Formative Assessment

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This session...

Formative Assessment:

1. What is it?
2. How does it differ from summative assessment?
3. How can it benefit teachers and students?
4. What are some current trends?
5. What strategies might classroom teachers use?
A definition...

Formative assessment is...

information collected DURING instruction
A definition...

Formative assessment is...

Information THAT is collected during instruction THAT teachers use to refine their practice.
A definition...

Formative assessment is...

Information collected during instruction THAT teachers use to refine their practice AND THAT students use for feedback about their learning
Formative assessment is...

A definition...

Informative information collected during instruction that teachers use to refine their practice AND THAT students use for feedback about their learning WHICH motivates students to learn.
A little bit about motivation

Self-regulated learning: students take ownership of their learning

Try to refine knowledge or skill and ---

Self-observation

Self-judgment

Self-reactions
What must students understand in order to do this?

Self-regulated learning: students take ownership of their learning

Try to refine knowledge or skill and ---
Key students understandings...

- What success looks like
- How their work differs from success
- Steps required to do to do better
Back to our regularly scheduled program.....
These ARE NOT formative..

- End of unit tests
- Midterms and finals
- CMTs and CAPTs
- Connecticut Benchmark Assessment System
- Anything that addresses skills that teachers and students will not revisit
Formative assessment DOES NOT require a particular test format

A first grade class completes a daily journal writing activity. The teacher reviews the writing at the end of a capitalization unit and assigns a grade of “A” to all students who begin their sentences with a capital letter.

This is an example of......

1. Benchmark assessment
2. Formative assessment
A definition...

Formative assessment is...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information collected during instruction</th>
<th>THAT</th>
<th>teachers use to refine their practice</th>
<th>AND</th>
<th>THAT</th>
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How does formative assessment differ from summative assessment?
How does it differ from summative assessment?

It is part of the learning process:

- information is temporal
- fine grained details crucial
- reflect on how to improve

Should not be used for accountability:

- too specific for generalizations about achievement
- snapshot of achievement before learning has concluded
- NOT appropriate for grading students
- NOT appropriate for evaluating schools
Benefits to teachers and students

Formative assessment activities are among the most effective strategies for improving student achievement.

Source:

Formative assessment improves achievement when students evaluate their own learning and communicate with teachers about it.

Assessment is most helpful when:

- Students grade/assess their own progress
- Teachers think about what should happen next
- Feedback is provided
Formative assessment is more effective than

- Other assessment approaches, including:
  - frequent testing
  - test preparation

- Many instructional techniques, such as:
  - Cooperative learning
  - Inquiry-based approaches
  - Mastery learning
Formative assessment is more effective than

- School reform efforts, like:
  - class size reduction
  - charter schools
  - multi-age classrooms

- Student background characteristics:
  - Prior achievement
  - Socioeconomic status
  - Parent/home support
Current trends in formative assessment

We'll focus on two today:

- Student self-assessment
- Peer assessment
Student self-assessment

Students reflect on the quality of their own work on a formative assessment. This requires students to:

- Have clear criteria on which to judge their work,
- Have a specific task or performance to assess,
- Observe models of self-assessment,
- Receive direct instruction in/assistance with self assessment,
- Practice,
- Receive feedback about how well they self-assessed, and
- Have opportunities to revise and improve the task or performance.
Student self-assessment: The process

1. **Articulate expectations.** Help students understand what it means to succeed on the task. This involves reviewing a rubric, or having the teacher and class create a rubric together, and critiquing strong and weak pieces.

2. **Students create rough drafts of assessments and critique them.** Students take compare the drafts to the rubric. Taking a pencil of different colors for each element of the rubric, they underline the evidence of mastery in their work with the color associated with that part of the rubric.

3. **Revision.** Students use the feedback they have
Pretend you are the student

- Read your essay (Essay #1)
- Jot down a few thoughts about needed improvements
Pretend you are the student

- Read your essay (Essay #1)
- Jot down a few thoughts about needed improvements
- Look at the rubric. Using the red crayon, circle “Purpose of the journey” in the left hand column, circle “The scene” in blue, and circle “Cast of characters” in green.
- Go through the essay and underline/mark sections of the essay that provide evidence for each category using the appropriate color.
- Make a new list of needed revisions.

From: Andrade, H.G. (2009). Promoting learning and achievement through self-
Are the lists different?

