Grad 2 Teach

Understanding the basics of good **formative assessment**

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What do the experts say?

Most observers credit British researchers Paul Black and Dylan Wiliam with sparking today's worldwide interest in formative assessment when they published two notable works in 1998.

Here's Dylan Wiliam talking about formative assessment:

A free 1 hour webinar is available at the below link if you would like more information:
https://info.nwea.org/FY2012WinterCampaignKLTWebinar2On-demandRegistration.html?%25E2%2580%258B

Tonight's objectives

To know that

- Formative assessment is an active, ongoing set of teaching behaviours to support good learning and progress
- Good formative assessment builds a picture of every pupil's understanding and progress for the teacher by the end of the lesson; assessment which doesn't include all pupils isn't good assessment

To understand

- How to make good formative assessment part of your daily teaching

Dylan Wiliam's research was inspired by his wish to make **teaching more responsive** in the classroom to **better meet pupils' needs**.

He identified 5 key principles (or strategies) for making this happen:

Principle 1: Teacher shares learning intentions

Principle 2: Teacher finds out what pupils already know

Principle 3: Teacher gives feedback which enables students to move their learning forward

Principle 4: Students are helped to be learning resources for each other

Principle 5: Students are 'activated' as owners of their own learning

Principle 1: Teacher shares learning intentions

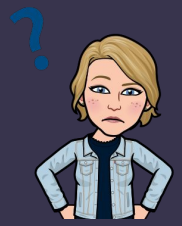
What does this actually mean?

This is about the teacher **clarifying** and **sharing the learning intentions** of the lesson and any **success criteria.**

Why?

Doing the above is a way of getting the pupils to understand what the lesson will look like and how their success will be measured.

This is the same principle as using style models - don't tell them what good and poor quality looks like, let the pupils join up the dots to understand for themselves



Give me an example of how this looks in the classroom…

Technique 1: Start with **samples of work** rather than the 'rules' for how to do it, so pupils can recognise what quality looks like

"As an adult in the professional world, if someone were to ask you to write a business plan or create a product brochure and the task was somewhat unfamiliar to you, what's the first thing you might do to get help? Perhaps you would search the Internet for examples of business plans or product brochures that other professionals have created.

As you examine these examples, you might be able to pick out the high-quality vs. low-quality ones, and even identify why you think this is so. Viewing samples of work in this way can help you as you create your own piece of work and, hopefully, result in a higher-quality product than if you had just started from scratch.

While success criteria have a role to play in your classroom, we believe they are best regarded as the culmination of a developmental process that begins with examination of samples of students' work. So, before your students do a laboratory report, before they write a ghost story, spend some time getting them to look at other students' attempts at similar tasks.

Some teachers believe that it is wasteful to take time that students could be generating their own work to look at the work of others, but there are two immediate benefits of getting students to look at samples of student work. **First, we are all better at spotting mistakes in the work of others than we are in our own work. Second, when we notice mistakes in the work of others, we are less likely to make the same mistakes in our own work."**

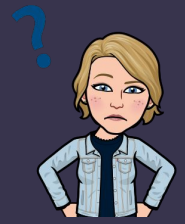
Principle 2: Teacher finds out what pupils already know

What does this actually mean?

Teacher finds out what students already know by engineering effective classroom discussions, activities, and learning tasks that elicit evidence of learning.

Why?

Developing effective classroom instructional strategies allows the teacher to measure the lesson's success - if only 20% of pupils answer questions, what do the other 80% know?



Give me an example of how this looks in the classroom…

Technique 2: No hands up, except to ask a question

"Walk into a classroom almost anywhere in the world, and you will see the same script being played out. The teacher asks a question, and a number of students raise their hands to signal they wish to respond. Then, the teacher almost always selects one of the students with his or her hand raised, and that student responds to the question.

But if the aim of questioning is to help the teacher find out what the students know, it makes little sense to select a respondent from the volunteers, because generally, students only raise their hands when they are confident they have the correct answer. Instead, if the teacher is asking the question, students should be given time to think about the question, and then it should be the teacher who selects the student or students to respond, at random."

This is the same principle as think, pair, share

Principle 3: Teacher gives feedback which enables students to move their learning forward

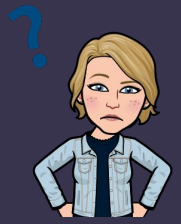
What does this actually mean?

Providing feedback that moves learning forward

Why?

Working with students to provide them with the information they need to better understand problems and solutions, i**n the classroom as they're working,** has the best chance of transforming the outcome.

This is the same principle as live marking - when you check/chat/mark pupils' work during the lesson. Writing feedback when the lesson's over and you're at home will not have the same, if any, impact!



Give me an example of how this looks in the classroom…

Technique 3: Focus on the reaction of the students—not the feedback

"The only thing that matters with feedback is the reaction of the recipient. That's it. Feedback, no matter how well designed, that is not acted upon by the student is a waste of time.

This may seem obvious, but hundreds of researchers have ignored this basic truth, and have tried instead to find out whether feedback should be immediate or delayed. Should it be specific or general? Should it be verbal or written? Ultimately, it just comes down to the simple truth that the most effective feedback is just feedback that our students actually use in improving their own learning."

Principle 4: Students are helped to be learning resources for each other

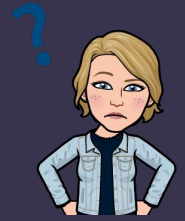
What does this actually mean?

Activating learners as instructional resources for one another

Why?

