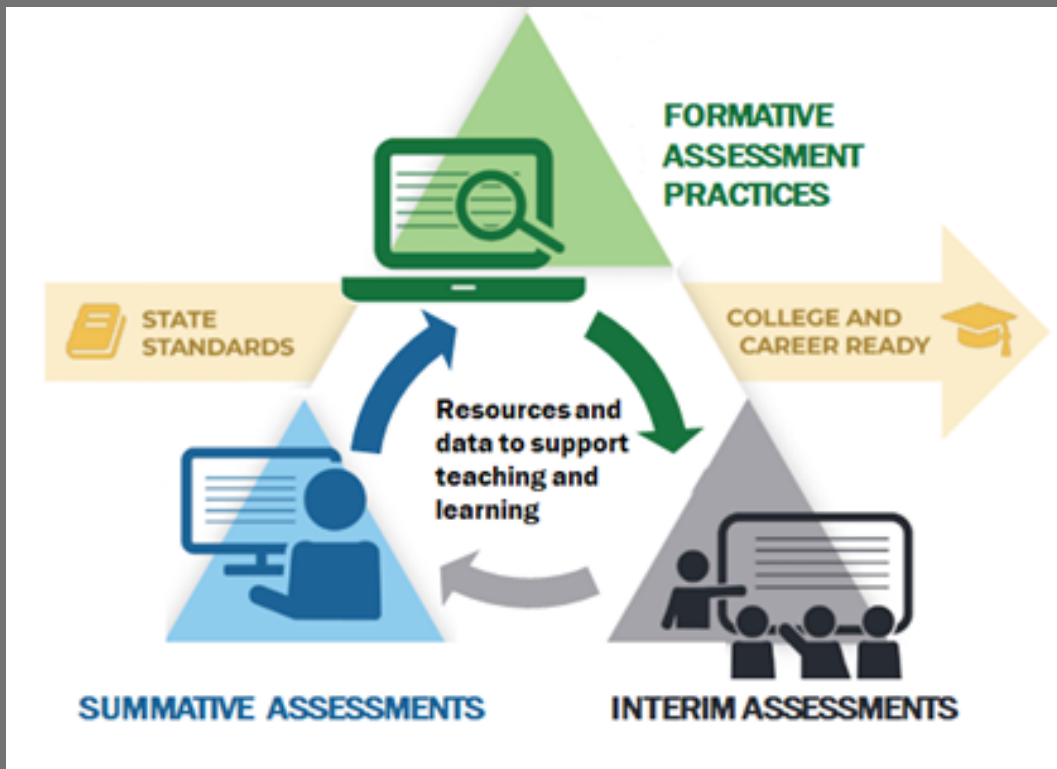# Formative Assessment

Supplement
The purpose of this document is to focus on meeting the academic needs of learners through the most critical formative assessment practices.

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Formative Assessment Practices: 2021 and Beyond

A Supplement to *Designing Learning for 2021-22:*
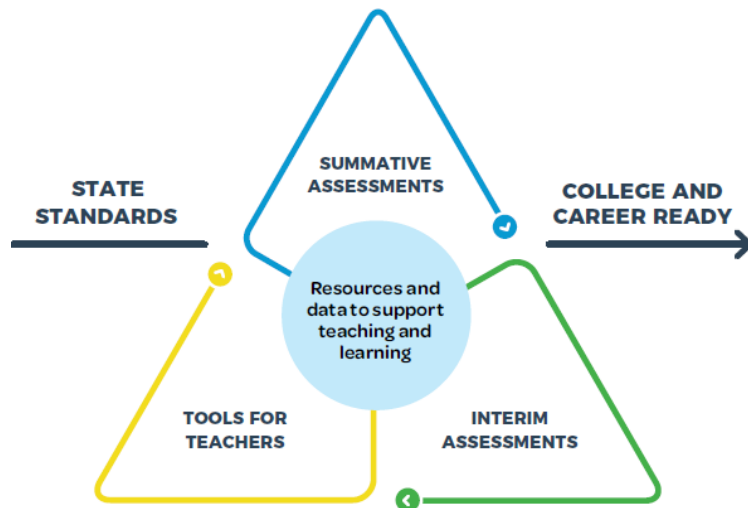***Content-Specific Considerations***

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Balanced Assessment System

Assessment literacy is the foundation required for successful communication around assessment. ODE published The Right Assessment for the Right Purpose to help formalize our assessment lexicon and leverage assessment types and practices for their intended purposes.