How so?
Student self-assessment: Benefits

- Better grasp of more difficult/nuanced aspects of the curriculum

- Improved performance, both in grades and standardized achievement measures

- Students more autonomous and more likely to check their own work
Peer assessment

“...an arrangement for learners to consider and specify the level, value, or quality of a product or performance of other equal-status learners.” (Topping, 2009, p.20)

Peer assessment: The process

1. Introduce peer assessment to students. Explain reasons for peer assessment, what skills will be assessed, and expectations.

2. Have students help develop assessment criteria.


4. Provide training, examples, and practice.

5. Provide guidelines, checklists, or other tangible scaffolding (e.g., written and/or pictorial reminders of the process).
Peer assessment: The Process (Continued)

6. **Specify activities and timescale.** What needs to be done? Within what time-scale? What records (if any) should be kept?

7. **Monitor and coach.** Teachers should keep a low profile, but support as needed.

8. **Check the match** between peers' assessments and on the relationship between peer and teacher assessments. Do not assume that teachers' assessments are better than peers’!

9. **Evaluate and give feedback.** Give the students information about their performance as peer assessors.
Planning for peer assessment

Think about a formative assessment that might incorporate peer assessment. Outline how you might use peer assessment for that task. Address at least some of the steps I discussed.

You will share with a partner who will provide feedback.
Feedback Topics

1. Adequacy of plans to help students learn how to peer assess.

2. Is there an appropriate process for teacher to monitor assessments.

3. Sufficiency of guidelines for students to assess each other and provide feedback.
Thoughts/questions?

How consistent is the process I outlined with your discussion peer assessment plans?
Peer assessment: The benefits

- Allows for more (and more varied) feedback to students.
- Increased time on task
- Greater sense of accountability
- Students disclose more to peers, which enables earlier identification of errors and misconceptions.
- Improves written products and groups work.
- May save teacher time.
What formative assessment strategies might teachers use?

See current trends....

Two additional topics:

1. Developing rubrics with students.
2. Feedback
Developing rubrics with students

- Easier if assessment, specific.
- Students review assessment and brainstorm important skills.
- Then review examples of student work.
- Students say what differentiates papers and order/arrange qualities of papers.
- Students share with the class. The teacher fills in the rubric based on comments/ suggestions for language. (Note this allows the teacher to have some control over the number of components to score and the number of scoring levels).
- Students review new papers using rubric and decide if rubric revisions are needed. (Language, components, scoring
Developing rubrics with students

- Takes many lessons, not a one day activity
- Examples should come from outside of class
- This is iterative and that's okay
- Not for every assessment
Feedback

Is key to learning

Should be

- specific,
- timely,
- honest, and
- descriptive (not value-laden).
Feedback

Read Essay # 2.

Provide written feedback on the paper as if you were the student's teacher.

Note, this is 8th grade, the same assignment as the self-assessment assignment.
Essay 4: COUNTRYSIDE—My Journey to up state New York

On October 7, 1996 I left with my aunt, uncle, and three cousins. My mom (Clara) was very sad that was leaving then for at least 4 yrs. My brother (Darrold) sad too. When I was leaving the house my mom and brother cried. My brother cried the most. I too cried a little but only for a while. Before I left my moms rm. She told, "listen to your aunt, don't give her a hard and help her up when she needs help". I told her "yes mom". My dad (Greg) droped me off at the Navy Log where my aunt and uncle were staying at for the night. We left the Navy Log at October 8, 1996. The ride to New York was boring because we hardly had anything to do. I had some drawing papers, crayons, markers, and writing papers. That's all I had to do. The only stops we made were to restraunts, gasoline stations, stores, and hotels. Oh I forgot to say that we traveld to New York by car. One of the worse places I would never want to pass by was the desert. It was so hot even rolling down the window didn't help. The trip to New York took us at least one week. When we got there, we stay with my grand parents place. My grant parents welcomed us and my aunt, an and two other male cousins too. There were more boys than girls I had to live with. Five boys and one girl me. Well that's my journey to New York. Hope you injoyed it too.
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Wrapping Up

Good formative assessment helps teachers AND students figure out how to improve learning.

To achieve this, teachers and students must have a shared (and clear) concept of the criteria for success.

They must also be able to identify the ways students fail to meet those criteria.

This requires open communication between students and teachers, and honesty from students about what they do and don't understand.
Questions or Comments?

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