Getting students involved with each other in discussions and working groups can help improve student learning.

This is a way of describing the process of peer assessment - when pupils 'mark' or look critically at a another pupil's work



Give me an example of how this looks in the classroom…

Technique 4: Peer feedback—two stars and a wish

"Group students into pairs. When students are giving feedback to each other, they identify two features of the work that are positive (the "stars") and one suggestion for how the work could be improved (the "wish"). What teachers typically find is that students are much tougher on each other than the teacher would feel able to be, because the power relationships are different.

This is an important observation, since it suggests that, done appropriately, peer feedback may be more effective than teacher feedback, because students are more likely to act on feedback from their peers than they would on feedback from a teacher."

Principle 5: Students are ‘activated’ as owners of their own learning

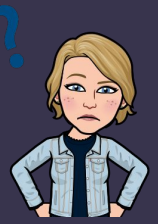
What does this actually mean?

Activating learners as owners of their own learning

Why?

Self-regulation of learning leads to student performance improvement - taking responsibility is good and develops independent learners.

This is similar to the previous principle of peer assessment - it’s about making the best of the help pupils can give each other as they’re often on the same wavelength. This can be especially good in maths lessons!



Give me an example of how this looks in the classroom…

Technique 5: Make self-rports consequential

“Provide each student with three coloured paper or plastic cups (red, yellow, and green). At the beginning of the lesson, nest the cups so that the green cup is showing. Tell students they can display their yellow cup to signal that the lesson is going too fast or their red cup to stop the lesson in order to ask a question. Accountability is built in by the fact that as soon as one student shows a red cup, the teacher selects another student at random from among those showing green cups, and that student is expected to answer the question being posed by the student who showed the red cup.”

Make a note of the 5 principles - which make the most sense to you? Put your thoughts on the Collaborate Board on the next slide.

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Knowledge

Understanding/ skills

Assessment

Metacognitive planning:
Thought 1: I want to teach a lesson on story openings which are suspenseful.

Formative assessment in planning

The Big 3 in action

(1) Knowledge:
To know 2 techniques writers use to create suspense

Understanding:

(1) to recognise and be able to identify strategies which create suspense and
(2) demonstrate this in their own writing*

*time permitting -possible 'carry over' activities

(3) Assessment: *(after lesson intro., discuss LO and suspense as a word/concept)*

Read Lesley Lokko passage as a class.

- **Think/pair/share task** - does this create suspense? How has the writer done this?
- T **takes feedback** on board/flipchart - establishes list of 2-4 strategies used/
- On board T explains and **models** how 2 simple strategies are used - (mysterious location, pronouns for characters instead of names) and 1 'stretch' strategy - use of character's thoughts mingling with description of location - to achieve a 'stream of consciousness' effect
- **Paired work** - borrowing the structure of the original, pupils create a new version of a suspenseful paragraph opening using 2 strategies. **Differentiation**: Sentence stems provided to LAs or LAs paired with MAs and HAs.
- T **circulates to assess success** of this activity and offer live marking and 1:1 feedback and help as needed. **T notes good examples.**
- T brings pupils' attention back to the front and **asks probing questions**: which strategy has been more/less effective? Why? What would happen if? **Stretch/challenge - perhaps make these questions targeted for HAs?
- **Peer review**: pairs present new version to another pair. T circulates.
- Speaker from each table **feeds back** 1 strategy to the class which has been used successfully to create suspense and must develop an explanation which answers the 'how'. T captures on flipchart for next lesson's starter activity.

How many opportunities for assessment have you built in to your own lesson plan? Do they fit in with the 5 key principles?

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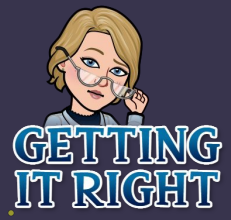
Let's put some more metacognitive principles into practice

When we plan assessment activities in lessons, ***what questions do we ask ourselves*** *to ensure they lead to effective learning?*

1. What is the primary purpose of this activity? (ie. will it work just to engage students or encourage participation, or could it have a greater benefit?)
2. Is this activity the best way of finding out what they understand about the topic? (ie. how effectively does my activity match my objective?)
3. What will I do with the information I get back? Will it enable me to move my students' learning on? How will I do this?
4. Does the time this activity takes to complete justify its inclusion in my lesson? Could it be equally as effective if I shortened it or changed it?



*When we plan assessment activities in lessons, **what questions do we ask ourselves** to ensure they lead to effective learning? ctd.*

(other examples)

5. How will I explain this activity to students to make sure they complete it to the best of their ability?

6. How will I judge whether the activity has been completed to an acceptable, good or excellent standard? What will the distinction be between success and mastery?

7. Is this something which requires lots of regular practice? Do I need to make this type of assessment a frequent feature of my lessons? Why/why not?

8. Does this activity allow me to stretch the most ambitious students? How?

TOP TIPS *to help us to assess students meaningfully*

- ★ *Good assessment practices include every student - not most students* ***(planning)***
- ★ *Ensure your assessment activity aligns with your objective* ***(planning)***
- ★ *Weigh up how much time needs to be spent on the activity to ensure it meets your objective and moves students on - low-stakes activities which prioritise engagement over learning should only take a few minutes* ***(planning)***
- ★ *Have a clear idea of what success in the activity looks like, so that you can communicate it with clarity to students* ***(assessment for learning)***
- ★ *Know what you are going to do with the information you get back to move students forward - anticipate where students may get confused, what key learning may need to be re-taught or what skills may need further practice* ***(feedback).***