Figure 1: Balanced Assessment Systems

Formative assessment practices form the most critical component of a balanced assessment system, as they increase student learning and agency. Formative practices inform instruction on a daily basis, often in the moment. Interim assessments guide periodic reviews of learning and can be used to determine progress toward proficiency. Summative assessment results can be used annually to inform systems improvement efforts.

Overview

This collection of information and resources supports the Ready Schools, Safe Learners Resiliency Framework that was issued by the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) in Summer 2021. This document focuses on meeting the academic needs of learners through the most critical formative assessment practices.

Formative assessment is a critical component of a balanced assessment system that greatly impacts student achievement. Eliciting, interpreting, and using evidence as part of ongoing teaching and learning allows educators and students to make adjustments that move students from their current level of understanding to demonstrating intended learning outcomes.

Research-supported formative assessment is a robust learning *process*; this differs from simplified or packaged versions of formative assessment that feature small tests or quizzes, or isolated feedback strategies like "exit tickets" or "fist of five." Formative assessment may include such ingredients, but is a much more complex, multi-dimensional instructional cycle, founded in continuous improvement. Only the most critical dimensions of formative assessment are explained here; the OFAST course referenced below provides a more in-depth look at the full formative assessment process.

This document will help to:

- Define formative assessment and explain the benefits for students and educators;

- Describe key dimensions that comprise the formative assessment process; and
- Identify appropriate instructional responses to address the needs of all students.

ODE worked with WestEd to develop a comprehensive Canvas-based course on formative assessment called Oregon Formative Assessment for Students and Teachers (OFAST). For the purposes of this brief document, ODE recommends a clear focus on the following dimensions (with future efforts designed to develop formative assessment muscle and add the remaining dimensions to the course of instruction strategically over time):

- Collaborative culture of learning
- Clarify and share learning goals and success criteria
- Elicit evidence of student understanding
- Implement feedback practices that accelerate learning (descriptive, peer, and self-assessment)
- Determine what adjustments to instruction are needed

Defining Formative Assessment

ODE has adapted the Council of Chief State School Officers' 2018 formative assessment definition as follows: ***Formative assessment is a planned, ongoing process to elicit and use evidence of learning in order to improve student understanding of intended disciplinary outcomes.*** Formative assessment is not separate from--or in addition to--teaching and learning; rather, the formative assessment process is excellent teaching and has the intentional benefit of supporting students becoming self-directed learners.

Another helpful definition comes from Cowie and Bell (1999): "Formative assessment is...the process used by teachers and students to recognize and respond to student learning in order to enhance that learning, during the learning[1]."

Key Elements of Formative Assessment

- Involves **intentional planning**. The educator has a clear purpose for questions, tasks, and activities that align with the intended learning outcomes to elicit evidence of student understanding.
- Forms an **ongoing process**, not a one-time event that occurs at the end of learning. It is woven into daily instruction and supports the educator and they make adjustments to accelerate learning.
- **Evidence** is used by both students and educators as they work collaboratively as a community of learners. As students play a more active role in this process, they increase their agency, sharpening skills they will need to continue learning.
- Provides **descriptive and actionable feedback** that allows students and educators to make adjustments to improve achievement on the intended learning outcomes.

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[1] Bronwen Cowie & Beverly Bell (1999) A Model of Formative Assessment in Science Education, Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice, 6:1, 101-116, DOI: 10.1080/09695949993026

Benefits of Formative Assessment

- Helps center students as agents of their own learning in a social context, with educators designing a class environment and lessons that are conducive to accelerating learning (*see* Student Achievement Partners, TNPT).
- Involves students in active learning, keeping them engaged and in charge of meeting their learning goals.
- It helps students and educators to understand what done looks like so they have a clear idea of the intended learning and the indicators they will use to identify when the task is complete.
- Enables students to receive feedback on exactly what they need to do to improve and shows them what to do next to reach the intended learning outcomes.
- Provides educators with information to make immediate adjustments based on students' current level of understanding in relation to the intended learning outcomes.
- Provides educators with feedback to determine effectiveness of instruction.

Key Strategies to Support Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is a process of eliciting, interpreting, and using evidence about student learning while it is occurring. Ultimately, any question, task or activity should provide information to help learners answers three questions (Hattie and Timperley, 2007):

- Where am I going?
- Where am I now?
- Where to next?

