APPLYING THE FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT/INSTRUCTIONAL PROCESS

Collaborative Learning Environment

Collaborative Learning Environment (left side)

Collaborative Learning Environment (right side)

Legend
- Attribute (blue)
- Action (green)
- Decision (yellow)

Success Criteria
The measurable indicators that students and teachers use to understand that learning is progressing toward the intended learning goal. SC form the finer grained learning that leads to the broader learning. Examples of strong and weak work are often used to further clarify SC. SC differentiated to address unique student needs. If all SC are learned, then LG has likely been met.

Initial Instruction
Delivered using evidence based strategies, routines & pedagogy; monitored for fidelity.

Elicit Quality Diagnostic Evidence of Students' Current Thinking:
Frequently collected diagnostic evidence, using a variety of all student response strategies during instruction, is used to gain insight into students' current thinking in relation to the SC and LG. This evidence along with feedback is used to move learning forward by adjusting learning strategies, adjusting goals, or adjusting instructional next steps. This evidence helps answer the questions: "Where is the learner now?" and "Where am I now?" Ideally, we also want to teach students how to elicit diagnostic evidence of their own thinking relative to the LG and their SC.

Learning Goals
Broad learning outcomes of unit of study- communicated using student friendly language. Where is the learner going? Where am I now?

Self-Directed Learners
Students are supported by teachers in becoming more cognizant of the process of and effective strategies of learning and also becoming more meta-cognitive and apply both elements to their own learning.

Scaffolding Ongoing Instruction
Teachers provide instruction within students' zone of proximal development, but gradually fading supports with the goal of moving students to become more self-directed learners.

Interpreting Diagnostic Evidence of Students' Current Thinking
Interpreted by preset standards of quality. These include the percent and number of students identifying the correct response. The importance of the material relative to the LG. Having a good idea of the instructional adjustments needed to get students back on track depending on each possible incorrect answer, or moving instruction on as planned as a result of students' current thinking.

Formal & Informal Collaboration
Pre-assessment activities of prerequisite skills, eliciting quality diagnostic evidence of students' current thinking and adjustments of learning strategies, goals, and next instructional steps.

Students and Teachers Use Evidence & Feedback to Move Learning Forward
These adjustments are based on evidence of students' current thinking and include:
1) adjusting learning strategies,
2) adjusting goals, and/or
3) adjusting instructional next steps and providing actionable feedback to learners.

Feedback Loop

Gap Still Open

Learning Progression
Explicit knowledge of the building blocks of learning within and across grades.

Actionable Feedback
Feedback is actionable, timely, and descriptive that prompts immediate actions by the students to close their current learning gap. It is relative to the LG and specifically the SC. Teacher provides the appropriate task, process and/or self-regulation feedback relative to the student(s) needs. Feedback answers the questions "What do I need to do to help the learner close the gap?" And "What do I need to do to close the gap?" Feedback is not providing students with the answers but helping them discover it. Students should consider the use of all feedback first towards future learning situations, then to their immediate learning. Thus, focusing feedback on students' mastering the LG and SC.

Identify Learning Gap
The difference between current & desired skill level. Answers the questions "Where is the learner now? and "Where am I know?" The teacher then identifies the students' zone of proximal development.

Gap Closed
Teachers should always ask, "Will students be able to retrieve this information in future novel situations?" And "What retrieval or maintenance activities do I and students need to plan so they are able to recall and retain this information in the future?"

Standards
Iowa Core, Iowa Early Learning, Music, Social Studies, Science and other standards as applicable

START

Student met learning goal: next skill in learning progression targeted.

McKenzie, J.W., Kremer, J.D., & Ramaekers, L. (2018) Applying the formative assessment / instructional process.

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Right panel

Formative assessment is a planned, ongoing process used by all students and teachers during learning and teaching to elicit and use evidence of student learning to improve student understanding of intended disciplinary learning outcomes and support students to become more self-directed learners. Effective use of the formative assessment process requires students and teachers to integrate and embed the following practices in a collaborative and respectful classroom environment:
- Clarifying learning goals and success criteria within a broader progression of learning;
- Eliciting and analyzing evidence of student thinking;
- Engaging in self-assessment and peer feedback;
- Providing actionable feedback; and
- Using evidence and feedback to move learning forward by adjusting learning strategies, goals or next instructional steps.

CCSSO FAST SCASS 2017

Critical Questions addressed by Teachers and Students throughout the entire process:

- Where is the learner going?
- Where am I going?

- Where is the learner now?
- Where am I now?

