

Assessment Design Checklist

Questions:	Evidence of Understanding
How will this assessment inform and impact future instruction and planning?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evidence will be used to inform instruction to meet student needs ● Feedback will provide students with information about their current and expected level of understanding
Is this assessment a collaboration with the student?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The teacher and the student will collaborate to determine how the student will reach the learning goal ● The teacher will question students to determine causes behind any gaps in understanding
Does the assessment provide effective feedback in order to guide student learning, inform students of how they may make progress toward their goals, and involve students in their own learning process?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teachers need to provide students with feedback about next steps so students understand how they can make progress toward their goals. ● Students should be involved in their learning process to understand their current understanding and achieve their learning goals.
Does the assessment provide an opportunity for students to self-regulate and/or self-evaluate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students need to learn the skills necessary to self-evaluate and self-regulate in order to effectively implement feedback. ● Students are given the opportunity to be involved in this process, rather than the responsibility falling on the teacher
Does this assessment have clear goals/learning targets that are effectively communicated to students?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students should have a clear idea of what is expected for the assessment. ● Teachers should clearly communicate the standards/learning goals/

Checklist Annotations

Question 1: How will this assessment inform and impact future instruction and planning?

It can be easy for educators to slip into a pattern of not spending as much time developing and reflecting on formative assessments because they are not always as formal as a summative assessment. “Teachers tend to spend the majority of their time designing their summative assessments as if that was the most important aspect, but really it’s formative assessment” (Wormeli, 2010). The purpose behind formative assessment is that students receive meaningful feedback and teachers receive information to inform future instruction, otherwise it is a summative assessment, or a measure of knowledge. “Feedback can only build on something; it is of little use when there is no initial learning or surface information. Feedback is what happens second, is one of the most powerful influences on learning, too rarely occurs” (Hattie & Timperley, 2007, p. 104). According to Black & William (1998), “assessment becomes formative assessment when the evidence is actually used to adapt the teaching to meet student needs” (as cited in Shepard, 2005). Reflecting on my own teaching practice, I consistently provide students with feedback, but am not consistently using information from formative assessments to guide my instruction. This will be a goal for me moving forward as I gain a more comprehensive understanding of formative assessment.

Evidence of Understanding

“Formative assessment does not take the form of a particular instrument or task (Moss, 2008), but is defined by its purpose (Shepard, 2009), which is to help form, or shape, a student’s learning during the learning process” (as cited in Trumbull & Lash, 2013). The format of the assessment is not as important as the purpose behind it. The important aspect of formative assessment is the information it can bring to light regarding the student’s learning process. This will drive future instruction and provide students feedback about their current understanding compared to the learning goal. “Feedback takes on a formative role when it provides information about the gap between a student’s current understanding and the desired level of understanding” (Trumbull & Lash, 2013). “Frequent assessment tasks, especially diagnostic tests, can help teachers generate cumulative information about students’ levels of understanding and skill, so that they can adapt their teaching accordingly” (Nicol & Macfarlane, 2006).

Question 2: Is this assessment a collaboration with the student?

All the formative assessments and results will be useless if teachers are not able to determine how the information gained from the assessment should influence future instruction. Reflecting

on data and insights from formative assessments is an essential aspect to the planning process when teachers make instructional decisions. Determining what to do with the information received can be the determining factor of a student developing a deeper understanding of content prior to another formative assessment or even a summative assessment. According to Hattie & Timperley (2007) "Teachers need to view feedback from the perspective of the individuals engaged in the learning and become proactive in providing information addressing the three feedback questions and developing ways for students to ask these questions of themselves. Students, too often, view feedback as the responsibility of someone else, usually teachers, whose job it is to provide feedback information by deciding for the students how well they are going, what the goals are, and what to do next" (p. 101).

Evidence of Understanding

Shepard (2005) defines formative assessment as "a collaborative process and involves negotiation of meaning between teacher and learner about expectations and how best to improve performance." Teachers cannot expect students to know what to do with feedback without collaborating and discussing with them what the feedback means and determine how the student will gain a deeper understanding of the concept. Trumbull & Lash (2013) explain that "formative assessment calls upon teachers not only to determine whether students have learned something, but also to probe students' ways of thinking to get at why any learning gaps exist." This information will be invaluable for the teacher to reflect on their instruction and determine any causes of learning gaps in their students and influence their lesson design in the future. There is a great deal of evidence in research that students do not understand the feedback given so they are not able to take the next step to make progress toward their learning goals (Chanock & Hyland, 2000, as cited in Nicol & Macfarlane, 2006). "Discussions in which pupil's are led to talk about their misunderstanding in their own ways are important aids to increasing knowledge and improving understanding. Dialogue with the teacher provides the opportunity for the teacher to respond to and reorient a pupil's thinking" (Black & William, 1998).