The following four dimensions outline ODE's formative assessment feedback loop:

- **Setting the Stage: Collaborative culture of learning**
  - Establishing a supportive environment that attends to social-emotional needs of students, builds the trust and support needed for learning.
- **Dimension 1**: **Clarify**
  - Clarifying and sharing learning goals and success criteria.
- **Dimension 2**: **Elicit**
  - Eliciting evidence of student understanding.
- **Dimension 3: Interpret**
  - Feedback that accelerates learning (descriptive, peer, and self-assessment).
- **Dimension 4: Act**
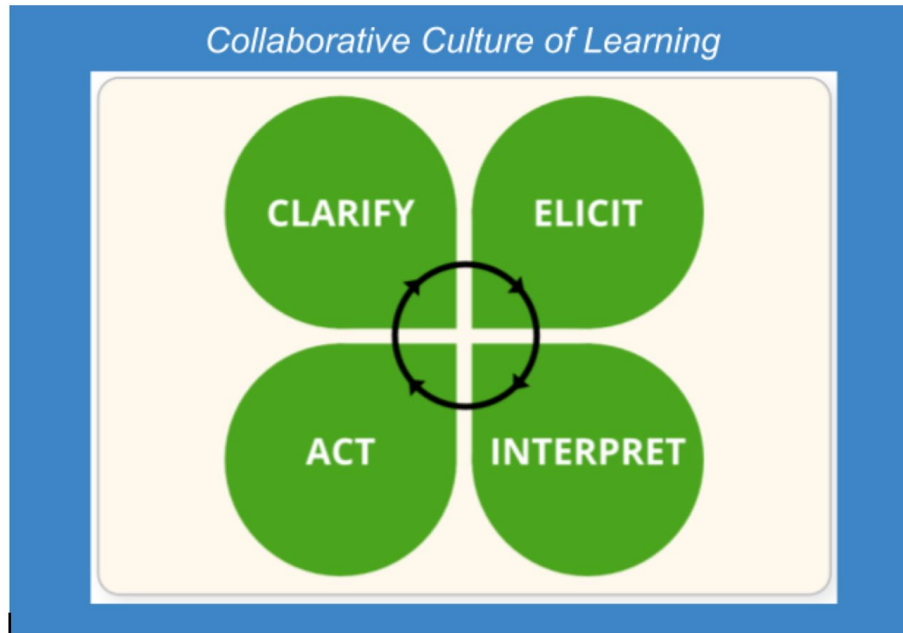 - Determine what adjustments to instruction are needed.

Figure 2: Formative Assessment Feedback Loop

[Oregon Formative Assessment Process Infographic PDF](#).
Please review the following [video](#) for additional background information on the formative assessment process, connected to the feedback loop identified in Figure 2 above. Note, a collaborative culture of learning is at the center of our formative assessment process.

Setting the Stage: A Collaborative Culture of Learning

Importance

A **Collaborative Culture of Learning** is essential to the formative assessment learning cycle. One of the hallmarks of this collaborative culture is that adults and children cultivate a growth mindset: a belief that one's basic qualities- such as personality, intellectual abilities, etc. – are malleable or incremental, not fixed, "carved in stone," or innate. Holders of a growth mindset believe that their intellectual abilities can be developed through effort and training. Consequently, they view "failure" as an opportunity to learn rather than as an indication of lack of ability. When a gap between intended and attained outcomes occurs, the response is not disappointment but eagerness to understand what learning can help us navigate the terrain.

Collaborative Culture of Learning

Schools whose educators view teaching as an opportunity for continual professional growth, and believe that all their students can learn and develop their skills using appropriate scaffolding, embrace a growth mindset. Likewise, principals who embrace a growth mindset prioritize organizational learning through collective inquiry into practice, and make it their mission to facilitate such learning so it becomes a habit within the school.

A collaborative culture of learning is characterized by shared responsibility, a spirit of inquiry, and a willingness to open one's practice for analysis and feedback where students are partners in the learning process. Effective educators identify ways they can work together to implement formative assessment practices and refine teaching techniques.

Effective distance learning relies on the formative assessment process for success because it helps educators and students identify where students are, where they need to be, and appropriate next steps. As educators begin work in formative assessment processes, educator practice may need to change. Students will likely also change how they engage with content and how they support their own learning. The development of a safe learning culture and feedback from both the students' educator and peers are critical elements for students learning. Formative assessment creates opportunities for students to become more fully engaged in and own their learning.