- What do I need to do to help the learner close the gap?
- What do I need to do to close the gap?

(Answered at many points during the process)

Collaborative Learning Environment

The Five Attributes of the Formative Assessment/ Instructional Process

1. Clarifying learning targets within a broader progression of learning

The elements of learning intentions (LI) are derived from the standards. These elements are learning progressions (LP), learning goals (LG), success criteria (SC), and learning targets (LT). Understanding, developing, and effectively delivering, LG, SC and LT to students before, during and even after instruction will provide students with a clearer and clearer expectation of what they are expected to learn, and thus be able to perform anytime. Thus, the purpose of these elements is to paint a crystal clear picture of what high quality successes looks like to students so that they know when they have obtained same. For students and teachers, LI are an essential and critical attribute of the formative assessment / instructional process and their importance cannot be understated. LI form the foundation for how meaningful, motivating, and powerful the other attributes of the formative assessment / instructional process can be in helping students' move their learning forward. They answer student's question of, "Where am I going?"

2. Eliciting and analyzing evidence of student thinking;

Planning how to elicit quality evidence of students' current thinking, then efficiently and effectively analyze the data, is another critical attribute of the formative assessment / instructional process. Eliciting and analyzing evidence of students' current thinking should be performed at critical or "hinge points" in the lesson. The focus should be on critical concepts that students must master before teachers can successfully continue instruction. Critical areas of understanding are referred to as SC. Teachers can collaboratively use their well-crafted SC to generate "hinge point" questions. Doing so should identify areas where students may struggle in their learning. The data obtained from "hinge point" questions, or with the use of other appropriate eliciting evidence activities/techniques answers students' and teacher's question, "Where am I now? and Where is the learner now?, respectively.

3. Engaging in self-assessment and peer feedback;

Planning and knowing how to teach students to self-assess which includes self-monitoring, self-reflection, and self-management, and also how to provide peers with actionable feedback is another critical attribute of the formative assessment / instructional process. Students who internalize LG, SC and LT are better equipped to be successful in self-assessment, and in providing peers with actionable feedback. Having these skills helps students answer the question, "What do I need to close the gap?" When students regularly ask themselves this question, and are able to figure out what to do next, they are on their way to becoming more independent, self-directed learners and problem solvers. This is the ultimate goal of the formative assessment / instructional process.

4. Providing actionable feedback;

Planning and knowing how to choose and then provide the appropriate type of feedback to students is another critical attribute of the formative assessment/instructional process. Ideally, teachers would want to move students from task, to process, then to self-regulation feedback and in doing so help them become more self-directed learners. However, for feedback to be actionable students, and teachers must first have a clear understanding of the current LG, SC and LT. This is a non-negotiable. When this is firmly in place, students will be in a better position to make the connection between where they currently are in their learning, where they need to go, and what actions— based on the feedback— they need to undertake to close their current learning gap. Thus, actionable feedback should not provide students with the solution, but it should guide them to discover it, and thereby increase their ability to think productively and build their confidence as learners. Confidence to not only solve/address the current issue, but to also to be able to successfully apply their new learning to future problems and opportunities.

5. Using evidence and feedback to move learning forward by adjusting learning strategies, goals, or instructional next steps.

Planning and knowing how to elicit, and then use evidence of students' current thinking, and provide actionable feedback to students' that moves their thinking forward will necessitate students and/or teachers adjusting learning strategies, adjusting goals, or adjusting instructional next steps. Teachers should explicitly model the various ways they adjust their own learning strategies to their students. For example, by productively using actionable feedback to more efficiently master LT, SC and LG. Teachers can further model to students how they connect and use all of the attributes of the formative assessment / instructional process to move their own learning forward. Modeling this and a host of other learning strategies to students is imperative and provides students with a variety of tools that they can use when they realize that their current learning strategy is not working.

Other times teachers may have to adjust goals. Resizing four SC into eight while retaining the overall LG is one example of adjusting goals without watering down what is to be learned. Teachers making this adjustment allows students to stay motivated in their learning by being challenged at a more appropriate level, which would allow them to see themselves as more capable learners.

Still at other times teachers may have to adjust their instructional next steps. This would happen during the lesson based on current evidence elicited from students to better meet their immediate learning needs. When teachers collaboratively pre-plan for these inevitable adjustments, knowing or being more certain why students are struggling allows for a better instructional adjustments that move students' thinking forward, as opposed to waiting until the moment to work these diagnostic issues out. Teachers should know the impact of their instruction on their students current thinking and ultimately on their learning. Doing so allows students to be held to these high learning standards.