Question 3: Does the assessment provide effective feedback in order to guide student learning and inform students of how they may make progress toward their goals?

According to Hattie & Timperley (2007) "When feedback draws attention to the regulatory processes needed to engage with a task, learners' beliefs about the importance of effort and their conceptions of learning can be important moderators in the learning process" (p. 102). It is important that students learn how to be involved in their own learning process in order to understand where they are at in the process as well as what it will take in order for them to make progress toward their learning goals. "Students need qualitatively good feedback from their teacher to achieve their learning goals. As in all learning, achieving task-related goals and

goals regarding the processing of the task is essential” (van den Berghe, Ros, & Beijaard, 2013).

Evidence of Understanding

“Sadler identified three conditions necessary for students to benefit from feedback in academic tasks. He argued that the student must know: what good performance is (i.e. the student must possess a concept of the goal or standard being aimed for); how current performance relates to good performance (for this, the student must be able to compare current and good performance); how to act to close the gap between current and good performance” (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). If feedback is ineffective and does not provide insight into next steps to make progress, students will most likely ignore the feedback or accept it simply as comment on their achievement. “External feedback should support both processes: it should help students to recognise the next steps in learning and how to take them, both during production and in relation to the next assignment” (Nicol & Macfarlane, 2006). Teachers need to ensure that their feedback is well rounded and addressing all three of these areas in order to best support their students.

Question 4: Does the assessment provide an opportunity for students to self-regulate and/or self-evaluate?

“Students generate internal feedback as they monitor their engagement with learning activities and tasks, and assess progress towards goals. Those more effective at self-regulation, however, produce better feedback or are more able to use the feedback they generate to achieve their desired goals” (Butler & Winne, 1995, as cited in Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Teachers can provide feedback all they want, but if students are not taught what to do with feedback or how to assess where they are in the progression of meeting a learning goal, it is not going to be as effective. According to Nicol & Macfarlane (2006) “Teachers need to create more structured opportunities for self-monitoring and the judging of progression to goals. Self-assessment tasks are an effective way of achieving this, as are activities that encourage reflection on learning progress.” “Another way to encourage student learning is to ensure that students have an opportunity to reflect on their learning using information derived from classroom assessments” (Marzano, 2006).

Evidence of Understanding

According to Marzano (2006), “One of the most powerful and straightforward ways a teacher can provide feedback that encourages learning is to have students keep track of their own progress on topics.” Students should be learning the skills necessary to track their own progress, which will make their progress more of a focus and provide them a deeper understanding of their own learning progression. According to Hattie & Timperley (2007) “A major type of FP relates to students' strategies for error detection, thus providing oneself with feedback. Such errors may indicate failure and a need to re-strategize, to choose different

strategies, to be more effective in applying strategies, and/or to seek help. Whether students engage in error correction strategies following error detection depends on their motivation to continue to pursue the goal or to reduce the gap between current knowledge and the goal” (p. 93). Students being able to identify which steps they need to take in order to make progress is a very important skill in the learning process. Students should be encouraged to continue making progress toward their goals and have the opportunity to demonstrate said progress. “The development of self-regulation in students can be facilitated by structuring learning environments in ways that make learning processes explicit, through metacognitive training, self-monitoring and by providing opportunities to practise self-regulation (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1994; Pintrich, 1995, as cited in Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Self-regulation and self-evaluation are important skills that students need to be explicitly taught in school so that they have the ability to do so later in life when there may not be a teacher/parent providing this type of feedback.

Question 5: Does this assessment have clear goals/learning targets that are effectively communicated to students?

According to Shepard (2000) “Students must have a clear understanding of the criteria by which their work will be assessed.” If teachers expect students to achieve on assessments that clearly demonstrate their ability and knowledge, students need to have a clear idea of what is being assessed and how it will be assessed. According to Marzano (2006), “Feedback from classroom assessments should give students a clear picture of their progress on learning goals and how they might improve.” Teachers need to be sure that they provide students both an idea of where they are in their learning process and also how they may improve or gain a better understanding of the concept.

Evidence of Understanding

According to Hattie & Timperley (2007), “Effective feedback must answer three major questions asked by a teacher and/or by a student: Where am I going? (What are the goals?), How am I going? (What progress is being made toward the goal?), and Where to next? (What activities need to be undertaken to make better progress?)” In order for students to answer the second two questions, they first need to understand where they are going in the learning process. “Frederiksen and Collins used the term transparency to express the idea that students must have a clear understanding of the criteria by which their work will be assessed. In fact, the features of excellent performance should be so transparent that students can learn to evaluate their own work in the same way that their teachers would” (Shepard, 2000, p. 11). Providing students with documents such as rubrics will provide them a clear understanding of what is being assessed and what the teacher expects to demonstrate a certain level of comprehension.

References

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