Whether students are engaged in remote or in-person learning, educators need ways to identify, monitor, and support student learning at various times while in separate spaces. Using formative assessment processes, educators and students can monitor and adjust learning together. The formative assessment process is essential for supporting effective distance learning. Educators provide actionable feedback to students about their learning with respect to Learning Goals and Success Criteria which often offers hints, suggestions, or cues that help students take the next steps in learning for themselves. Educators also model feedback strategies for peer-to-peer feedback and adjust teaching strategies to meet student needs.

Dimension 1: Clarify

Importance

The first step in the formative assessment process is to clarify the intended learning goals and success criteria. Before educators can assess where students are in their learning, before they can give meaningful feedback and before students can reflect on their own learning, educators must first be clear on where students are going and articulate the intended learning to the students (Wiliam & Leahy, 2015). Focus on what students will <u>learn</u>, not merely what they will <u>do</u> during a given project or activity.

Learning Goals and Success Criteria

As educators work together in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), they need to analyze the standards to identify what students must know and be able to do to meet the expectations of the

standards. This analysis helps educators determine the content, concepts and/or skills students must master on their way to meeting the full depth of a standard or group of standards.

To support educators in analyzing the standards, the PLC should utilize the *Oregon Academic Content Standards* (ODE) documents focusing on the critical components (see below for links). The purpose of the critical components found in each ODE document is to provide greater clarity in what the standards are specifically asking students to know and be able to do to meet the expectations of the standards.

Examples of the components include multidimensionality, clarifications, and progressions. For example, within the *ODE for Reading and Writing* document, the multidimensionality component highlights the three dimensions built within each standard: content, comprehension and analysis. By specifying the three dimensions separately, the standards document better communicates the intent of each standard so that local instruction and assessment will align to the intended depth.

The PLC should focus on examining each component and the connections between the components and the standards, as well as how those components can support educators in designing standards-aligned instruction, grade-level assignments and classroom assessments.

Based on this analysis, educators derive the **learning goals** and **success criteria** that will help ensure alignment between the grade-level standards, instruction, and assessment. The learning goals and success criteria guide educators as they design questions, tasks and activities that align to these learning outcomes.

Learning Goals
- Brief statement that describes clearly what students need to know, understand and be able to do by the end of the lesson or a series of lessons.
- Represent the "destination" of where students are going.
- Can focus on knowledge, skills and/or concepts and should be aligned to the grade-level standards.
- Focused, as mentioned above, on the intended learning, not a list of activities that students will do.
- Also referred to as learning intentions, targets, objectives or purpose.

Success Criteria
- Statements that describe the evidence students must produce to show they have achieved the learning goals.
- If learning goals are the destination; success criteria are the "road map" (remember, too, that there are many available routes and many available vehicles to travel to this destination).
- Act as major checkpoints along the way for educator and students to know how they are progressing.
- Specific, concrete and measurable.
- Used as the basis for educator feedback, peer feedback and student self-assessment.
- Are supported, when necessary, through modeling, exemplars or work samples.

Table 1 below provides a non-exhaustive list of example Learning Goals and Success Criteria to better help illustrate the relationship between these two concepts.

Table 1: Examples of Learning Goals and Success Criteria

Learning Goal	Success Criteria
We are learning about the importance of photosynthesis and cellular respiration	I can... ● explain how energy can be stored in food through chemical reactions. ● identify and explain how different parts of a plant gather materials needed for photosynthesis. ● create a model to show how plants use photosynthesis to make food they need for growth and energy. ● create a model to show how animals are able to gain energy from plants through cellular respiration. ● utilize a model (food web) to develop a scientific explanation as to how matter and energy move through an ecosystem.
We are learning to identify the central idea of a text.	I can... ● define the central idea. ● list key details in a text. ● analyze key details to determine the central idea of a text. ● analyze how the central idea is reflected in a text and cite relevant evidence to support thinking around the central idea.
We are learning to compare fractions.	I can... ● draw models to make fraction comparisons. ● use the symbols, and when making fraction comparisons. ● explain how the size of equal parts can be used to compare fractions. ● construct a viable argument and/or critique the reasoning of others to prove whether a fraction comparison is correct or incorrect.
We are analyzing the structure of the U.S. government, including separation of power and its system of checks and balances,	I can... ● ask compelling and discipline-specific supporting questions about the structure of the U.S. government. ● identify the three branches of government and describe the function and roles of each branch.

Learning Goal	Success Criteria
through inquiry practices.	- describe the limitations of each branch established by separation of powers. - analyze how the system of checks and balances creates a balance of power among the branches of government. - use and integrate information from primary and secondary sources to develop claims that answer compelling and supporting questions, while noting key similarities and differences in the perspective the sources represent. - construct explanatory products to convey the diverse perspectives that impacted the founding of the United States. - explain different approaches people can take to address local, regional and global problems, using examples from U.S. history.

