
Assessment for learning: the road to improvement

Webinar handout

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Here are the 10 principles of Assessment for Learning created by the Assessment Reform Group (Broadfoot et al, 2002).

Assessment should:

- be part of effective planning
- focus on how students learn
- be central to classroom practice
- be a key professional skill
- be sensitive and constructive
- foster student motivation
- promote understanding of goals and criteria
- give guidance on how to improve learning
- develop the learners' capacity for self-assessment
- recognise the full range of educational achievement

How to introduce peer & self-assessment

- Identify assignments/activities where students might benefit from peer and self-feedback.
- Consider breaking a larger assignment into smaller pieces and incorporating peer assessment opportunities at each stage.
- Involve students in defining/clarifying success criteria.
- Work with samples - exemplars and examples make the criteria visible for students.
- Teach students how to apply criteria'.

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- Provide guidance as students apply criteria - applying criteria to anonymous samples deepens understanding of the criteria.
 - Support students in peer assessment and feedback - prompts including sentence starters and feedback forms help students to give appropriate feedback.

Peer assessment

- Co-develop some ground rules for peer assessment and display as a wall chart.
- Select an appropriate strategy/ tool for students to use for peer assessment tasks.
- Teach and model peer assessment and giving feedback.
- Provide exemplars, i.e., samples of quality work.
- Involve students in developing criteria.
- Remind students that all comments must relate to the success criteria.

Effective questioning – types of questions

- Closed questions, e.g. Are you feeling better today?
- Questions for clarification, e.g. What do you mean by...?
- Questions that probe assumptions, e.g. Why do you think this is so?
- Questions that probe reasons and evidence, e.g. Why do you think that is true?
- Questions about viewpoints and perspectives, e.g. Who do you agree with?
- Questions that probe implications and consequences, e.g. What are the consequences of that assumption?

Planning questions

- Decide on your goal for asking questions, and select the content for questioning
- Ask questions that require an extended response
- Write your main questions in advance and think of additional questions
- Phrase your questions so that the task is clear
- Avoid implied response questions
- Try to anticipate possible student responses

Reference:

Broadfoot, P., Daugherty, R., Gardner, J., Harlen, W., James, M., & Stobart, G. (2002). Assessment for learning: 10 principles: research-based principles to guide classroom practice. Assessment Reform Group.