Considerations

- How will you collaborate with other grade-level educators to determine learning goals and success criteria necessary for students to meet the standards within each unit of study in the curriculum?
- How will you collaborate with educators from the previous grade level to clarify learning goals and success criteria?
- How will you share learning goals and success criteria with your students?
- Possible ideas:
    - When introducing new learning goals and success criteria, have students reflect on what they already know about the goal, specific words or phrases that are confusing or that they don't understand. If in a virtual setting, students can post their responses electronically through a virtual chat platform or electronic document to capture their thinking (NCEO, 2020).
    - Remind students of the learning goals and success criteria before students start any instructional task or activity to focus them on the purpose.
    - Write the learning goals and success criteria on the assignment or task.
    - During teacher-facilitated instruction, share the learning goals and success criteria at the beginning to focus students. Where applicable, build in stopping points throughout and pose questions to have students reflect on the intended learning.
    - If using a slide presentation as part of direct instruction or an assignment in a virtual setting, insert a slide at the beginning that describes the learning goals. Where applicable, insert slides at critical points throughout that contain questions to help students reflect on the intended learning (NCEO, 2020).

- When recording an audio file for students, clearly state the learning target and success criteria at the beginning to focus the student, and reference throughout as applicable (NCEO, 2020).
- How will you help students understand the success criteria? Possible ideas:
  - Utilize examples of student work and ask students to reflect on them using the success criteria.
    - In a virtual setting, these examples could be in a document shared electronically with the students, shown and discussed in a recorded video for easy student access, or shared in live virtual meetings (NCEO, 2020).
  - Provide modeling, where appropriate, that allows the learner to follow, imitate or work from what they have witnessed.
  - If using a rubric that contains the success criteria, provide it at the same time they get the assignment or task.
  - Check to make sure the criteria on the rubric are about things that provide evidence of learning, not about following directions or surface features of the work.
- How will you intentionally utilize the learning goals and success criteria throughout instruction to focus students on what they are learning and not on what they are doing?

Dimension 2: Elicit

Importance

Once educators and students are clear on the intended learning outcome, the next step is to determine where students are in meeting that goal. Educators need to not only intentionally plan instructional activities aligned to the learning goals, they also need to plan in detail how they are going to find out where students are in their learning throughout the lesson or series of lessons.

When educators ask students to engage in activities that directly relate to the learning goals and success criteria, students feel respected and see the school experience as purposeful and coherent (Erkens, Schimmer, & Vagel, 2018).

The insights below are taken from OFAST "Insights About Eliciting Evidence."

Elicit evidence aligned to the learning goals and success criteria of the lesson

As students engage in any learning experience, they need to make visible a performance of learning or an execution of a skill that reflects what is articulated in the success criteria.

Elicit evidence intentionally and strategically

Opportunities to elicit evidence are thought through in advance and strategically placed at points in the lesson where educators know they will need information about the status of student learning.

Elicit evidence in multiple ways

"Evidence" is much more than numerical data. It includes all the ways students showcase their learning relative to the learning goals and success criteria. When educators use multiple approaches to establish the current level of student understanding, it provides a much richer picture of student learning to analyze and act on during instruction. Educators must also frame their noticing to focus on the anticipated indicators and behaviors that are relevant to the learning.

Instructional Routines for Eliciting Evidence

These routines are taken from OFAST "Five Evidence Gathering Routines."

Routine #1: Elicit evidence through activating prior knowledge

As instruction begins in a new lesson, students will have different starting points, misconceptions and foundational knowledge. Activating background knowledge helps educators:

- Identify students' prior knowledge and current level of understanding
- Identify missing elements in skills or understanding
- Elicit misconceptions
- Clarify where to begin instruction

Instructional routines focused on activating prior knowledge helps students explore connections across content areas and engage in thinking about the learning goal. While background knowledge is often assessed at the onset of a lesson, it should be assessed, enhanced and worked on throughout a learning sequence. Some possible techniques include:

- K-W-L charts
- Quick writes
- Checklists
- Carousel brainstorming
- Whiteboard prompts

Routine #2: Elicit evidence through academic discourse

When students engage in academic discourse, they are thinking, exploring ideas and making connections. When students talk, educators can better understand what students know, the strategies they are using and how they are thinking about the content. It is important for educators to create a

classroom culture in which there is equitable academic talk among all students. Class discussions that privilege student voices are a prerequisite for learning.

To support effective use of academic discourse, educators should:

- Develop and uphold classroom agreements that promote a safe expression of ideas
- Establish opportunities to explore multiple viewpoints and solutions
- Ensure discourse allows for equitable participation by all students
- Establish consistent use of both large and small group dialogue

Routine #3: Elicit evidence through questioning

Effective oral questioning supports cognitive growth, provides connections to prior knowledge, contributes to a classroom culture that promotes learning and risk-taking, and supports students' ability to internalize next steps in learning.

Some essential elements of effective questioning that support eliciting evidence:

- Plan questions in advance of the lesson that will prompt student thinking throughout the lesson.
- Pose questions to elicit thinking at key points in the lesson or sequence questions to address appropriate cognitive demands as students' understanding becomes more sophisticated.

Engage in assessment conversations by asking follow-up questions to further explore student thinking. The follow up might:

- Build on student thinking to make connections ("How might this connect to what we studied in our last unit?")
- Challenge students to prove their thinking ("What evidence do you have to support your answer?")
- Probe student ideas and misconceptions ("What would that look like if … ?")
- Bring other student voices into the conversation ("What do you think about what was just said? Can you build on his/her response?")
- Engage others to elicit different thinking ("Can you think of a different way to approach the problem?")

Apply the research on effective questioning. Use wait time, integrate questions that encourage higher-order thinking and provide opportunities to formulate their ideas (pair- share, pre-write) when asking cognitively complex questions.

Routine #4: Elicit evidence through observation and analysis of student work

Using multiple representations of learning helps educators understand a more complete picture of each student's understanding. When planning to gather evidence of learning, consider learning opportunities where student thinking can be observed. This might include:

- Drawing
- Diagrams
- Graphs
- Concept/mind maps

- Model building
- Investigations
- Student writing
- Graphic organizers
- Detailed outlines
- Student notes

Considerations

- How will you collaborate with grade-level or course content educators to determine the best way to elicit evidence for the learning goals and success criteria for grade-level standards?
- How will you collaborate with educators in the previous grade level or course to determine possible ways to elicit evidence of student learning?
- How will you ensure that what you ask students to say, do, make or write will provide you the information needed to determine where students are in their understanding relative to the learning goals and success criteria in both the classroom and virtual setting?
- At what strategic points throughout the lesson will evidence of student learning need to be intentionally designed?
  - Will evidence be needed at the start of the lesson to determine how best to begin and frame the lesson content?
  - Will evidence be needed early in the lesson, before building on introductory content?
  - Will evidence be needed partway through the lesson in order to decide among different instructional routes to reach the intended learning outcome?
  - Will evidence be needed at the end of the lesson to help plan the next lesson?
  - When designing lessons, what typical misconceptions might students have, or what common errors might they make? How will you elicit evidence to address those misconceptions or errors in thinking?
  - What are the different ways you will gather evidence of student learning to gain a richer picture of student learning that most aligns with the intended learning outcomes of each lesson?
  - What classroom agreements are needed to support academic dialogue in both the classroom and virtual settings?

Dimension 3: Interpret

Importance

Feedback is a critical component of the formative assessment process. It provides students and educators with information about how students are doing relative to the intended learning outcome. Effective feedback provides students with the information they need to understand where they are in their learning and what to do next. It also serves to increase student motivation because once students feel they understand what to do and why, it helps them feel that they have more control over their own learning (Brookhart, 2017).

Insights for Providing Effective Feedback

The insights below are taken from "Six Insights about Feedback" by WestEd and Oregon FAST.

Give feedback that relates student work to the learning goals and success criteria

Feedback is about letting students know where they are relative to where they are heading; it should also help clarify their next learning move. Effective feedback focuses on the status of student learning as evidenced by what students say, do, make, or write. If feedback is to be meaningful and actionable, it is critical that students have a clear understanding of the learning goals and how they will recognize when they have met them using the success criteria.

Give feedback that students can use

Feedback is beneficial when students can act on it to move their learning forward. One of the goals of feedback is to ensure educators are not doing the work of learning for the student. To do this, educators use clear, descriptive language to provide hints, clues and guidance that can help move student learning forward. Usable feedback should:

- Focus on the learning goals and success criteria;
- Make reference to what students have done well; and
- Suggest next steps for improvement.

Give feedback that supports students' management of their own learning

When feedback is effective, it casts students as capable managers of their own learning by helping them to understand the status of their learning relative to the learning goal and to take steps to advance their

own learning. If students understand what is "good" about their work, they are able to internalize the knowledge, strategies or processes they used in this and apply them to other situations in the future.

It is a good idea to check with students to see whether the feedback provided is adequate for them to take the next steps for themselves. For example, asking questions such as, "Are you clear on what you need to do next?" or "Can you tell me what you are going to do next?" will provide feedback to the educator about students' understanding of the guidance and support offered.

Considerations

- How will you ensure that your feedback is linked to the learning goal and success criteria?
- How will you provide feedback in a timely manner that allows students to take action and apply the feedback?
    - Possible ideas for virtual settings ([Fiock & Garcia, n.d)](#):
        - Text annotations: Notes or comments added digitally to written assignments.
        - Audio or video file: Could be provided to individual students or to small groups of students requiring the same type of feedback.
        - Rubrics: Online scoring guides aligned to the success criteria to evaluate students' work.
- How will you intentionally build in time for students to respond to and apply feedback to their work?
- How will you structure opportunities to have uninterrupted time with individuals or groups of individuals to provide feedback?
    - If in a virtual setting, how will you structure time and opportunity to meet with individuals or small groups to provide feedback?

Using Peer- and Self-Assessment to Develop Student Ownership

Peer and self-assessment help students develop both self-regulation and self-efficacy. As they learn to become more self-regulatory, students can monitor, direct and regulate their own actions as they progress toward the learning goals. Through peer assessment, students gain increased clarity on the learning goal and success criteria. Self-assessment provides students with the opportunity to apply their understanding of the learning goals and the success criteria to their own work to become more aware of their strengths, progress and any gaps in learning they still need to address (Moss & Brookhart, 2019).

Peer Assessment

The following guidance is taken from OFAST "[Peer Assessment.](#)"

Peer assessment requires a classroom culture characterized by supportive, collaborative relationships that lead to feelings of mutual trust among the students. In such a classroom culture, students understand that they share responsibility for their own and their peers' learning and that part of this joint responsibility is to provide constructive, respectful and non-judgmental feedback. Below are three strategies educators can use to help support students to give peer feedback:

Model providing feedback

When educators provide oral or written feedback, students are listening to and noticing what quality feedback sounds or looks like. educators also can model feedback for students by using samples of student work, reviewing the learning goal and success criteria with the whole class, and analyzing the work in light of the criteria and discussing what feedback to provide and why.

Use feedback prompts and protocols

When students are first starting the process of peer feedback, conversation prompts can support and build students' skill at providing feedback. Some possible prompts include:

- A strength I see in your work is…
- I am curious about...
- I would like to suggest …
- I wonder why…
- I am confused because…
- Have you thought about… ?
- I notice that…
- I did not understand what you meant when you said…
- You might be able to improve this by…

Analyze strong and weak feedback

Students also can benefit from discussing examples of strong and weak feedback, both oral and written. Students can be guided to consider the feedback with questions such as:

- Do you understand the feedback?
- Does the feedback match the learning goal and success criteria?
- Is the feedback specific?
- Would this student know what to do with the feedback to move forward?
- How might you improve this feedback?

Creating a list of what makes strong and weak feedback after these analyses, or reviewing existing lists to make sure they include specific items from the analyses, also are useful strategies.

Self-Assessment

The insights below highlight how to structure self-assessment opportunities into classroom practice. These are taken from OFAST "Insights about Self-Assessment."

Self-assessment is explicitly taught and modeled by the educator

When educators explicitly teach students to become effective self-assessors, students are empowered to be in charge of their own learning: to identify goals, determine where they are in their learning with respect to the goals, and to take actions to close the gap. At each stage of this process, students require feedback, support and practice. To support teaching self-assessment skills to students:

- Model how the success criteria are applied to student work.

- Provide opportunities for students to apply criteria to their own work.
- Discuss with students how well they are assessing their own learning.
- Help students use feedback (from the educator, peer assessment and self-assessment) to develop individual learning goals and clarify next steps in their learning.

Self-assessment involves students applying all the elements of the feedback loop to their own work

To do self-assessment well, students need to attend to all three primary questions in the feedback loop, beginning with, "Where am I going?," then reviewing their own work or their thinking to determine, "Where am I now?" and finally answering, "Where to next?"

Students must have a clear conception of where the learning is headed in order to assess their status in relation to that goal. The process of internalizing the success criteria allows students to come to a deeper understanding of what they are learning and will result in their self-assessment being more aligned with the expected learning goals. As students become more skilled at assessing their progress towards the learning goals, they are increasingly able to make decisions about where to go next in their learning.

Self-assessment is an essential element in support of student agency and self-regulation

Student self-assessment is a critical component of classroom formative assessment, as it is a key element of practice that supports students to become independent and self-regulating learners.

Self-assessment supports students to develop metacognitive skills, in which they can think about their thinking and how they learn. This provides students with opportunities to practice self- regulation skills. While educators model this work in the early stages, the expectation is that students develop and use metacognitive strategies themselves.

To help reach this independent stage, educators develop a repertoire of strategies students can use (i.e. templates, checklists, reflections) that facilitate their responsibility and ownership for monitoring their own learning.

Considerations

- How will you build a classroom community, in both the classroom, virtual, and home settings, that supports peer and self-assessment? What classroom agreements, routines, and procedures are needed to build trust and a supportive environment?
- How will you intentionally build students' skills in providing peer feedback?
- How will you provide opportunities for peer assessment?
  - Possible ideas for peer feedback in a virtual setting:
    - Collaborative documents (i.e. Google Docs, OneDrive)
    - Group discussion using videoconferencing or a forum
- How will you build in opportunities for students to self-assess and reflect on the learning goals and success criteria?
  - Possible ideas for a virtual setting (NCEO, 2020)

- Format the success criteria into a tool students can use as they do their lesson or assignment. Examples include a simple bulleted list, a checklist or a rubric.
- Include one or more self-assessment loops in the assignment directions, where students review their work using the tool and make adjustments to their work.
- Include a "mid-point reflection" in a document-based lesson or assignment or include one or more pause points in a video or slide-based lesson or assignment. Possible reflection questions might include:
  - When you look at the success criteria you have been using, which one has been the easiest for you? Why?
  - Which one has been the most difficult for you? Why?

Dimension 4: Act

The following guidance was taken from OFAST "Taking Pedagogical Action."

After educators have interpreted the evidence and made a determination about the status of student learning, they need to take some action in response to students' immediate learning needs. This action might be taken in the moment in the form of feedback to the student(s) or an instructional adjustment. Or it may be that the educator uses the information to plan the next lesson. Educators also might decide that student learning is on track to meet the learning goal and they may continue with the lesson as planned. Instructional adjustments could include:

Model

Deliberate, purposeful modeling is a powerful instructional strategy. educators can make intended student learning "visible" by verbalizing their reasoning out loud, explicitly narrating their thinking during a problem-solving process or demonstrating a specific skill.

Prompt

Prompting helps students access and apply prior learning as a bridge to new learning. Prompting may take the form of a reminder, a strong hint, a clue or a question, and should always be followed by adequate wait time.

Question

Asking questions is an ideal way to generate thoughtful discussions and explorations of issues that are important to developing students' understanding. In addition, attending to the answers that students give and probing these answers with follow-up questions yields important information that educators can use to evaluate current levels of understanding and identify appropriate instructional responses for next steps.

Give Feedback

The primary use of feedback is not to indicate whether students are right or wrong, but to enable them to reflect on their use of strategies and on their learning. An important message for educators to convey when giving feedback is that the source of student success is their own learning strategies. Providing feedback that gives hints, cues or suggestions rather than total solutions will assist students to build a repertoire of learning strategies.

Tell

Telling means supplying what students need in the moment (an unknown word or the steps to complete a task, for example) to enable them to maintain momentum in the learning process. An educator makes a professional judgment to use this instructional strategy so that student learning is not short-circuited, but rather the temporary obstacles are removed on the way to deeper learning.

Explain

Explanations are verbally explicit, tailored to individual student needs and intended to help students develop their own understandings. Educators may use explanations to introduce an unfamiliar concept, clear up misconceptions, explain a process (how to give peer feedback, for example) or clarify the steps of a specific learning strategy (such as note taking).

Direct

Directing is simply giving a specific instruction to let the learner know what he or she is supposed to do. For example, "Find the sentence in the text that suggests…", "Write the letter for the sound…" or "Turn to your partner and share…"

Professional Learning Opportunities

A foundation of assessment literacy is a prerequisite for implementing balanced assessment systems. ODE has recorded and published a comprehensive webinar training series on its Interim Assessment webpage within the Interim Assessment/ Professional Development Materials expandable folder.

Additionally, the National Center for Improvement of Educational Assessment (NCIEA) has developed a series of openly-licensed Classroom Assessment Learning Modules Overview.

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